

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF HARTLEY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HARTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

HELD IN THE PAVILION, MANOR FIELD, CHURCH ROAD

8th SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 7.30 P.M.

Present :

Cllr Larry Abraham
Cllr Penny Cole
Cllr Perry Cole
Cllr Jim Colwell
Cllr David Conroy
Cllr Lesley Driscoll
Cllr Laurence Glander – (*Chairman*)
Cllr Anne Oxtoby
Cllr Brian Ramsay
Cllr Vincent Sewell

In attendance:

Mrs Helen Boden - (*Clerk*)
Cllr Maxine Fothergill – (*Kent County Councillor*) - Arrived at 7.39p.m.
Cllr Shaun Fishenden – (*Chairman of Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council*)
Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr David Graeme due to family commitments, Cllr Mally Malham due to family commitments and Cllr Ian Ross due to family commitments.

RESOLVED: That, the absences of Cllr David Graham due to family commitments, Cllr Mally Malham due to family commitments and Cllr Ian Ross due to family commitments, be accepted and approved.

2. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Dispensations

There were no requests from Members for a dispensation.

4. Minutes

RESOLVED: That, the minutes of the meeting of Hartley Parish Council held on 14th July 2025, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The meeting was adjourned at 7.31 p.m. to receive reports from the District and County Councillors.

The meeting resumed at 7.51 p.m.

Pursuant to Standing Order 3 (e) the Chairman of the Council invited members of the public present to express an interest if they wished to make representations, answer questions or give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda.

The Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group expressed an interest in making representations answering questions or giving evidence in respect of agenda item 9. Neighbourhood Plan.

5. Amenities & Open Spaces Committee

RESOLVED: That,

the minutes of the meetings of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee held on 13th August 2025 and 3rd September 2025 and the recommendations contained therein, be received and, where necessary, approved and adopted.

6. Burial Grounds & Gardens of Remembrance Committee

RESOLVED: That,

the minutes of the meeting of the Burial Grounds & Gardens of Remembrance Committee held on 23rd July 2025 and the recommendations contained therein, be received and, where necessary, approved and adopted.

7. Finance & General Purposes Committee

RESOLVED: That,

the minutes of the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 30th July 2025 and the recommendations contained therein, be received and, where necessary, approved and adopted.

8. Planning Committee

RESOLVED: That,

the minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 16th July 2025, 30th July 2025, 13th August 2025 and 27th August 2025 and the recommendations contained therein, be received and, where necessary, approved and adopted.

9. Neighbourhood Plan

RESOLVED: That,

the minutes of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held on 3rd July 2025 and 13th August 2025 and the recommendations contained therein, be received and, where necessary, approved and adopted.

At the Chairman's invitation the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group addressed the Council.

The Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group reported that the formal consultation for the Sevenoaks District Council Neighbourhood Plan is planned for October/November this year.

The Chairman reported that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group strongly recommends that the Parish Council appoints a Planning Consultant to advise on the Draft Local Plan and how it impacts Hartley.

Members agreed that professional assistance would be required, to enable the Parish Council to submit a detailed response to the consultation.

Members were reminded that previously, the cost of the Planning Consultant had been shared with Fawkham Parish Council, as the 2 parishes are closely linked.

The Parish Council's Financial Regulations require the Clerk to try to obtain 2 estimates which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.

For contracts greater than £5,000 excluding VAT the Clerk shall seek at least 3 fixed-price quotes.

Members agreed that the Council had been more than satisfied with the work previously undertaken by Mr Fullwood, with regard to the Draft Local Plan and that it would be in the best interests of the Council to retain the specialist services of Tony Fullwood Associates, as doing so would ensure continuity and consistency.

RESOLVED: That,

- (1) the report received from the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group be noted;
- (2) the Clerk be requested to Contact Tony Fullwood to ask whether he would be available to advise the Council on the Draft Local Plan and to obtain a quotation for the work;
- (3) subject to the above and provided that the quotation is not too dissimilar from previously and pursuant to Financial Regulation 5.12 (i) the professional services of Tony Fullwood Associates be retained, to assist the Council with its response to Sevenoaks District Council's "Regulation 18" Consultation, in view of the special circumstances outlined above;
- (4) the Clerk be requested to contact Fawkham Parish Council to ask whether they would be prepared to share the cost of the services of the Planning Consultant as previously and,
- (5) the total cost of the above be met from the Parish Council's general reserves.

10. Sevenoaks District Council – Land Disposal

At the meeting of the Parish Council held on 9th June 2025, Members considered an email received from Sevenoaks District Council, advising of its intention to dispose of several parcels of land located within the Parish, currently owned by the District Council.

The Clerk was requested to respond to Sevenoaks District Council to express the Council's concern about the possibility of the plots being sold off and to request that the green spaces should remain in the District Council's ownership and continue to be maintained by them.

In addition, the Clerk was requested to contact Sevenoaks District Council to query ownership of one of the parcels of land and to seek confirmation that no action would be taken in respect of the disposal of the land, until ownership has been confirmed.

At the Council meeting held of 14th July 2025, the Clerk reported that no response had been received from the District Council and Cllr Perry Cole agreed to query the lack of response at the SDC Cabinet meeting to be held on 15th July.

The Clerk reported that on 18th July, an email was received from the District Council advising that the proposals had been presented to Cabinet that week and that they were awaiting further instruction of what is next and would be in contact when they know more.

Members noted that no further response had been received.

The Clerk sent an email on 4th September, requesting a site visit and the following response was received:

“While we appreciate the changes that may occur as a result of this disposal, the Parish council will have the option to purchase this land if it reaches the final disposal stage.

At which point Sevenoaks District Council, will be working with the parish council to mitigate security and other concerns”.

Cllr Perry Cole reported that the paper on all disposals goes to Cabinet on 18th September for a decision.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the above reports be noted and,

(2) the Clerk be requested to write to both the Leader and the Chief Executive of Sevenoaks District Council, (a) to express the Parish

Council’s concerns and to reiterate the Council’s request that a site meeting be arranged before the Cabinet meeting to establish the boundary of the land north of the recreation area at the junction of Caxton Close and Woodland Avenue and (b) to advise that the land has been maintained, fenced and secured by the Parish Council for in excess of 20 years and is an important piece of amenity land, also actively used by SDC for Family Fun Days and by Millwall FC for regular football sessions and to request that no further action is taken to dispose of the land until a meeting has been held and clarification been obtained

Cllr Fothergill left the meeting at 8.48p.m.

11. Parish Office

(a) Computers

At the meeting of the Parish Council held on 14th July 2025, it was suggested that further information be sought from the Council’s IT provider with regard to using Cloud backups.

The Clerk reported that with some adjustments and archiving, the Council’s Cloud backup requirements would cost approx £5.20 per month inc vat.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the Clerk’s report be noted and,

(2) the Council's IT provider be requested to make the necessary arrangements to enable the Council to use Cloud backups at a cost of approx. £5.20 (inc VAT) per month, in addition to the current backup arrangements.

(b) Air Conditioning Unit

The Clerk reported that during the recent period of hot weather, it had been discovered that the portable air conditioning unit located in the Parish Office no longer works.

The Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the Council, made arrangements for the purchase of a new air conditioning unit at a cost of £299.17 + VAT.

RESOLVED: That,

- (1) the Clerk's report be noted and,
- (2) the Clerk's actions, in consultation with the Chairman of the Council, of making arrangements for the purchase of a new air conditioning unit at a cost of £299.17 + VAT, be confirmed and approved.

12. Parish Office Lease

At the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 7th May 2025, it was recommended that enquiries be made with Kent County Council and the Parish Council's Solicitor, with regard to arrangements for renewing the lease on the Parish Office, which is due to expire on 31st March 2026.

The Clerk reported that she had contacted KCC and was awaiting a further update.

The Clerk advised that she would continue to pursue the matter.

RESOLVED: That,

- (1) the Clerk's report be noted and,
- (2) the matter continue to be pursued with KCC.

13. Website

(a) Accessibility Statement

Members reviewed the Council's Website Accessibility Statement and were satisfied that it met the Council's requirements.

The Clerk reported that the website provider would shortly be carrying out a digital "MOT" of the website and that any updates required to the current Accessibility Statement would be highlighted during this process.

RESOLVED: That,

the Parish Council's Website Accessibility Statement, be confirmed and approved.

(b) AGAR – Assertion 10: Digital & Data Compliance

The Clerk reported that in order to ensure that the Parish Council's website meets the requirements of WCAG 2.2 AA, arrangements have been made for the Council's website provider to conduct a digital "MOT" at a cost of £145.00 + VAT.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the Clerk's actions of arranging for the Council's website provider to conduct a digital "MOT" at a cost of £145.00 + VAT, be confirmed and approved and,

(2) the total cost be met from the Council's general reserves.

14. Payments

RESOLVED: That,

(a) the payment of accounts for September 2025, attached as **Appendix 1** to these minutes, be approved.

(b) the Council detail report as at 3rd September 2025, setting out actual income and expenditure against budgeted estimates be received and noted.

(c) it be noted that the bank reconciliations for the Council's four bank accounts for June 2025 had been verified by Cllr Graham and,

(d) it be noted that the bank reconciliations for the four bank accounts for July & August 2025 would be verified by Cllr Glander.

Pursuant to Standing Order 3 (d), the public were excluded from the meeting during consideration of agenda items 15, Personnel Committee, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted relating to staff matters and agenda item 16, Community Warden Service Review – Draft Agreement, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

15. Personnel Committee

RESOLVED: That,

the minutes of the meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 27th August 2025 and the recommendations contained therein, be received and, where necessary, approved and adopted.

16. Community Warden Service Review – Draft Agreement

At the meeting of the Parish Council held on 14th July 2025, it had been agreed that one Solicitor be appointed to review the draft agreement and that the cost be split between Hartley and Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council.

Members considered the draft agreement and noted the comments received from the Solicitor.

The Clerk reported that although the revised agreement had addressed a number of the Council's previous concerns, there was still some clarification required.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the remaining concerns raised by the Council be submitted to Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council, to be referred to the Solicitor for their advice/clarification;

(2) the matter be deferred until the next meeting, pending a response from the Solicitor and,

(3) the total cost of Hartley Parish Council's share of the Solicitor's costs, be met from the Council's general reserves.

The meeting closed at 9.10p.m.

Signed:..... Date:..... Chairman of
Hartley Parish Council

APPENDIX 1

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Schedule of Payments September 2025 - Paid by Internet Banking/DDR from Unity Trust Bank					
Ref:	Payment to	Particulars	Net	VAT	Total
DDR		PAID - Account charges 01/06/25-30/06/25	11.25	-	11.25
552031226		PAID 18/07/25 - Payment of July statement	122.92	-	122.92
469641537		PAID 25/07/25 - Chgs 01/07-30/09	205.26	41.05	246.31
26837986		PAID 25/07/25 - Supply & install new tap @ pavilion inv 1507	190.00	38.00	228.00
212090817		PAID 05/08/25 - Make safe 2 storm damaged trees MF inv 3011	80.00	16.00	-
		PAID 05/08/25 - Dismantle 2 no trees Gorse Wood inv 3010	1,300.00	260.00	1,656.00
427990548		PAID - 05/08/25 - Annual playground inspection inv 30778	585.00	117.00	702.00
598175493		PAID 05/08/25 - LP water sampling @ pav inv 76203	99.00	19.80	118.80
673781653		PAID 05/08/25 - Cradle swing re W/Ave inv 61676	104.25	20.85	125.10
248782182		PAID 05/08/25 - Grounds maint @ BG inv 3879	594.16	118.83	-
		PAID 05/08/25 - Grounds maint @ BG inv 3853	594.16	118.83	1,425.98
525384180		PAID 05/08/25 - Rectified hot tap issue @ Pavilion inv 757	60.00	-	60.00
51397930		PAID 14/08/25 - AGAR Assertion 10 training inv INV-1400	15.00	3.00	18.00
363862800		PAID 14/08/25 - Supply & delivery of 30 x garden sacks inv 2099270	660.00	-	660.00
200249359		PAID 14/08/25 - Cleaning @ Pavilion inv 5857	278.66	-	278.66
956670524		PAID 14/08/25 - Grounds maint@ MF Apr-Jun inv LS213861	4,165.00	833.00	4,998.00
183611847		PAID 14/08/25 - Standing charge inv 93771554	19.61	0.98	20.59
643680182		PAID 14/08/25 - Avast Antivirus 3 years inv 223779	96.78	19.36	116.14
338624252		PAID 14/08/25 - Routine maintenance contract inv 192	727.50	-	727.50
90452396		PAID 14/08/25 - Water at Pavilion 01/07-31/07	52.92	-	-
		PAID 14/08/25 - Water at allotments 01/07-31/07	185.78	-	238.70
221786507		PAID 14/08/25 - Payment of August statement	72.24	-	72.24
214376269		PAID 29/07/25 - Repairs @ pavilion inv 765	70.00	-	70.00
4876028226		PAID 29/08/25 - Water hygiene contract @ pavilion inv 76532	175.00	35.00	210.00
466426600		PAID 04/09/25 - Hire of toilet re fun day 12/08/25 inv 2922	85.00	17.00	102.00
642107881		Annual contribution	2,000.00	-	2,000.00
		Nuts & bolts of Parish Councils course D Conroy inv 13004623853	50.00	10.00	60.00
		Hand towels & stationery inv 128607	23.15	4.63	-
		Stationery inv 125481	62.37	12.47	-
		Hand towels & black refuse sacks inv 132167	30.94	6.19	139.75
109857109		Print September newsletter inv SI-27473	286.00	-	286.00

