

BEECH PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Louisa Thomson
E-Mail: clerk@beechpc.com

Minutes of the Meeting Monday 12th May 2025

PARTICIPANTS : Councillor Kim Eakers (Chair) Member of the BRSF Working Group
Councillor Tony Ransley Members of the Village Hall Committee
Councillor Alana Coombes
Councillor Nikki Pickard
Councillor Ruth Duffin
Louisa Thomson – Clerk to the Council

25.048 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Proposed Alana Coombes, Seconded Nikki Pickard, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: That Councillor Kim Eakers is elected as Chairman. Chairman Eakers signed a declaration of acceptance of office.

25.049 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Ingrid McCormack.

25.050 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES – UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

The Minutes of the Council meeting held on 14th April 2025, copies previously circulated,
Proposed as a true record by Alana Coombes, Seconded by Tony Ransley, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED and signed by Chairman Kim Eakers.

25.051 DECLARATION OF INTEREST - Councillor Kim Eakers declared an interest in agenda item 13. Beech Village Hall.

25.052 COUNCIL REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

Council reviewed its internal control systems and procedures, Proposed Alana Coombes, Seconded Tony Ransley, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that they are current and fit for purpose.

- a) **Standing Orders (Including adopting new model Standing Orders updates)**
- b) **Protocol for Reporting at Meetings [Annex to Standing Order No. 3 (I)]**
- c) **Financial Regulations (Including adopting new model Financial Regulation updates)**
- d) **Risk Assessment**
- e) **Complaints Procedure**
- f) **Publication Scheme**
- g) **Grant Awarding Policy & Procedure and Application Form**
- h) **Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Procedure**
- i) **Disciplinary and Grievance Policy**
- j) **Social Media Policy**
- k) **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Privacy Notices**
- l) **AutoSpeedWatch Camera Policy**
- m) **Code of Conduct**

Copies will be added to the Parish Council website detailing the review date and minute reference.

25.053 ASSET REGISTER - **Proposed Tony Ransley, Seconded Ruth Duffin, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:** confirmed the Asset Register is correct.

25.054 COUNCIL INSURANCE RENEWAL

Proposed Ruth Duffin, Seconded Tony Ransley, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: to approve the council insurance renewal with Zurich £390.44, this is based on last year's assets. This may increase when the assets have been updated, Council approved up to £450.

25.055 GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

Proposed Tony Ransley, Seconded Nikki Pickard, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED the Council still meets the General Power of Competence prescribed criteria, being:

- a) Two thirds of the councillors have been elected; Beech has 6 out of 7 elected councillors.
- b) The Clerk holds relevant professional qualifications: Beech Clerk has passed CiLCA.
- c) The Clerk has completed relevant training in the exercise of GPC, unless training was included in (b) above: Beech Clerk has carried out HALC training in GPC and the CiLCA qualification includes GPC.

Chair Kim Eakers declared an interest in the next item. Proposed Tony Ransley, Seconded Nikki Pickard, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that Councillor Alana Coombes Chairs the next item.

Alana Coombes suspended Standing Orders so members of the Village Hall Committee can address the Council.

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Members of the Village Hall Committee reiterated the use of the Wellhouse following refurbishment. Following the Parish Councils grant approval in November 2024 the Village Hall Committee had entered the formal tender process. Additional works and requesting a fixed price have increased costs. Additional works include providing storage and a garden area together with furniture and fixings.

Grants have been secured from Viola for £61,500; National Lottery £17,000 and Beech Village Hall reserves of £11,500.

The Committee are requesting the Parish Council pay the grant of £11,669, previously approved, in July to assist with cash flow and allow the works to commence.

Alana Coombes reinstated Standing Orders.

25.056 BEECH VILLAGE HALL - **Proposed Tony Ransley, Seconded Nikki Pickard, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:** to defer awarding of funds until later in the year or on completion when all other funding sources have been investigated / applied for.

Kim Eakers retook the Chair.

25.057 PLANNING

Kim Eakers suspended Standing Orders so a member of the public could speak, Standing Orders were then reinstated.

Proposed Alana Coombes, Seconded Nikki Pickard, RESOLVED (Ruth Duffin abstained): to approve Tony Ransley's letter in response to CSA Environmental which will be sent to EHDC.

25.058 BEECH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW

Kim Eakers suspended Standing Orders so Graham Webb from the Working Group can update.

The Working Group are waiting for a meeting with EHDC and will hopefully update the Parish Council at the June meeting.

Kim Eakers reinstated Standing Orders.

Tony Ransley - Grant updates will hopefully be available at the June Parish Council meeting.

