

HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Horley Town Meeting held at the Albert Rooms, Albert Road, Horley
on Friday 16 May 2025**

PRESENT

In the Chair:	Cllr Lynnette Easterbrook - Chairman and Town Mayor
Town Councillors	Cllrs Fagan, Marshall, George, Saunders, Blacker, Baird, Hughes and Turner
Borough & County Councillors:	Cllr Richard Biggs (Borough Leader) Cllr Hannah Avery (Borough and Town Councillor) Cllr Steve Wotton (Borough and Town Councillor)
Guest Speaker	Terry Flynn, Talks Team Volunteer, Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex (KSS) for Surrey
Council Officers	Joan Walsh, Sam Adeniji, Helen Mann and Sophie Mandak
Plus 30 members of the public.	

The Council Chair and Town Mayor, Cllr Lynnette Easterbrook welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Chris Coghlan MP, RBBC/HTC Cllr Jerry Hudson, RBBC/HTC Cllr James Baker, SCC Cllr Andy Lynch, SCC/HTC Jordan Beech and SCC Cllr Marisa Heath.

Minutes of Meeting held on 17 May 2024

The Minutes of the Annual Town Public Forum held on 17 May 2024 were presented for confirmation by those present and signed by the Chair of the Council.

Presentation of Town Award

A Town Award was presented to David Edge, Bandmaster of the Redhill Corps of Drums and Band, for his outstanding service to the Horley Community, over many years. This includes organising the marching band for the annual Remembrance Day Parade and Service, arranging buglers for the service and mentoring young band members in both music and marching. In his acceptance speech, David Edge thanked the Town Council for his award.

Annual Report of the Henry Smith Charity Horley for 2024-2025

Mr David Yates, Chair of the Henry Smith Charity Horley, delivered a presentation outlining the charity's history, purpose and recent activities. Established in 1628, the charity provides financial support to individuals in poverty within the Ancient Parish of Horley, as well as to local organisations with similar aims. Mr Yates highlighted the increasing demand for assistance, driven by factors such as social housing developments, homelessness and changes in government policy, noting that the charity's annual income has grown to approximately £18,000. In 2023/24, over 180 individuals benefited from support, including retail and energy vouchers, essential household goods, study materials and transport assistance. He emphasised the accessibility of the service and its vital role in supporting vulnerable members of the community.

Horley Churchyards

Reverend Canon Les Wells, of St Bartholomew's Church, presented an update on the maintenance and financial position of the New Churchyard which serves as a public cemetery for Horley residents. He thanked Horley Town Council for its continued support in helping with the maintenance of the Churchyard, in a way that is aesthetically pleasing and safe for the public. He further detailed maintenance activities in 2024, including volunteer contributions and professional works such as grass and hedge cutting together with trimming a large oak tree. A new contract with their grounds maintenance provider, Idverde, was outlined, with costs totalling £11,377 (including VAT). He advised that volunteers had played a significant role in keeping the grounds safe and presentable. A grant of £6,750 was received from the Town Council during 2024/25 and, in view of rising expenses and financial pressures on the PCC due to declining church membership and attendance, he asked the Town Council to consider covering the total cost of the maintenance contract next year. It was further noted that Reverend Kerry Evans was grateful to the Council for its grant in support of the church's new Community Allotment project.

Horley Edmond Community Fund (HECF)

Grants Manager, Josephine Larcher of the Community Foundation for Surrey, presented the annual report of the Horley Edmonds Fund which had awarded over £55,900 in grants since its inception in 2008. In 2024/25, grants totalling £5,300 were awarded to local organisations including YMCA East Surrey, Horley Parochial Church Council, Horley Lions and most recently, the Sparkfish project to fund a Youth Worker at Oakwood School, one day per week. To date, 50 grants had supported nearly 12,000 beneficiaries across a range of themes, including health and wellbeing, education, community development, arts and culture, and disability access. Ms Larcher thanked the Town Council for its continued support and encouraged members to help raise awareness of the Fund's availability to support eligible Horley-based projects.

This report was followed by a cheque presentation of £800 to the Horley Edmonds Community Fund by the Chair of the Council for 2024/25, Cllr Martin Saunders.

Annual Report 2024-2025

The Annual Report was received by those present.

Report of the Chair of the Council 2024/25 – Cllr Martin Saunders

The Chair's report was received.

Report of the Chair of the Leisure & Amenities Committee - Cllr Samantha Marshall

The report of the Chair of the Leisure & Amenities Committee was received.

Report of the Chair of the Planning & Development Committee - Cllr Mike George

The report of the Chair of the Planning & Development Committee was received.

Report of the Finance Lead – Cllr Jordan Beech

The report of the Finance Lead Member was received (recited by Cllr Hannah Avery).

Comments and Questions on Reports

Residents were invited to make comments or ask questions concerning the reports. A question was raised about the traffic implications at the new Lidl site (former Air Balloon) at 60 Brighton Road.

Cllr George explained that the Town Council is aware of the potential problems and that steps have been taken to address this in the design of the proposed site.

Resolutions

The Chief Executive Officer advised that no resolutions had been received, for consideration.

Local Government Reorganisation of Surrey and Devolution

Borough Leader, Cllr Richard Biggs gave a presentation on the Government's proposals for Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution in England, following the publication of the Devolution White Paper, in December 2024. He explained that the proposals involve replacing the current two-tier system with single-tier Unitary Authorities and introducing new Strategic Authorities for cross-boundary issues. He further outlined the options put forward for Surrey, including a three-unitary model strongly supported by Reigate and Banstead which aims to keep services closer to residents and better reflect community identities. Additionally, a supplementary proposal was submitted for a joint unitary authority with Reigate & Banstead and Crawley, designed to strengthen planning and economic development across the Gatwick Diamond area. Cllr Biggs confirmed that updates will be provided once the Government outlines its consultation process and next steps. He encouraged residents to stay informed via the Council's website and social media channels.

Horley in Bloom and Photographic Competitions

Cllr George outlined arrangements for the competitions for 2025. This event is organised by Fiona Stimpson and sponsored by Idverde and the Town Council. The competition has now been extended to include playgroups and has introduced a 'seed swap' initiative.

Presentation from Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex (KSS)

The Chair welcomes the guest speaker, Mr Terry Flynn of the Air Ambulance Charity.

The speaker provided an overview of the charity's operations and impact across the region. Founded in 1989 by Kate Chivers, KSS delivers Helicopter Emergency Medical Services to 4.8 million people across Kent, Surrey, and Sussex. In 2023–24, the charity responded to over 3,300 emergencies, averaging nine missions per day.

KSS operates a fleet comprising three Leonardo AW169 helicopters and four hybrid Rapid Response Vehicles (RRVs). The AW169 helicopters, known for their speed and spacious cabins, enable in-flight critical care and rapid transport to specialist hospitals. The RRVs, equipped with the same medical apparatus as the helicopters, ensure continuity of care when flying is not feasible.

Each mission team includes a highly trained doctor, a critical care paramedic and two crew members. KSS emphasises the importance of delivering advanced medical interventions promptly, significantly improving patient outcomes. The speaker also highlighted a commitment by KSS to reduce preventable loss of life from medical emergencies. He explained that early intervention through bystander CPR and defibrillator use can more than double a person's chance of survival. To this end, KSS has trained over 80,000 individuals in CPR and defibrillator use across the South East, including innovative programmes like teaching six-year-old children CPR using teddy bears to make the learning process engaging and age-appropriate.

The charity also focuses on community engagement and education, notably through initiatives like the Team KSS Young Ambassadors programme, which encourages youth involvement in fundraising and awareness campaigns.

Financially, KSS is predominantly community-funded, with 88% of its £20.7 million income in 2023–24 derived from public donations and fundraising activities. The charity expressed gratitude for the continued support from local communities and emphasised the vital role this support plays in sustaining its life-saving service.

The Chair thanked the speaker for the comprehensive and informative presentation given on behalf of the charity, and for providing a valuable insight into the vital work of everyone involved in giving patients the best possible chance of a positive outcome when serious incidents occur.

The Chair closed the meeting by thanking everyone for attending the meeting.

Meeting closed at 9.03pm.

Date of Next Meeting – 15 May 2026 (provisional)

Signed:

Dated: