

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
AMENITIES AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE  
HELD AT HARTLEY LIBRARY, ASH ROAD  
ON WEDNESDAY 13<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2025  
AT 6.00p.m.**

**Present:**

Cllr David Conroy  
Cllr Laurence Glander  
Cllr Anne Oxtoby – (*Chairman*)  
Cllr Brian Ramsay  
Cllr Vincent Sewell (*Arrived at 6.02p.m.*)

**In Attendance:**

Mrs H Boden – (*Clerk*)  
A representative from the New Ash Green Football Club  
2 representatives from the Hartley De Sales Football Club  
A representative from the New Ash Green & Hartley Cricket Club – (*Arrived at 6.05p.m*)

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Penny Cole, Cllr Graeme and Cllr Malham.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. Minutes of previous meeting**

RESOLVED: That,  
the minutes of the meeting of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2025, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The Clerk reported that the representative from the New Ash Green & Hartley Cricket Club had advised that they may arrive late due to traffic issues.

In view of this, it was agreed that the agenda item relating to Cricket at Manor Field, be deferred to later in the meeting.

RESOLVED: That,

pursuant to Standing Order 10 (a) (ix), the order of business be altered so that agenda item 5. Cricket at Longfield Hill and agenda item 6. Football at Manor Field, be brought forward.

#### **4. Cricket at Longfield Hill**

There was no report from Meopham Cricket Club.

#### **5. Football at Manor Field**

(a) The Committee considered the pitch requirements for Hartley De Sales FC and the New Ash Green FC for the 2025/26 season.

Hartley De Sales FC confirmed that they would require 1 no 11 v 11 pitch (including respect lines), to be located in the far left corner of Manor Field (when looking out from in front of the pavilion).

The New Ash Green FC confirmed that they would require 2 no pitches. 1 no 9 v 9 pitch, to be located in the far right corner of Manor Field (when looking out from in front of the pavilion).and 1 no 11 v 11 pitch, to be located in front of the Pavilion. The representative from the New Ash Green FC confirmed that respect lines would not be required on either pitch.

The Committee noted that as last season, the New Ash Green FC would also require the use of the toilets in the Pavilion for their girls' teams, on an ad hoc basis.

RESOLVED: That,

the pitch requirements of Hartley De Sales FC and the New Ash Green FC, be confirmed.

The representative from Hartley De Sales FC asked whether, if required, an additional grass cut could be carried out, outside of the contracted period (April – November).

RESOLVED: That,

should an additional cut be required by the Club, appropriate notice should be given to the Clerk to enable the necessary arrangements to be made, with the total cost of the work to be met by the Club.

(b) The Committee had been requested to consider a quotation for the setting out of the required pitches.

The Clerk reported that despite contacting the contractor on numerous occasions, the quotation was still awaited.

RESOLVED: That,

the matter be deferred until the next meeting.

(c) The Committee had been requested to consider the fees for the use of the pitches at Manor Field for the 2025/26 season.

Due to the fact that the quotation had not been received for the setting out of the pitches, it was agreed that consideration of the fees should be deferred until the next meeting, to enable the Committee to be in possession of all of the relevant information and costs.

RESOLVED: That,

consideration of the fees for the use of the pitches at Manor Field for the 2025/26 season, be deferred until the next meeting.

(d) The Committee considered a request received from Hartley De Sales FC, for the use of the WC at the entrance end of the Pavilion, between the hours of 5p.m. and 7p.m. on a Monday evening during training.

The Clerk reported that there was a regular hirer in the Pavilion from 5.15p.m. to 7.30p.m. and that they frequently experienced issues with parents/dog walkers trying to access the toilets during their hire period.

The representative from Hartley De Sales FC confirmed that the use of the WC would only be required in the summer months.

The Clerk suggested that the regular hirer be consulted to ask whether they would be amenable to the WC being used by the club for a trial period next summer.

RESOLVED: That,

the Clerk be requested to contact the regular hirer of the Pavilion to ask whether they would be amenable to the football club using the wc at the entrance end of the Pavilion for a trial period next summer.