APPENDIX 1

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556719235	Reconfigure printer inv 223678	41.67	8.33	50.00
DDR	Account charges 01/07/25 - 31/07/25	11.10	-	11.10
530111736	Salary 01/09/25 - 30/09/25 (previously approved) + backdated salary 01/04/25-31/08/25	2,903.65	-	2,903.65
879638749	Salary 01/09/25 - 30/09/25 (previously approved) + backdated salary 01/04/25 - 31/08/25	1,898.21	-	1,898.21
747171888	Salary 01/09/25 - 30/09/25 (previously approved) + backdated salary 01/04/25 - 31/08/02	1,158.25	-	1,158.25
184298373	Month 6 Employer & Employee NIC & PAYE	3,162.15		3,162.15
698419528	Employer & Employee pension contributions September	2,316.06	-	2,316.06
34461033	Routine maintenance 11/08-01/09 inv 190	634.00	-	-
	Water flushing @ Pavilion 11/08-01/09 inv 190	58.50	-	-
	Burial Ground clearance inv 190	19.50	-	712.00
444010301	Grass cutting Inv 3914	594.16	118.83	712.99
972844763	Cesspit emptying 4000 gallons 28/08 inv 1522085	398.00	79.60	477.60
717472490	12 weeks of football sessions @ W/Ave Inv 2291 1st insrallment	768.00	-	768.00
259898393	Clean pavilion August inv 5901	308.66	-	308.66
		11,315.49	198.43	11,513.92

Ref:	Payment to	Particulars	Net	VAT	Total
		PAID 25/07/25 - 4 x squire locks	55.78	11.16	66.94
		PAID 26/07/25 - Portable fan re Parish Office	9.99	2.00	11.99
		PAID 01/08/25 - 3 x signed for 2nd class letters	8.31	-	8.31
		PAID 13/08/25 - Air conditioning unit re Parish Office	299.17	59.83	359.00
		PAID 13/08/25 - Postage	12.10	-	12.10
		PAID 22/08/25 - Title plan	24.00	-	24.00
			409.35	72.99	482.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7.31 p.m.

Cllr Perry Cole reported on the timeline for the Local Government Reorganisation.

Cllr Perry Cole reported that a decision on Sevenoaks District Council's disposal of assets, would be made on 18th September 2025.

Cllr Perry Cole reported that the District Councillors were due to be briefed on the sites in Hartley that would form part of the SDC Local Plan consultation.

Details of the proposed sites would be released to the public on 16th September.

Cllr Perry Cole reported that he had recently assisted a local resident with the clearance of the foot tunnel at the bottom of Gorse Wood Road and informed Members that the resident has some ideas that they would like to be referred to the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee.

Cllr Fothergill reported that she had been busy with home/school transport appeals.

Cllr Fothergill reported that she had recently attended a Reform Party Conference and that a decision had been made to contact all large Solar Farms, to advise that all grant subsidies would be taken away should the Party get in to power.

Cllr Fothergill reported that she would be writing to all of the local Solar Farm operators and landowners as per the above.

The meeting resumed at 7.51 p.m.

