WASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

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WASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES of the monthly meeting of Washington Parish Council held on Monday 5th October 2026 in the Washington Village Hall (Doré Room) School Lane, Washington RH20 4AP

PRESENT: Cllr A. Dillaway, Cllr B. Hanvey (Vice-Chairman), Cllr O. Jupp, Cllr T. Keech (Chairman) and Cllr A Lisher.

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr E Beard (HDC) and Cllr J Grech (HDC). Apologies received from Cllr P Marshall (WSCC) and Cllr C. Fisher (HDC).

ALSO: Clerk to the Council

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 1

ABSENT: 1

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7:30pm

FC/26/10/01 **Apologies for Absence**
The Council **RESOLVED** to accept apologies from Cllr Hanvey (personal reasons).

FC/26/10/02 **Declaration of Members' Interests and Dispensations.**
Cllr Hanvey declared a non-pecuniary interest in item. No other interests were declared as defined under the Localism Act 2011 and the Council's Code of Conduct for the business # of this meeting.

FC/26/10/03 **Minutes of the last Full Council meeting**
The Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the 3rd August as a true and accurate record to be duly signed by the Chairman.

FC/26/10/04 **Public Forum**
A resident raised safety concerns on London Road about overgrown vegetation, faded white lines and the volume of quarry HGVs using the village as a cut-through, particularly affecting pedestrians and school children.

Cllr Beard confirmed that she had reported the hedges and road markings to WSCC and would

follow up. The Chairman said the Parish Council had also raised HGV concerns and requested, through Cllr Marshall, routing conditions in the anticipated Rock Common Quarry Traffic Management Plan. The Council agreed to write to Cllr Marshall stressing the urgency.

There were no other written or spoken representations.

FC/26/10/05 **County and District Reports**

HDC Reports:

Cllr Beard reported that the Governance Review proposed changes elsewhere in the district from April 2027, with Washington Parish unchanged. From 14 October, revised HDC planning arrangements would refer fewer applications to a smaller committee under new decision gateways; guidance would follow. She also reported plans for social-rent homes on derelict garage sites, the Local Plan hearing on 13 October, the Over-50s Winter Warm Up on 15 October, a possible trial electric refuse lorry, and the WSCC consultation on on-street EV charging points closing 16 October, with none proposed in Washington or Storrington.

Cllr Beard further reported that a representative for residents in Old London Road has sought a 30mph Traffic Regulation Order. Cllr Dillaway reported that WSCC had rejected a similar 20mph request because recorded speeds were already low and no measurable safety benefit or Police/Road Safety support was expected. Cllr Beard agreed to take this up further with the applicant.

WSCC Reports:

The Council noted Cllr Marshall's apologies and written updates on local government reorganisation, the Governance Review, Route 23 bus capacity and the rejected Old London Road 20mph limit. The Clerk had thanked him for supporting retention of the Parish boundaries and requested updates on the Washington Bostal link and Rock Common Quarry traffic.

FC/26/10/06 **Action Updates.**

The Council noted the Actions Report and matters arising from decisions made at the last Council meeting (Appendix A).

FC/26/10/07 **Neighbourhood Planning**

Cllr Lisher would seek a response from the SSWNP Steering Group Chairman to his email request on arranging a meeting to discuss the Neighbourhood Plan review. The Clerk asked to be copied into the exchange.

FC/26/10/08 **Committees**

Drafts of the Planning and Transport Committee and OSRA Committee minutes of 21 September 2026 were deferred to the next meeting. Two recommendations on 2027 grounds maintenance and allotment management were considered under the next two items of business.

FC/26/10/09 Washington Recreation Ground Charity: Allotment Management Review

The Council considered the OSRA Committee's recommendation, the Clerk's report, legal advice and comments from the Stewards on involving plot holders in allotment management. It noted that an informal working group could not exercise delegated authority and that legal responsibility would remain with the Council unless management were transferred formally. Options included a constituted allotment association, external provision and additional clerical support; outsourcing was not supported because the likely cost would exceed annual rental income of approximately £400 and require unacceptable rent increases.

The Council **RESOLVED** to invite plot holders to consider forming a legally constituted allotment association or to identify further responsibilities that they could lawfully undertake. Cllr Dillaway agreed to discuss the options with Mr Turley and provide him with the schedule of duties.