*The representatives from the New Ash Green Football Club and the Hartley De Sales Football Club left the meeting at 6.36p.m.*

## **6. Cricket at Manor Field**

The representative from the New Ash Green & Hartley Cricket Club reported that the 1<sup>st</sup> team was struggling to stay in the league, but that the 2<sup>nd</sup> team was hoping for promotion.

The Clerk reported that the recent Legionella test results had come back negative and that the showers would be available for use at the weekend.

The representative from the New Ash Green & Hartley Cricket Club reported that there were several members of the Club with expertise in plumbing and that they would be prepared to look at the current plumbing system to ascertain whether it could be improved.

The Committee agreed that the current system was in need of review and that the offer from the Club should be accepted.

RESOLVED: That,

arrangements be made for members of the New Ash Green & Hartley Cricket Club, with the relevant expertise, to be invited to review the current plumbing system at the Pavilion.

Members noted that the cleaners had reported damage to the wall in the Away changing room, seemingly caused by cricket boot spikes.

The representative from the New Ash Green Cricket Club agreed that the club would make good the damage.

The representative from the New Ash Green Cricket Club reported that there had been an issue with the storage container and that it had been necessary to carry out some adjustments.

Members asked whether the sight screens would be removed from the field during the winter months.

The representative from the New Ash Green Cricket Club asked whether it would be possible for the screens to remain on site.

The Committee agreed that this wouldn't be an issue provided that the nets were rolled up.

*The representative from the New Ash Green & Hartley Cricket Club left the meeting at 6.44p.m.*

## **7. Financial Report**

The Committee considered a financial statement setting out detailed income and expenditure by budget heading in respect of the Allotments, Open Spaces and the Pavilion, as at 7<sup>th</sup> August 2025.

The Clerk reported that an invoice for water at the allotments had been received which was higher than anticipated, particularly in view of the current hosepipe ban.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the Council's Routine Maintenance Contractor be requested to turn off the water at the allotments and check the meter to see if it was still running, in order to ascertain whether or not there was a leak and if so, arrangements be made for its repair,

(2) the financial statement setting out detailed income and expenditure by budget heading in respect of the Allotments, Open Spaces and the Pavilion, as at 7<sup>th</sup> August 2025, be received and noted.

## **8. Trees**

### **(a) Manor Field**

(i) During the Routine Maintenance Contractor's weekly inspection, two storm damaged trees located on land adjacent to the car park at Manor Field were highlighted as being unsafe, as they had fallen across the hedge, into the car park.

Arrangements were made for the trees to be inspected by a Tree Surgeon who advised that it would be necessary for them to be removed due to health and safety concerns.

Pursuant to Financial Regulation 5.18, the Assistant Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee, accepted a quotation for the sum of £80 + VAT for the felling and removal of the trees.

The Committee had been requested to confirm the Assistant Clerk's actions.

RESOLVED: That,

the Clerk's actions, in consultation with the Chairman of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee of accepting a quotation for the sum of £80 + VAT for the felling and removal of the two storm damaged trees, located on land adjacent to the car park at Manor Field, due to health and safety issues, be confirmed.

(ii) The Clerk reported that there have been several complaints regarding overhanging trees at the entrance to Manor Field, which do not appear to be located on Council owned land.

The Clerk reported that the neighbouring land owner had been consulted and that they had confirmed that the trees in question were not located on land owned by them.

Members noted that Kent Highway Services had also been contacted and that they had advised that the land on which the trees are located is unregistered.

The Clerk reported that in view of the potential hazard caused by the overhanging trees, which are almost touching the roofs of vehicles entering and exiting the car park, she had sought the advice of a Tree Surgeon who had confirmed that the trees would benefit from being crown lifted.

RECOMMENDED: That, the quotation received for the sum of £400 + VAT to crown lift the trees located on unregistered land adjacent to Manor Field, be accepted.

(b) Billings Hill Shaw

At the meeting of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2025, the Committee considered a suggestion that the planting of fruit trees be undertaken at Billings Hill Shaw.

It was noted that there was a possibility that grants may be available for the planting of orchards.

It was agreed that the Clerk be requested to contact the New Ash Green Woodland Group to obtain further information and advice regarding the proposed scheme.

