



WEST HANNINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES of an ordinary Parish Council Meeting 8th December 2025 at 7.30pm

Meeting held at South Hanningfield Village Hall

Present:

Cllr K Jones
Cllr P Brand
Cllr L Darg
Cllr P Galley
Cllr P Scanes
Cllr H Holman
Miss L White (Clerk)
One Member of Public

Before the start of business, the Chairman requested all mobile phones be switched to silent and asked if anyone had any intention of recording the meeting. The Clerk declared she would record the meeting.

174/25 – Apologies for Absence

It was resolved to accept apologies for absence from Cllr Alexander.

175/25 – Declaration of Interests

Members were reminded of their obligations to declare interests and notify the Monitoring Officer where required. None were declared.

176/25 – Admission of the Public

It was resolved item 188/25 would be discussed in closed session.

177/25 – Public Forum

One member of the public was present and enquired about the village hall, including the reasons for its closure. Councillor Brand provided an overview of the background and circumstances relating to this matter.

The application to register The Compasses as an Asset of Community Value was also discussed.

178/25 – Approval of Minutes

It was resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 10th November.

179/25 – Report from Essex County Council

Cllr Dobson was unable to attend the meeting.

180/25 – Report from Chelmsford City Council

Neither Cllr Dobson nor Cllr Taylor were able to attend.

181/25 – Planning

Cllr Brand reported that the following planning application had been approved prior to the meeting. The Council noted and was satisfied with this outcome:

Two-storey front and rear extensions, replacement roof, and alterations to fenestration.
Longacres House, Lower Stock Road, West Hanningfield, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 8UY
Ref. No: 25/01512/FUL

182/25 – Sandon Brook Solar Farm – Community Benefit

Members noted that West Hanningfield Parish Council had been offered a 4% share of the community benefit from the Sandon Brook Solar Farm, with the remaining 96% offered to East Hanningfield Parish Council, but that there was an opportunity for the two councils to negotiate the allocation if they wished to do so.

The Clerk reported that she had approached East Hanningfield Parish Council, which had indicated that it did not wish to negotiate or share the community benefit and had provided evidence to support this position.

Councillors Brand and Scanes carried out indicative calculations and considered that West Hanningfield Parish Council should receive a higher proportion, estimated at approximately 8.7%. The Clerk was therefore asked to contact the agent, Low Carbon Limited, to formally express the Council's dissatisfaction with the proposed allocation and to request a revised offer reflecting a higher share for West Hanningfield.

183/25 – Finance

It was resolved to approve the following payments:

31/10/2025	Unity Trust Bank	Service Charge	£6.00
06/11/2025	Royal British Legion	Poppy Wreath	£25.00
06/11/2025	S-Type Security	Security	£504.00
06/11/2025	Wallace Arboriculture & Groundcare	Groundswork	£245.84
06/11/2025	S-Type Security	Security	£546.00
06/11/2025	HMRC	PAYE	Confidential
06/11/2025	Ahead4	365 Licences	£30.48
17/11/2025	Nest	Clerk's Pension	Confidential
24/11/2025	O2	Telephone	£15.00
VAT on above transactions totals £180.08			

Members considered and agreed the bank reconciliation which was duly signed by Cllr Darg.

Members resolved not to proceed with commissioning an automated traffic count on Bakers Lane.

184/25 – Play Area Development Working Group

With no further plans in place to replace the play equipment in the play area, **it was resolved** that the Play Area Development Working Group be disbanded.

185/25 – Village Hall and Recreation Ground / Play Area Lease

The Clerk reported that progress had been made on the renewal of the lease; however, the process had slowed due to the staff member at Savilles responsible for it being on annual leave.

186/25 – Assets of Community Value

Due to the Clerk's reduced hours, Cllr Brand had kindly agreed to complete the application to have The Three Compasses registered as an Asset of Community Value. However, he had been unable to complete it due to his own workload. Cllr Jones (Chairman) emphasised the need for

the application to be completed prior to the next meeting, noting that it had been outstanding for some time.

187/25 – Members Invited to Share Any Other Business (NO RESOLUTIONS)

Cllr Brand reported that potholes in Blind Road were becoming increasingly problematic and that there were ongoing concerns regarding the bridge over the A130. The Clerk will provide City Cllr Sue Dobson with the relevant Track-it reference numbers to escalate the repairs. It was noted that the bridge over the A130 falls within the parish of East Hanningfield. However, the Clerk will still forward the Track-it references to Cllr Dobson.

NOTE: Due to the confidential nature of the following business, this item was discussed in closed session. The Clerk was not present for the discussion. Before leaving, the Clerk asked Councillors if they had any questions regarding the staffing matter. The minute for this item was provided by Cllr Jones.

188/25 – Staffing Matters

The Clerk left the meeting for this confidential agenda item.

Members discussed the proposal put forward by the outgoing Parish Clerk to split the roles of the Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer (RFO). This is because the Clerk had offered to take on the RFO role either permanently or temporarily.

The Chair explained that the Personnel Committee had met and discussed the proposal and recommends to full council that the role of Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer remain unchanged. This is because West Hanningfield is a small parish council, and the Committee believes that it is more cost-effective and efficient for one person to manage both administrative and financial responsibilities rather than split them between two roles.

This recommendation was unanimously agreed by members.

The meeting was closed at 8.44pm.