FC/26/10/10 Washington Recreation Ground Charity: Quotes

The Council reviewed the OSRA Committee's recommendation and the three quotations previously circulated for the 2027-29 grounds maintenance.

The Council **RESOLVED** to appoint Sussex Land Services Ltd (Contractor C) because of their reliable service, high standard of work and significantly better value than the other quotations.

FC/26/10/11 Washington Recreation Ground Charity: Tree management

The Council reviewed GTC's annual tree inspection report and schedule of recommended works dated 17 September. No urgent safety works were required.

It was noted that the Parish Tree Warden had attended the inspection and agreed to remove basal growth from the lime tree on the Recreation Ground.

The Council **RESOLVED** to arrange for the collapsed plum tree at the rear of the allotment to be felled, as recommended. The Clerk was delegated to instruct the Council's approved tree surgeon, Mr Morley of Sawing Heights, and invite him to quote for the remaining works in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations. Councillors thanked the Tree Warden for her assistance.

FC/26/10/11 Washington Recreation Ground Charity: Annual Charity Return

The Council reviewed and **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the WRGC 2025/26 Draft Annual Return prepared by the Clerk for submission to the Charity Commission.

FC/26/10/12 Washington Recreation Ground Charity: Play Area

The Council reviewed concerns from a member of the public that the play area's grass surface becomes muddy in wet weather, making it slippery. Councillors noted advice that the grass assists drainage from the nearby road, that no safety issue had been recorded in weekly inspections, and that the all-weather surfacing had already been extended in the play area at significant cost.

The Council **RESOLVED** to review suitable synthetic surfacing as a potential CIL-funded project later in the year, once commitments had been clarified through the Finance Committee's

November budget review.

FC/26/10/13 Grant applications

The Council considered an grant application from Milford Grange Management Company for £599 towards a new bench in Milford Grange Country Park. The Council noted that the park is publicly accessible, is designated as a protected green space in the Neighbourhood Plan, and is maintained by the Management Company on behalf of Milford Grange residents.

The Council further noted that the proposed bench would provide an amenity for parish residents and other visitors to the park.

Having considered the application, the Company's accounts and legal advice, and being satisfied that the applicant operates on a not-for- profit basis, the Council **RESOLVED** to award the grant of £599, funded from parish CIL receipts, pursuant to section 19(3) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. Cllr Harvey abstained from the vote, having declared a personal non-pecuniary interest.

FC/26/10/14 AGAR 2025/26: External Audit and Notice of Conclusion of Audit

The Council reviewed the Notice of Conclusion of Audit and the external auditor's report and certificate for the year ended 31 March 2026, both published on the Council's website.

The auditor confirmed that Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR complied with Proper Practices and identified no cause for concern. A £1 discrepancy between the 2025 year-end and 2026 opening figures had been corrected, resubmitted and republished by the Clerk; the auditor advised that these figures should be checked for agreement by the Council in future.

The Council **RESOLVED** to note the Signed External Auditor Report and Certificate 2025–26 and the correction and republication of the AGAR. It accepted the auditor's advice and agreed that the Clerk/RFO would verify that the prior-year balance carried forward agrees with the current-year balance brought forward before future AGAR approval.

The Council further **RESOLVED** to agree the Notice of Conclusion of Audit 2025–26, commencing 29 September 2026 and published on the Council's website.

FC/26/10/15 Delegated Decisions

The Council reviewed the following decisions made by the Clerk since the last meeting in accordance with its scheme of delegation.

i. A neutral planning response from the Council to application reference DC/26/1151 Erection of a first-floor extension by raising roofline and associated alterations.

ii. Engagement of J Electrical to replace the insecure MUGA light-meter cupboard at a cost of £135 (gross) because of the public safety risk; installation was scheduled for 6 October.

The Council **RESOLVED** to ratify approval of the decisions under its scheme of delegation.

FC/26/10/16 Reports from representatives of Outside Bodies

To Report HDC's second meeting with Parishes on 16th September 2026
The Clerk reported on her attendance at the meeting at which HDC updated parish councils on its priorities, current developments and Local Government Reorganisation.

To Report on HALC's AGM
Cllr Thomas's report on the HALC AGM was deferred to the next Council meeting.