The Clerk reported that she had been in contact with a representative from the New Ash Green Woodland Group, who had suggested a meeting on site to discuss the matter further.

Members noted that the Clerk had asked the representative to provide a list of convenient dates so that a meeting could be arranged.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the Clerk's report be noted and,

(2) a meeting be arranged with the representative from the New Ash Green Woodland Group and members of the Committee, once the representative comes back with a list of potential dates.

(c) Gorse Wood

(i) At the meeting of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee held on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2025, the Committee considered emails received from a resident of Caxton Close, regarding trees overhanging their rear garden and noted that upon inspection, the Tree Surgeon had advised that there were two fairly small Ash trees growing from the woodland, that were overhanging the fence by a reasonable amount, The trees were described as "not being fine specimens" and are growing at a bit of an angle.

It was resolved that the Clerk be requested to contact the Tree Surgeon to ask whether the two Ash trees posed a health and safety issue.

At the meeting of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2025, the Committee noted that the Tree Surgeon had not been prepared to confirm whether the trees pose a health and safety risk. Therefore, it was agreed that further advice be sought.

The Clerk reported that an alternative Tree Surgeon has inspected the trees and confirmed that they pose no health and safety risk and that therefore no work was required.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the Clerk's report be noted and no further action be taken by the Council and,

(2) the resident be advised that the Parish Council has no objection to them making arrangements for any overhanging branches to be cut back to the boundary at their own expense.

(ii) At the meeting of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2025, the Committee considered an email received from a resident of Porchester Close, regarding a tree located in Gorse Wood, adjacent to their property.

The Committee noted that arrangements had been made for a Tree Surgeon to inspect the tree and they had advised that the tree was very large and would benefit from a reduction of 25%.

It subsequently transpired that the tree that the Tree Surgeon had inspected was not the tree that the resident was referring to. The overgrown tree was on land owned by the District Council.

The Clerk reported that arrangements had been made for the correct tree to be inspected and that the Tree Surgeon had confirmed that it posed no health and safety risk and that therefore no work was required.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the Clerk's report be noted and no further action be taken by the Council and, (2) the resident be advised that the Parish Council has no objection to them making arrangements for any overhanging branches to be cut back to the boundary at their own expense.

#### (d) Quantified Tree Risk Assessment

At the meeting of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2025, it was agreed that arrangements be made with Duramen Consulting to carry out a Quantified Tree Risk Assessment on the trees located on land owned or managed by the Parish Council.

It was also agreed that arrangements be made for Members to accompany the Tree Inspector when he carries out the inspection, to assess the situation with regard to the boundary discrepancies and unregistered land, adjacent to the land shown on the Land Registry title.

The Clerk reported that a meeting has been arranged for Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> October at 10.00a.m.

**RESOLVED:** That, the Clerk's report be noted and arrangements be made for Members of the Committee to accompany the Tree Inspector when he carries out the inspection on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> October at 10.00a.m.

## **9. Pavilion**

### **(a) Water Hygiene**

(i) The Committee considered the results of the monthly water temperature check at the Pavilion, carried out by the cleaning contractor and the results of the monthly calorifier temperature check carried out by the Clerk.

**RESOLVED:** That, (1) the results of the monthly water temperature check at the Pavilion, for July 2025, carried out by the cleaning contractor be noted with no action required, as the Committee is satisfied that the results were within scope and, (2) the results of the monthly calorifier temperature check at the Pavilion, for July 2025, carried out by the Clerk, be noted, with no action required, as the Committee is satisfied that the result was within scope;

(ii) Due to issues with the hot taps in the Home and Away changing rooms and the wc at the entrance end of the Pavilion, the Parish Council's water hygiene contractor recommended that water samples be taken to ensure that Legionella is not present in the system.

Members noted that in the meantime, the changing rooms have remained open for use by the Cricket Club at the weekends, but the water services to the changing rooms and wc have been turned off.

During the week, these areas have been locked, but the twice weekly water flushing regime has continued.

The Committee had been requested to note the above and to consider a course of action with regard to the ongoing issues with the plumbing system at the Pavilion.