25.059 BEECH ROAD AND FOOTPATH SAFETY WORKING GROUP - Kim Eakers updated.

Roads

- The footway lines will be reinstated following the resurfacing work on Medstead Road.
- The safety audit has been completed and Hampshire Highways will raise and invoice to the Parish Council.
- Ian Janes confirmed phase two will be looking at increased signage.
- Public Rights of Way
- Countryside Services have looked at the low point in Ackender Wood where bridleways meet and estimate it will cost £2,000 to repair the surface.
- Countryside Services agree the bridleway to Thedden is in a poor condition and will send costings.

Kim Eakers suspended Standing Orders so Graham Webb from the Working Group can update.

- Land at Whitedown Lane proposed development release of CIL funding is dependent on EHDC decision.
- Countryside Services have stipulated that bridleway maintenance money is set aside as part of any planning permission granted.
- The developers highway solution has been rejected by Hampshire Highways and will need to be redone.
- Forestry England have £200,000 of S106 money available to update the paths in Ackendar Wood.
- Bus Stop – the amount of work required to clear the footpath and bus stop is a bigger job than previously thought. Clerk will email PJ Grace to ask for a site meeting to quote for this and clearing the grips and ditches.
- Cycle / footpath along A339 into Alton – pedestrians have complained about cyclists using it. There needs to be signage and the vegetation needs clearing.

Kim Eakers reinstated Standing Orders.

25.060 AUTOSPEEDWATCH CAMERA AND SPEED INDICATOR DEVICE

- There has been a change of leadership within the Police Road Safety, hopefully ASW will be looked at again.
- Autospeedwatch April report attached Appendix A.

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- 25.061 20MPH SPEED LIMIT
Looking into the possibility of a joint application with Alton and neighbouring Parishes to reduce the cost of the application.
- 25.062 MEDSTEAD ROAD FOOTPATH MAINTENANCE
Proposed Ruth Duffin, Seconded Tony Ransley, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: to confirm PJ Grace to trim the footpath once a month from May to October (six strims) @ £150 plus VAT per trim.
- 25.063 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2024/25
- a) Council confirmed receipt of the Annual Internal Audit Report carried out by Nigel Sillick.
 - b) i) Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 – Council completed the Annual Governance Statement. **Proposed Alana Coombes, Seconded Tony Ransley, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** it is signed by Chairman Kim Eakers and Clerk Louisa Thomson.
 - ii) Accounting Statements 2024/25 – The Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2025 were presented to council for approval. **Proposed Tony Ransley, Seconded Alana Coombes and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Accounting Statements 2024/25 are approved, they were signed by Chairman Kim Eakers. Clerk Louisa Thomson signed before presenting the statements to Council.
 - c) Conflict of Interest with BDO LLP – **Proposed Ruth Duffin, Seconded Tony Ransley, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that no members of Beech Parish Council have a Conflict of Interest with BDO. Chairman Kim Eakers and Clerk Louisa Thomson completed and signed the form.
 - d) **Proposed Alana Coombes, Seconded Tony Ransley, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** the Exercise of Public Rights Notice dates are: Date of announcement Monday 2nd June, notice period Tuesday 3rd June 2025 to Monday 14th July 2025.
- 25.064 PAYROLL
Proposed Ruth Duffin, Seconded Nikki Pickard, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: to approve the new payroll processing rates of £31.50 per month, an increase of £1.20 per month payable to DCK Payroll Solutions Ltd.
- 25.065 ACCOUNTS 2025/26
Proposed Ruth Duffin, Seconded Alana Coombes and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the following payments are approved, payments will be authorised by Tony Ransley.
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| a) | Clerk's Salary (May 2025) | £888.95 |
| b) | Clerk's Expenses (May 2025) | £27.77 |
| c) | Hampshire Pension Fund (Clerk's pension – May 2025) | £248.78 |
| d) | DCK Accounting Solutions Ltd – Monthly Payroll processing | £38.28 |
| e) | Beech Village Hall and Recreation Ground | £24.76 |
| f) | Zurich Municipal (to be paid once renewal figure received if approved in item 11.) | £390.44 |
| g) | Hampshire Association of Local Councils – Affiliation Fees & NALC Levy £347.00 and LCPD Membership £216.00 | £563.00 |
- 25.066 MEETING DATES
- a) The following proposed dates for Council meetings for 2025/2026 were noted and will be published. (These dates may be subject to change.)

<u>2025</u>		<u>2025</u>	
June	16 th	January	19 th
July	21 st	February	16 th
August	18 th (Meeting to be scheduled if required)	March	16 th
September	15 th	Annual Parish Meeting and Council meeting	
October	20 th	April	20 th
November	17 th	Annual Council Meeting	
December	15 th (Meeting to be scheduled, if required.)	May	18 th
 - b) Confirmed the date of the next scheduled Council meeting as Monday, 16th June 2025 at 7pm with public question time at 6.45pm.

CLOSURE OF MEETING - Chairman thanked all present for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.25 pm.

signed:
Chairman Beech Parish Council
date: 16th June 2025