FC/26/10/17 Correspondence
The Council noted the following additional correspondence:

- **HALC:** Five parish council chairs seek a special meeting over unresolved and alleged governance and financial issues.
- **WSCC grant:** Up to £5,000 for waste-prevention projects; applications close 3 November 2026.
- **Public footpath obstruction in Washington Parish:** WSCC will investigate the padlocked gate near Tilleys Farm (reference WAS-2701). Report kindly made by Cllr Thomas.
- **People's Emergency Briefing 22nd September:** A report has been requested; response pending.
- **CPRE:** HALC encouraged parish councils to consider membership and shared the membership page and infrastructure-mapping article.
- **WSCC Highways, Transport and Planning newsletter:** Updates covered parish briefings, proposed EV charge points, highway schemes and utility works; comments on proposed charging locations were invited through the consultation website.

FC/26/10/18 Financial Reports

Payments

i. The Council **RESOLVED** to ratify **APPROVAL** of invoice payments totalling **£6,07.97** in the following schedule presented:

oucher	Cheque	Name	Description	Amount
90		Sussex Land Services Ltd	Grounds maintenance June + July 2026	2,286.50
91		Central Computer Management Ltd	Payroll Services - Aug 2026	78.00
92		Mr T Ashburner Cox	Weekly Safety Inspections	300.00
93		Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd	Delegate fee - Mulberry LAS Annual	72.00
94		Moore	External Audit 2025.26 services	409.50
95		WSALC	HALC subscriptions	40.00
96		Parish Online	Parish Online - Digital Mapping	96.00
97		NEST	Pension - Aug 2026	209.47
98		HMRC	PAYE Aug 2026	644.73
99		Z Savill	Staff salary Aug 2026	1,876.23
100		Z Savill	Clerk's electricity - Aug 2026	26.00
101		Z Savill	Broadband - Aug 2026	20.00
102		Tesco	Office phone	9.54
			TOTAL	6,067.97

ii. The Council **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** invoice payments totalling **£12,442.56** in the following amended schedule presented:

Voucher	Cheque	Name	Description	Amount
103		Lloyds Bank PLC	Bank Service Charge	4.25
104		Juke Carpentry & Renovations Ltd	Pathways project - deposit	5,250.00
105		Central Computer Management Ltd	Payroll Services - Sep 2026	78.00
106		Horsham District Council	Dog bin emptying Q2 2026.27	44.20
107		S Russell	Litter Warden - Aug 2026	166.72
108		Hags-Smp Ltd	Play area equipment	1,916.13
109		Gale Tree Consultancy	Annual Tree Survey 2026	870.00
110		Gale Tree Consultancy	Weekly Safety Inspections - Sep 2026	300.00
111		Satswana Limited	DPO Service	180.00
112		South East Landbased Training Courses	Basic Tree Inspection Course	210.00
113		TEEC Limited	GOV.UK domain + Planning Tracker	70.80
114		Lloyds Bank PLC	Bank charges	4.25
115		Royal Mail Group Ltd	PO BOX Address	499.80
116		NEST	Pension - Sep 2026	209.47
117		HMRC	Payroll - Sep 2026	644.93
118		Z Savill	Staff Salary - Sep 2026	1,876.03
119		Z Savill	Clerk's Mileage	35.64
120		Z Savill	Broadband - Sep 2026	20.00
121		Z Savill	Electricity - Sep 2026	26.00
122		Tesco	Office phone contract	9.54
123		Amazon EU	Stationery	26.79
			TOTAL	**12,442.56**

Income

iii. The Council **RESOLVED** to note receipts totalling **£30,848.37** in the following schedule ~~presented including the second part of the 2026/27 parish precept~~:

Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Receipt No	Description	Customer	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
12	Bank interest	16/09/2026	FC Oct 2026	Redwood Bank Limit		Bank interest	Redwood Bank Ltd	X	2,050.00		2,050.00
13	Precept	28/09/2026	FC Oct 2026	Lloyds Current Accou		Precept - 2nd Payment 2026.2	HDC	X	27,390.16		27,390.16
14	HDC Cleansing grant	28/09/2026	FC Oct 2026	Lloyds Current Accou		Cleansing grant - 2nd Payment	HDC	X	1,251.06		1,251.06
15	Bank interest	31/07/2026	FC Oct 2026	Nationwide Business	Statement Number	Bank interest	Nationwide Building Society	X			
16	Bank interest	28/08/2026	FC Oct 2026	Nationwide Business	Statement Number	Bank interest	Nationwide Building Society	X	157.15		157.15
								Total	30,848.37		30,848.37

