**Minutes of the Upper Beeding Council meeting held at**

**Beeding & Bramber Village Hall**

**on Tuesday 25th February 2025 commencing at 7pm**

**Present:**  Councillors: S Birnstingl, F Bull, C Deadman, J Edwards, B Harber (Chair), F Heaver, S Teatum and C Warren

**Also present:**  Parish Clerk: Stephen Keogh

M Croker (Horsham District Council)

**C: 0225: 01 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllrs. P. Bull, J Cannon and T Kardos

Cllr. R Noel (Horsham District Council)

West Sussex County Councillor. Cllr P. Linehan.

**C: 0225: 02 Declaration of Councillors personal or prejudicial interest**

The Chairman reminded councillors that previous declarations still stand (as defined under the Localism Act 2011).

No further declarations received on this occasion.

**C: 0225: 03 Minutes of the last meeting**

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on [14th January 2025](https://upperbeedingpc.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/UBPC/EZ2ljL7xQDdJoB6vPkpl1_0BWAC3OfUSrAZ9Fufk2Zse5Q)

Proposed Cllr F Heaver, seconded Cllr C Warren and **AGREED.**

**C: 0225: 04 Public Adjournment**

No Members of the public were present.

**C: 0125: 05 Update from County Councillor –**

Cllr P Linehan was unavailable.

**C: 0125: 06 Update from District Councillor –**

Mike Croker HDC Councillors.

**Budget**

* The 2025/26 Budget has been agreed, and this will lead to a 2.7% increase in Council Tax.

**Local Plan**

* The LDP has moved to the next stage, and this is to set a new timetable for the completion of the plan.
* There are a number of possible outcomes to the Inspectors deliberations, which are expected in March 2025.
* The most likely outcome will be that the plan will need to be reviewed prior to resubmission and the main issue being that the amount of development needs to be increased to meet targets.
* The main areas of change may be the need to include larger sites, which had not been included in the original plan.
* It is expected that the plan will be resubmitted and agreed by 2028.

**Devolution**

* The consultation has started, and the main issue is the move towards the Mayoral system of government.
* In addition to the National Devolution Proposals, there is also a plan to carry out a reorganisation of the Local Government picture in the Area.
* There will be a consultation on the Governance and Boundary reform.
* There is still no clarification of the roles of Parish and Town Councils.
* District Council across the County are in discussions to ***prevent and issues moving forward. I don’t understand.***

**Questions:**

* Cllr F Bul asked if the changes will be Member or Officer led.

Cllr Croker explained that the main area of discussion was at Cabinet level, so a combination of senior officers and Members were involved.

CEO is currently working 90% of her time on the Reorganisation and Devolution.

* Cllr Warren was concerned about the proposed planning development inI Small Dole, in particular those larger areas of land which currently had no applications attached; will they be coming forward?
* Cllr Birnstingl was also concerned that if this is the case and larger developments were encouraged, that there also needs to be some confirmed infrastructure to go along with them.
* Cllr Croker explained that there was to be a review of the sites. Larger developments may be encouraged which could mean smaller ones may be removed. It would all be included in the redrafted Sustainability Appraisal.

**C: 0125: 07 Neighbourhood Warden Report**

The report for [January 2025](https://upperbeedingpc.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/UBPC/Ea74SVHtN4dBkECAtyEdnMYB6egeRqqj6Wh9-V9Pj7EPig) circulated with the agenda was **NOTED.**

Cllr F Bull asked the Clerk if it would be possible for the Wardens to include the new riverside walk as part of their regular patrols, as e-scooters have been seen using it.

**C: 0225: 08 Minutes –** To adopt the Minutes of the following Committees:

1. It was **AGREED** to Adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on [Tuesday 14th January 2025](https://upperbeedingpc.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/UBPC/EbtyXibm8ehIt_U0wg6afIAB74Zk-ivm_dBr_rhvN_VoOQ).
2. It was **AGREED** to Adopt the minutes of the Facilities Committee Meeting held on [Tuesday 4th February 2025](https://upperbeedingpc.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/UBPC/Ef7eB9f8CRlEgkD7WwqKeBUBxz8AjlU8ZYHdylaHXhvOdg)
3. It was **AGREED** to Adopt the minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on[Tuesday 11th February 2025](https://upperbeedingpc.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/UBPC/EZfiKgOhZRxDoV9QtP-UWc8Bn4epL_ykuYM0cBDQwqzmtw)

**C: 0225: 09 Recommendations for the Finance Committee**

It was **AGREED** to accept the recommendations of the Finance Committee held on [11th February 2025](https://upperbeedingpc.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/UBPC/Eb8jwGAki3ZAotwya00G8CMBZ26rBjLwHVQiTC_8_rHngw).

Cllr Heaver reminded the Clerk that a full report would be required regarding the correct use of the funds.

**C: 0225: 10 Devolution**

The Chair gave a verbal update from HDC Presentation at the Steyning Parish Council meeting held on Monday 17th September.

The main topic was the consultation which had started that afternoon – [Link to consultation](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/sussex-and-brighton-devolution/sussex-and-brighton-devolution-consultation) this runs until 13th April 2025

The subject was discussed at great length.

There is a need to be proactive, to know which assets can be taken on by the Parish Council, as there are a lot of opportunities that could be available to the Parish as a stand-alone authority or as part of a cluster.

The Chair asked Members to co-ordinate their thoughts so that the Clerk can submit a response.

The main issues appear to be around the use of a mayor as there are a lot of unknowns and a lack of experience of the work of a mayor.

