

# **Parish Council Report – January 2026**

## Local Government Reorganisation

**All council leaders across West Sussex have issued a joint statement, following the government's consultation on local government in West Sussex.**

“As council leaders across West Sussex, we reaffirm the strength of our joint working as we move towards the next stage of local government reorganisation. Over recent months, all councils in West Sussex have continued to collaborate closely, building on a solid foundation of shared ambition, evidence, and commitment to the people and communities we serve.

We are grateful to everyone who contributed their views to the government's consultation on local government reorganisation in West Sussex which closed on 11 January 2026.

Ministers will now assess all business cases and responses to the consultation. They have confirmed that decisions will be made using the published criteria and informed by the consultation feedback. The government is expected to announce its decision for West Sussex by the end of March 2026. Elections for a new shadow authority or authorities are anticipated in May 2027, with the new arrangements formally taking effect when the new unitary councils assume governance from 1 April 2028.

There will be no immediate changes to how residents and businesses access services. The councils remain fully committed to delivering high-quality, efficient local services across all our communities, with services continuing to operate as normal.

Our shared priority is clear: to ensure that any reorganisation delivers a structure that supports local identity, economic prosperity, and long-term resilience with simpler access to services, fair outcomes for all areas of the county, and strong value for taxpayers. The strong partnership between our councils provides a robust platform for preparing for a smooth transition and ensuring continuity of essential services.

We will continue to work together and keep you updated as this important process develops. Thank you for your ongoing partnership and support.”

## Community Climate Fund

**Up to £5,000 available via Horsham District's Community Climate Fund.**

### **What is the Community Climate Fund?**

The grant is a launchpad for community organisations to start new projects that reduce carbon emissions, whilst taking steps to saving money and create lasting positive change in the community. Together, we can create a brighter, greener future for the Horsham District.

### **Who is eligible?**

Local voluntary, community or not-for-profit organisations that are based in Horsham District. Must be properly formed and operate services that are open to all.

### What projects are funded?

New projects that reduce carbon emissions through one or more of the following areas:

- **Energy** (solar panels, smart heating controls, LED lighting)
- **Water** (rainwater harvesting, low flow and sensor taps)
- **Waste** (set up a repair café or 'hard to recycle' collection, composting)
- **Biodiversity** (develop your nature garden, plant trees and pollinators)
- **Transport** (bicycle parking, running a bicycle repair workshop or active travel event)

The broader community benefits of **health and wellbeing**, **education** and **social inclusion** are considerations too.

We **can** fund the purchase of materials and hired contractors needed to deliver your works. This includes resources to run events or behaviour change campaigns. We cannot fund core cost or retrospective funding of projects that have already started/finished.

### How can you apply?

Application rounds are open in January, April, June and September. Further information and the application form can be found on our webpage via the link below.

For project advice and application support please contact our team at **01403 215156** or via [email](#). We can also provide a draft application, so that you are fully prepared before submitting the online form.

[Find out more and apply now](#)

## Food Waste Collection

This week, all Horsham District households will receive letters explaining how the new service will be delivered.

The food waste collection service will be rolled out in phases, with a starter pack delivered to every household from February to April. The exact collection start dates will depend on where residents live.

Each household will receive a lockable outside food waste bin and a 5-litre caddy for use in the kitchen. A starter roll of compostable liners and a leaflet which lists what can and cannot go in the food waste bin will be included. Flats will receive a kitchen caddy and communal external food waste bin.

The new recycling service comes as part of the UK Government's Simpler Recycling reforms, designed to make recycling easier and more consistent across England.

Refuse and recycling collections will continue as usual every other week: these new food waste collections are an additional service on top of these. Collection days will not change – the food waste recycling bin will be collected weekly on the same day as either your recycling or general waste bin, depending on where you live.

More details on our food waste collection service including what you can and can't put in your food waste bin can be found here: [www.horsham.gov.uk/foodwaste](http://www.horsham.gov.uk/foodwaste)

You are also encouraged to download the free Council app to receive alerts for your collection dates: <https://www.horsham.gov.uk/mobileapp>

You can also visit the Council's Bin Calendar webpage and use the postcode search to view the collection dates for your property:

<https://www.horsham.gov.uk/waste-recycling-and-bins/household-bin-collections/check-your-bin-collection-day>

Please check your online bin calendar from 20 January to see when your feed waste collection will start.

## Local Plan Update

In November 2025, the Horsham District Local Plan Inspector agreed to hold an exploratory / procedural meeting to consider the next steps for the Council's emerging local plan. A meeting has now been arranged to be held on 26 February 2026.

In his November letter to the Council, the Inspector outlined that he would write again to the Council setting out further details and information that he requires from HDC to inform discussions at the exploratory meeting.

We have now received the further letter from the Inspector. It will also be made available on the Council's examination webpages.

Whilst it is clear from the letter that the Inspector is of the view that there is a significant amount of work for the Council to undertake to progress the plan, the issues that he has raised have been foreseen by officers and are matters which are already in the process of being addressed. This information will be provided in a response to the Inspector by 12 February 2026 as he has requested.

## Annual Plan

Horsham District Council recently ran a consultation on our draft Annual Plan for 2026-2027.

We acknowledge that this was open for a shorter period than we would have liked and will look to consult earlier and for longer on the next Annual Plan. However, we are analysing all the feedback that was received from external stakeholders and the general public, as well as the Council's two Policy & Scrutiny committees, and are already working on refinements.

The final Plan will go to Cabinet for final approval in January, along with the Draft Budget - which will then go to Full Council for approval in February.

HDC are looking to set up 4 area meetings with grouped Parish Councils in February. In these area meetings we intend to discuss the Annual Plan, along with other topics. Each meeting will have one member of the Cabinet and one member of the Senior Leadership Team present.

## Survey Results

**Results are in for Council's leisure and wellbeing services survey - check them out!**

Horsham District Council has completed a major public engagement initiative to inform the future of Horsham District's leisure and wellbeing facilities.

As part of preparations to renew its Leisure Services contract in 2027- a significant decision made only once every 15 years - the Council launched a district-wide survey and a series of focus groups to gather views from residents, schools, youth forums, community partners, and key stakeholders.

**[Read more](#)**

## Council Tax

### **Council set to recommend balanced budget with lowest Council Tax in Sussex**

Senior councillors at Horsham District Council's Cabinet meeting on 21 January 2026 are expected to support proposals for a balanced financial and capital budget for the year ahead which will also deliver the lowest Council Tax charge in Sussex.

The proposed budget not only improves financial stability but also prioritises support for the most vulnerable residents, whilst investing in key capital projects.

Despite ongoing pressures as a result of inflation, the Council is on track to deliver a balanced budget for 2026/27, with a projected £1.6 million surplus which will be invested in an enlarged capital programme.

Thanks to ongoing prudent financial management and healthy reserves, the Council remains well-positioned to protect essential services, support those in need, and invest in projects that enhance the quality of life of residents across the Horsham District.

**[Read More Online](#)**

## Council Issues Public Health Warning

Horsham District Council has been made aware of confectionary products on sale nationwide containing mineral oil aromatic hydrocarbons, which is a prohibited ingredient in the UK as it can increase the risk of cancer if consumed in high quantities over a prolonged period.

The affected products are branded as Jolly Rancher and cover all flavours and batches of their Hand Candy, 'Misfit' Gummies, Hand Candy Fruity 2 in 1, Berry Gummies, Filled Pops and Freeze-Dried Candy product lines.

Officers from the Environmental Health team have undertaken visits across the Horsham District and where affected products have been found, taken steps to remove them from the market. If any businesses still have of the confectionary, then it must not be sold and must be taken off shelves.

Although the risk of illness resulting from consumption of the products is low, members of the public are advised to not consume any of them and simply dispose of the sweets.

For further information please contact the Council's Environmental Health & Licensing team by emailing [ehl@horsham.gov.uk](mailto:ehl@horsham.gov.uk)

## Provisional Settlement

The Provisional Settlement was announced on 17 December and as expected, the Council is one of 50 to 60 authorities facing cuts of up to 5%.

Further details can be found [here](#)

MHCLG has previously informed this cohort that we have benefited from business rate growth, have high levels of reserves and have had extra time to prepare from cuts that were signalled years ago.

The Core Spending Power for Horsham is reduced by **4.3%** in 2026/27 compared to 2025/26 which equates to £1m.

Furthermore, Government's core spending power calculation includes £0.5m more locally raised Council tax and consequently therefore £0.5m less Government funding than the prior year.

However, the funding contained within the three year Provisional Settlement should be sufficient to help the Council balance the budgets through to 2028/29. The full budget and updated Medium term Financial Strategy will be taken to the following meetings in January and February:

- Finance and Performance Policy and Scrutiny Committee on 19 January
- Cabinet on 21 January 2026
- Council on 23 February 2026.