The Council reviewed and further **RESOLVED** to ratify **APPROVAL** of the following:

- The Redwood Savings Account matured on 17 September. The Chairman reported on ~~his transfer of £2,040 interest and a further £2,044.38 to the Lloyds community~~ account, and that the new one-year Redwood bond would pay 4.80% fixed for the 1-year term on the remaining £45,472.35 reserves held in that account. The Clerk's advice, together ~~with the Chairman's comments and written support from Councillors for the transfer of funds, were previously circulated and noted~~.

~~Finance Report with Bank Reconciliation~~

iv. ~~The Council **RESOLVED** to note the finance report on payments and receipts since the last meeting, and balances for all bank accounts reconciled at £159,685~~ on 30th September 2026.

Reserves Transfers

v. The Council reviewed its budget and cashflow position and **RESOLVED** to agree the Chairman's proposal to transfer £15,000 from Lloyds to Nationwide to maximise interest on funds held in the savings account.

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2026/27 VAT

vi. The Council noted that the Q2 2026/27 VAT position would be reported at the meeting on 7 December.

2026/27 Budget Review

vii. The Council **RESOLVED** to note that it was operating largely within budget in the second quarter of 2026/27, and that the variance arising from new and increased annual subscriptions would be covered by general reserves for unforeseen expenditure.

FC/26/10/19 Sussex Local

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Chairman's draft editorial for the November issue of Sussex Local, to be submitted to the magazine on 7th October.

FC/26/10/20 Chairman's Announcements

None.

FC/26/10/21 Items for the next Agenda

- Consider making representations to HDC on NPPF changes reducing local representation on planning committees and delegating more decisions to officers.
- To Consider holding next year's APM in the Chanctonbury Room of the Village Hall.

FC/26/10/22 Dates of next meetings

The Council **RESOLVED** to note the following meetings dates:

Staffing Meeting: Prior to the Finance Committee Meeting. Cllr Dillaway to arrange to be held at least one week prior to the Finance Committee Meeting.
Planning & Transport Committee: Monday 16th November slightly earlier at 6.30pm
OSRA Committee: Monday 16th November at 7:15pm
Finance Committee: Monday 16th November at 8:00pm – 2026/26 budget review.
Full Council: Monday 7th December 2026

FC/26/10/23 **Co-Option**

The Council noted that there were no applications for co-option to the Council.

FC/26/10/24 **Confidential Matters**

The Council **RESOLVED** that, under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded for the remaining business because disclosure would be prejudicial to the public interest due to its confidential nature.

FC/26/10/25 **Washington Recreation Ground Charity: Rampion Heads of Terms**

The Council carefully reviewed legal advice and the non-binding Heads of Terms with Rampion Expansion Development Ltd (RED) for an underground cable route on its Recreation Ground and allotment land. This will be part of a wider cable corridor across the South Downs, serving the windfarm expansion development off the Sussex coast and terminating at the Bolney sub-station.

Savills has negotiated on the Council's behalf as its Agent, following the April 2025 Development Consent Order for the windfarm project. Councillors noted that amendments previously agreed with the Agent, including removal of the compensation cap for manhole covers, have been included in the re-issued terms.

RED has also agreed to meet reasonable costs for a Designated Adviser's Report to be prepared with the Option for Deed of Easement. The Council's Solicitor from Moore Barlow will seek consent from RED to cover specialist charity-governance advice if needed.

Members considered that the negotiated terms of the voluntary agreement offered the best available compensation for the charity, avoiding exposure to professional costs and loss of incentive payments if the developer invoked its compulsory powers.

Following discussion, the Council, as sole managing trustee of the Washington Recreation Ground Charity, **RESOLVED** to agree the non-binding Heads of Terms with Rampion Expansion Development Ltd, without prejudice to its objection to the cable route, subject to the Solicitor drafting the Option for Deed of Easement and completion of the Designated Adviser's Report. These would be reviewed by the Council at a later date in accordance with statutory and charity legislation.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:15pm.

Signed.....

Dated.....