The Clerk reported that the results of the water sampling have now been received and that Legionella was not detected.

Cllr Ramsay asked whether the plans of the plumbing system at the Pavilion were available, as he would like to view them.

**RESOLVED:** That, (1) the results of the recent water sampling, testing for Legionella, be noted with no further action required, as Legionella was not detected;

(2) the showers, hand basins and toilets at the entrance end of the Pavilion, be re-opened for use with immediate effect; (3) the Clerk be requested to provide Cllr Ramsay with the plans of the plumbing system at the Pavilion and, (4) further consideration of the ongoing issues with the plumbing system be deferred until the planned review has taken place.

(iii) The Committee considered arrangements for the maintenance of the showers at the end of the cricket season and during the winter months.

Members noted the advice received from the Parish Council's water hygiene contractor last year and agreed that the same arrangements should be put in place this year. The Committee was satisfied that it would comply with the Parish Council's

water hygiene responsibilities and be the safest and most cost effective option.  
**RECOMMENDED:** That, 1) arrangements be made for the calorifier 1 (located in the boiler room) and the cold water tank (located in the loft space above the entrance corridor) to be left full and the water supply to the sink toilets and showers turned off, using the isolation valves; 2) the changing room showers/hand wash basins and toilets be taken out of use for the winter and the water temperature monitoring and flushing in these areas be discontinued during this time; 3) arrangements be made for the doors to the wc and home and away changing rooms to be locked and notices placed on the doors stating the following: “Notice – To all Pavilion users. Please do not enter or turn on any water services”; 4) monthly water temperature monitoring and weekly flushing of the outlets at the mains fed end of the building be continued throughout the winter and, 5) as recommended by the Council’s water hygiene contractor, arrangements be made for the disinfection of the water tank, calorifier 1 and associated pipework and for two Legionella samples to be taken 48 – 72 hours afterwards, approximately 3-4 weeks before the start of the cricket season.

## **10. Playgrounds**

### **(a) Annual Inspection Report**

The Committee considered the Annual Inspection Report dated 21<sup>st</sup> July 2025, received from the Parish Council’s Playground Inspector.

The Committee noted that Longfield Hill had been rated as “medium risk” and that Woodland Avenue and Chantry Avenue had been rated as “low risk”.

The Clerk reminded Members that the report advised that, the medium risk rating items contained in the report “*may continue in use. Action required as indicated on the report will be necessary within 3-6 months, as finance allows*”.

The Committee noted that the following item had been highlighted as a “medium risk” item in the annual inspection report:

#### **Longfield Hill**

- Site General – Close to the entrance of the play area, the railway fence fixings have been cut through and removed, there is access on to the railway track area with a large drop off/cliff present – Carry out repair to the damaged unit, replace fixings

The Clerk reported that she had contacted Network Rail on the day that the inspection report had been received and that they had sent out a contractor to carry out the necessary repairs, which were subsequently completed.

**RESOLVED:** That, the Clerk’s report be noted.

Members were reminded that the report advised that, the very low/low risk rating items contained in the report “*may continue in use. Action may be required, but monitoring should be undertaken. The necessary action will be indicated on the report where appropriate*”.

The Committee agreed that as these items are monitored by the Playground Inspector during the quarterly playground inspections, they should not be



replaced/repared until such time as the Playground Inspector considers necessary, or they become medium risk items.

The Clerk reported that a number of the low risk items indicated action to be taken and that where possible, she had asked the Council's Routine Maintenance Contractor to take the required action:

#### Longfield Hill

- Bench – There are loose fixings – tighten loose fixings
- Fence – The post is loose in the ground – re-secure
- Fence – There is a loose slat – replace missing fixing
- Swing – Junior – There are loose seat hanger fixings – Tighten loose fixings
- Trim Trail – timber – There are loose post fixings on five posts – Tighten loose fixings
- Trim Trail – timber – There is a missing fixing cap – Install cap