The Members agreed that there were certain areas where it may be a good thing:

Proposed levels of funding.

Cil funds raised in an area being spent in the same area.

Local decisions for local people.

Taking on assets and services.

Nonpolitical?

Involved in National and County wide events.

Wider engagement

Improve local government services if done correctly.

There are some negatives:

The unknown, how the mayor will work.

The number of committee members making the decisions

Potential lack of democratic process.

Possible loss of local Identity

Loss of rural identity

The subject will be discussed further at the March meeting.

**C: 0225: 11 Clerk’s Report**

The Clerk’s [Repor](https://upperbeedingpc.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/UBPC/EdDZPjEL4ytFh54_wDThiMEBCjwEcToxI1s4qgeXgMDwaQ)t was **NOTED.**

**Annual Parish Meeting**

The Clerk was asked if he could invite a suitable person to give a presentation on the proposed devolution and the effect on the Parish residents.

Members asked if there was a possibility that the main room of the Village Hall could be used to house the people expected.

**C: 0225: 12 Saltings Field Loop Pathway Upgrade**

The [Update](https://upperbeedingpc.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/UBPC/EVUPr2Sk2QRElFt4rudxVL8Ben1xy1RNbjCXUVzojBc4Kw) on the works was **NOTED**.

The Clerk reported that the White Bridge Link would be starting soon.

Cllr Birnstingl reported that he had seen contractors on site.

**C: 0225: 13 South Downs National Park: Local Plan Review**

The proposed development plan for [Beeding Cement Works](https://upperbeedingpc.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/UBPC/Ef5cFDnVeTZMmSrciAe6G2kBaQH5digpx_dsvnDrSaDEbQ) was **NOTED.**

Members felt that until a plan for the development for the site was driven with the support of the landowner, there would be no movement on the subject.

**C: 0225: 14 Financial Update**

Income and expenditure reports ([summary](https://upperbeedingpc.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/UBPC/ERb2ujtrAGhKqhuzBeJu4jQBe64fxiuHUpogc2w1O70RvQ) and [detailed](https://upperbeedingpc.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/UBPC/ER7cAH37nV9EhjT5T8proyYBCk2qCj_CaXl0FI_52sC74Q)) to date had been circulated with the agenda; Councillors received and **NOTED**.

**C: 0225: 15 Bank Reconciliation** –

Councillors received and **NOTED** the Bank Reconciliation for [January](https://upperbeedingpc.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/UBPC/EUZp9furW_RLkIT6QkFZ1eUBsr0_DilJxNzxEunIke4m_A) 2025.

**C: 0225: 16 Payments List** –

Councillors received and **NOTED** the payments made in [January](https://upperbeedingpc.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/UBPC/ETnloGvmVtlBio8oYrsUxv0BXUgNF1CfBkhVS7peffetpQ) for £11,476.66 in accordance with Financial Regulations.

**C: 0225: 17 Climate Matters –**

Cllr Birnstingl has been investigating the larger trees planting project to encourage the planting of more mature trees rather than whips.

He foresees a few stumbling blocks as the majority of the trees would need to be planted by WSCC.

This could be a subject for the newsletter as there may be some sites in the village which could enjoy some trees, if the Parish Council has the permission to plant them on Council owned or other private land.

**C: 0225: 18 Correspondence** –

received and **NOTED** the correspondence received during [January 2025.](https://upperbeedingpc.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/UBPC/EVaR91GjguZPvfLKZ3ga3QQBD099iBl1vAKIydJgTuHuCg)

* [Letter from MP](https://upperbeedingpc.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/UBPC/ETBE9iEEDcJHgh_EibyJwq0BFb4wb8rwv3DhOkebelMjSQ).

It was **AGREED** that the Clerk should reply to the letter asking for Mr Griffiths to investigate the current issues with the mobile phone service in the area.

**C: 0225: 19 Chair’s Announcements**

Cllr Harber reported that there has been a survey received which asks whether the Upper Beeding Surgery should be kept open.

He stated that there were social media posts, which were generally against permanent closure.

Cllr Teatum was not sure that the high building costs could justify having a satellite surgery, which is not open as much as it could be.

There are some who can walk to the surgery, but there is still a number of residents who have a 15-minute walk or need to drive, so the closure of the surgery may not impact in these people.

Members feel that there is a potential for the building to be kept open in some way, the ideas included the use of the building for a pharmacy, the Parish Office and potentially a location for medical services (physio etc.)

Cllr Croker mentioned that one of the groups who may be affected is the young parents with no form of transport; the bus service is not good, and it may be a problem for them. This service could be one of the reasons for a satellite site.

Cllr Heaver was concerned that there are mixed messages, as the Steyning Medical Centre had posters etc asking for support to keep local services open, yet they are closing their own.

The closure for maintenance seemed to be false, as no works have been carried out, and it appears to be more of a trial closure to check the effect on residents and the reaction to it.

The location could be kept as a surgery for the area or provide some form of services to the community.

The consultation will be discussed further at the Community Committee and a response submitted.

Members were also encouraged to make their own submission.

The Chair offered his thanks to the Clerk for his work to push through the Riverside Walk project.

**C: 0225: 20 Matters raised by Councillors** - to receive matters for information or for discussion in future agendas.

**Cllr Teatum**

Reported that the Speedwatch group has been set up and once all the Members are trained there is an opportunity for the group to start patrols.

There being no further business the meeting closed at8.55pm

Signed: Date: