

Appendix A

Report to Washington Parish Council Meeting on 9th December 2024 by HDC Councillors Joan Grech (JG), Emma Beard (EB) and Claudia Fisher (CF)

Cllr Grech advised the following:

General HDC news

Climate:

- draft Carbon Reduction Plan Nov 2024 – Mar 2030 approved by cabinet (20 Nov)
 - current plan expires next year
 - net zero goals for council operation:
 - direct emissions by 2030 (baseline 2.7kt pa), will need 0.4kt pa offsetting
 - indirect emissions by 2050 (baseline 5.8kt pa)
 - only outline at this stage
- **5 themes**
 - behaviour change – officer education
 - transport – move to EVs (light vehicles), HVO fuel (HGVs) but EVs considered
 - buildings – least efficient first, office move will save 120t CO₂e pa
 - offsetting – will be subject to close scrutiny!
 - procurement – identify and focus on top 10 suppliers
- £1.6m budget in FY25/26 – council approval on 11 Dec
 - significant costs going forward
 - applying to Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund?

Finance:

- still many known unknowns
 - food waste collection transitional support from central gov?
 - 25/26 FY settlement?
 - relief for ~£0.5m employer NICs increase?

Planning and Infrastructure Bill is to be published possibly Jan 25? – devolution prospects?

JG - Of interest but not yet in Storrington

- **Vapes, batteries and mobile phone drop off bins being trialled in Horsham town - if a success the scheme will be rolled out district-wide.**

Other - JG was asked to look into the availability of CIL money available for spending on Washington. Sent an email to WPC Clerk including a calculation of what money was available for WPC to spend directly (Approx £52K) and that being 25% of the total CIL money raised on development wholly or partially within the parish that HDC does hold a larger portion.

Suggested that WPC should-

- a) look to identify schemes within the parish it could spend its £52K CIL portion on
- b) consult with neighbouring parishes to get their views on the impact of local development on the availability of services and facilities, and on local infrastructure, and raising these issues with HDC (maybe Barbara Childs would be the best person to approach). Where issues arising from local developments impact multiple parishes then CIL income relating to those parishes presumably can be pooled to resolve those issues.

Things we've been doing -

- **CF - PARKING** - looking into BB (Blue Badge) parking

HDC Blue Badge Parking Policy: Key Points

- **National Blue Badge Scheme Purpose:**
 - Helps those with mobility issues park closer to destinations.
 - Provides concessions, such as parking on yellow lines for up to 3 hours (where permitted).
 - Encourages independence, inclusion, and accessibility.
- **Current Policy for HDC Car Parks:**
 - Since 2005, Blue Badge (BB) holders must pay unless registered for an exemption (for those on certain disability benefits).

- Registration process ensures eligibility and prevents abuse. Staff are available to assist with applications.
- **Fraud Prevention:**
 - BB fraud is a national issue, with significant thefts often linked to organized crime.
 - HDC's scheme safeguards disabled parking spaces and reduces abuse, ensuring bays remain available to those who need them.
- **Signage and Awareness:**
 - Updated car park signage in 2024 to reflect changes in eligibility criteria and broaden accessibility.
 - Communications with registered BB holders through emails and planned updates in district magazine.
- **Revenue and Free Parking Considerations:**
 - Estimated annual revenue from BB parking exceeds £76,500 for town centre car parks alone.
 - Free parking for all BB holders would significantly increase revenue loss and could lead to reduced availability of disabled bays due to misuse.
- **Addressing Specific Concerns:**
 - Cobble Streets: Accessible off-street parking with compliant bays is available near Horsham town centre, along with a Shopmobility service offering free wheelchairs and scooters.
 - Multiple Vehicles: While one registered vehicle is standard, flexibility exists for special cases (e.g., care homes or rural areas relying on multiple drivers).
 - PCN Appeals: PCNs for BB holders are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and often cancelled if eligibility issues are demonstrated.
- **Comparison with Other Authorities:**
 - HDC's approach to charge or require registration is unique in West Sussex, praised for reducing fraud and maintaining accessibility.
 - Neighbouring councils face challenges implementing similar policies due to public perception.
- **Conclusion:**
 - HDC prioritizes accessibility and fraud prevention over blanket free parking.
 - The current policy supports those in financial hardship while protecting the value and availability of disabled parking spaces.

Link to HDC BB parking here:

<https://www.horsham.gov.uk/parking/disabled-parking/horsham-blue-badge-scheme>

We will look further into this as there seem to be difficulties with understanding HDC's BB policy across the district and have concerns about the principle of

- **CF - Litter pickers** – Claudia, Emma and Joan to buy a set 12 of compact recycled litter pickers for Storrington Primary school with HDC offering to supply on loan larger quantities for specific dates for both the school and the PC . Happy to fund a sum for the PC for regular use (would 4 be useful?) – To book litter picking kit from HDC please email Simon.Furlonger@horsham.gov.uk to arrange this.
- **CF - HDC meetings in the south** – meeting with HDC Chair Nigel Emery – looks like Storrington April and Henfield June – Chairman Nigel Emery surprised that PC hadn't been informed last time, this will not happen again – meeting with Jane Eaton went well – watch this space.

STG (Storrington Traffic Group) meeting – petition wording agreed to be put to WSCC Highways (from 20s Plenty site) and to include Cowfold – petition submitted and likely to be live from Friday. It needs to achieve 3000 signatures from people living, working or studying in West Sussex by 27 Feb for inclusion in a debate at WSCC full council on 21 March. Link to petition here: <https://westsussex.moderngov.co.uk/mgEPetitionDisplay.aspx?id=45>

CF & EB - Planning committee challenges – HDC planning committees to be revised but not till the HDC constitution has been updated and still awaiting further national guidance. Currently the options are to stay on the committee but to stand away from certain applications in order to be able to represent residents better – this would allow a cllr to speak for 5 mins at the Planning committee but not to vote. Green HDC convenor Cllr Mike Croker will take concerns around the pressure put on cllrs who also sit on the planning committee further with HDC CEO - we will report back

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- **EB (given by CF) - Bramber Brooks** - EB visited the Drop-in exhibition in Upper Beeding displaying HDC's plans for managing Bramber Brooks – A positive meeting with good attendance.

- **EB (given by CF) - Rivers** - A team of us three and one other Green HDC cllr have been meeting with Cllr Colette Blackburn, Cabinet member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery to monitor progress on the Rivers Charter we proposed at council in Dec 23 – it is likely to be some kind of statement of intent and won't come to council before April 25. We will continue to monitor progress.

- **EB (given by CF) – Storks...** We fully support the application for Knepp and Storrington for Stork Village status and for a Stork & Biodiversity Festival at Chanctonbury Leisure Centre on 5th May 2025.

Joan Grech, Claudia Fisher and Emma Beard.

Appendix B

FC/24/12/06 Actions and matters arising from the last meeting

- **Min Ref: FC/24/6/13 (FC June 2024):** Closed. Council's request for refund on Premium website package at renewal declined by website service provider.
- **Min Ref: FC/24/7/6 (FC July 2024)** 'Slow Down' signage on Bostal road suggested at Sussex Safer Roads Partnership May 2024). WSCC Highways Authority (email 5th Aug 2024 to PC) advised on requirement for exact location and design of signage. No further action.
- **Min Ref: FC/34/8/7 (FC Aug 2024).** Closed. Cllr Thomas confirmed that yellow-backed speed signs London Road/Bostal Road had been installed by the Highways Authority.
- **Min Ref: FC/24/9/6 (FC Sep 2024)** In progress. Outsourcing payroll options. Tabled for consideration by Full Council Meeting on 9th December 2024..
- **Min Ref FC/24/10/05 (FC Oct 2024)** Cllr Grech agreed to make further enquiries on progress of South Downs Link Pathway project. Pending.
- **Min Ref: FC/24/10/11 (FC Oct 2024)** In progress. Motion for Bus Shelter (Old London Road) recommended by OSRA Committee (18th Nov 2024) to Full Council for approval pending full details from Cllr Scovell. Deferred until information is available.
- **Min Ref: FC/24/10/13 (FC Oct 2024):** Closed. Speed Indicator Device (SID), relocated in Rock Road and solar panel installed. Agenda item (FC Dec 2024) to consider quotation for cutting back vegetation by the device.
- **FC/24/10/10 (FC Oct 2024)** Notice of 'casual vacancy' following resignation of Cllr Luckin (Washington Ward): Closed. No request for an election. Council is free to co-opt. Vacancy to be advertised for co-option at the next meeting.
- **Min Ref: FC/24/10/17** review presentation of operating costs and reserves in budget reports. In progress. Cllr Keech to action