#### Chantry Avenue

- Surface grass – There is a trip hazard – infill with soil and seed area
- Gate – Metal – The item is noisy in operation – Item requires lubricating
- Multi Play – Toddler – There are loose fixings – Tighten loose fixings
- Swing – Junior – There is a protruding fence fixing – Cut off the protruding fixing where necessary
- Swing – Toddler – The seat is not hung level – Adjust seat chains as required
- Trim Trail – The grab handles are twisted showing accessible edges that are not rounded to the minimum required radius of 3mm – Relocate grab handles

#### Woodland Avenue

- Site General – Trees are overhanging into the area and over the equipment – Remove the weeds/vegetation
- (Unfenced) Bench – Weeds and vegetation growth present over the unit – Remove the weeds/vegetation
- (Unfenced) Goal end1 (Play area side) – There are protruding sharps – remove protruding/sharps
- There are loose cross bar fixings – Tighten loose fixings
- Teenage Shelter – There is a trip hazard – Adapt the area of the trip hazard to remove the risk
- Multi play Junior – There are missing fixing caps – Install caps
- Roundabout – There is a missing fixing cap – Install cap
- Spring Rocker Chair – There are missing fixing caps – Install caps
- Swing – Combination – There are missing fixing caps – Install caps
- Trim Trail – There are missing fixing caps – Install caps

RESOLVED: That, the “very low risk” and “low risk” items identified in the Annual Inspection Report be noted, with no further action to be taken at the present time, other than the items detailed above, to be actioned where possible by the Council's Routine Maintenance Contractor.

Members noted that the report had highlighted that the metal fence surrounding the play area at Woodland Avenue had a loose post in the ground.

Upon further inspection, Members of the Committee noted that there were 2 loose posts.

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk be requested to contact the contractor that had installed the fencing to ask for the posts in question to be secured.

The Clerk reported that the report had highlighted a number of low risk items with metal corrosion present.

The report recommends the following action:

- Investigate cause of corrosion and take appropriate remedial actions to ensure item is safe for use, including removal of corrosion and painting of area where appropriate

Members noted that the items concerned are as follows:

Chantry Avenue

- Goal - end 1 (Basketball post side)
- Goal - end 2
- Roundabout
- Swing – Junior
- Swing – Toddler

Woodland Avenue

- (Unfenced) Goal end 1 (Play area side)
- (Unfenced) Goal end 2 (Kick wall side)
- (Unfenced) Kick wall metal

RESOLVED: That,  
a quotation be sought from the Parish Council's Routine Maintenance Contractor to remove the corrosion and repaint the items detailed above.

(b) Woodland Avenue Recreation Ground

(i) Prior to the meeting, the Clerk and Members of the Committee carried out a site visit to Woodland Avenue recreation ground.

It was noted that the vegetation around the edge of the recreation ground was encroaching into the play area and the unfenced area around the youth shelter and bench.

It was agreed that the whole perimeter (not the road side), would benefit from being cut back by 6ft.

RESOLVED: That, quotations be sought for the vegetation around the perimeter of the recreation ground (excluding the roadside edge), to be cut back by 6 ft, to be considered at the next meeting.

(ii) The Clerk reported that the cradle swing seat had been damaged beyond repair and had been removed from site.

Quotations were sought and the Clerk made arrangements for a replacement swing seat to be purchased at a total cost of £125.10.

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk's actions of making arrangements for a replacement swing seat to be purchased at a total cost of £125.10, be confirmed.

## **11. Manor Field**

### Weed & Moss Control

At the meeting of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee held on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2025, the Committee considered a programme of works to the ground at Manor Field for 2025 and it was agreed that a quotation to apply Fertilizer & moss control (March & September) and Fertilizer and weed control (June), to Manor Field, be accepted.

The quotation was accepted, but the contractor contacted the Parish too late for the work to be carried out in March and June.

In view of this, the Committee is requested to consider whether it wishes to proceed with the September treatment.

RESOLVED: That, arrangements be made for the September treatment to be carried out.

## **12. Martyn's Law**

The Committee considered an Advice Note received from NALC entitled "Preparing for the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025.

RESOLVED: That, the Advice Note received from NALC entitled "Preparing for the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, be noted.

## **13. Date of next meeting**

Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2025 at 10.00a.m. at Hartley Library.

The meeting closed at 7.19p.m.

Signed:..... Date:.....

Chairman of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee



