

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF HARTLEY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HARTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

HELD IN THE PAVILION, MANOR FIELD, CHURCH ROAD

ON MONDAY 9th MARCH 2026 AT 7.30 P.M.

Present :

Cllr Larry Abraham - *(Parish & District Councillor)*
Cllr Penny Cole - *(Parish & District Councillor)*
Cllr Perry Cole - *(Parish & District Councillor)*
Cllr Jim Colwell
Cllr David Conroy
Cllr Carl Crane
Cllr Lesley Driscoll
Cllr Laurence Glander – *(Chairman)*
Cllr Anne Oxtoby
Cllr Brian Ramsay
Cllr Vincent Sewell

In attendance:

Mrs Jane Tyrell - *(Assistant Clerk)*
Cllr Maxine Fothergill – *(Kent County Councillor)*
Cllr Shaun Fishenden – *(Chairman of Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council)*
2 members of the public

1. Apologies for Absence

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

RESOLVED: That,

the absences of Cllr David Graeme due to family commitments and Cllr Ian Ross, due to family commitments, be accepted and approved.

2. Declarations of interest

Cllr Glander declared an interest under agenda item 17 (a), Payments, as he was the recipient of one of the payments.

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 9th February 2026, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

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

The meeting resumed at 7.55p.m.

5. Co-option to the Council

The Council considered 2 applications from residents to be co-opted as a Hartley Parish Councillor.

RESOLVED: That,

Mr Carl Crane be co-opted as a Parish Councillor to Hartley Parish Council.

6. Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Mr Carl Crane signed his declaration of acceptance of office, which was duly delivered to the Council.

7. Membership of Committees

RESOLVED: That,

(1) Cllr Crane be appointed to the Hartley Village Hall Management Committee;

(2) Cllr Abraham be removed as a member of the Burial Grounds & Gardens of Remembrance Committee and,

(3) Cllr Ramsay be removed as a member of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee.

8. Amenities & Open Spaces Committee

Cllr Oxtoby asked a question in relation to the recommendation contained on page 10 of the minutes of the meeting of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee held on 18th February 2026, minute item 12 (2).

The recommendation was not clear as to whether VAT was included in the cost stated for the grass cutting at the Council's recreation grounds at Manor Field and Longfield Hill, as specified in Contract 3 for the period 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2027.

It was agreed that the Assistant Clerk would clarify this after the meeting but that the recommendation be approved and adopted, assuming that the sum stated was + VAT.

RESOLVED: That,

the minutes of the meeting of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee held on 18th February 2026 and the recommendations contained therein, be received and, where necessary, approved and adopted.

9. Burial Grounds & Gardens of Remembrance Committee

RESOLVED: That,

the minutes of the meeting of the Burial Grounds & Gardens of Remembrance Committee held on 25th February 2026 and the recommendations contained therein, be received and, where necessary, approved and adopted.

10. Planning Committee

RESOLVED: That,

the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 18th February 2026 and the recommendations contained therein, be received and, where necessary, approved and adopted.

11. Northfield Management Committee

The Assistant Clerk reported that the minutes of the meeting of the Northfield Management Committee held on 4th March 2026 were not yet available.

12. Neighbourhood Plan

(a) Cllr Conroy reported that the proposed consultation with residents had been delayed due to queries submitted by Sevenoaks District Council and that a new timetable was being developed by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the above report be noted and, (2) the minutes of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held on 4th March 2026 and the recommendations contained therein, be received and, where necessary, approved and adopted.

(b) The Chairman reported that the Government Grant funding for the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan has now ceased and that any further expenditure will need to be met from the Neighbourhood Plan Earmarked Reserve, which currently stands at £20,376.59.

Members noted that a consultation leaflet has been prepared by the Steering Group, to be delivered to every household in the parish and that the cost of printing and distribution would be met from the Earmarked Reserve.

The Assistant Clerk reported that an invoice had been received from the Village Advertiser for the sum of £167.60 + VAT for the distribution of the leaflet, but that there would be additional delivery costs.

It was agreed that the cost of the photocopier paper and print copies should also be met from the Earmarked Reserve.

Cllr Conroy reported that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group would be holding “walk-in” sessions during the first week of May, for residents to attend, to ask any questions that they may have regarding the Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Colwell reported that the Steering Group had suggested the erection of banners to advertise the consultation and “walk in” sessions and Members noted that the cost of these would need to be met from the Earmarked Reserve.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the above reports be noted; (2) the spending to date from the Neighbourhood Plan Earmarked Reserve be noted and approved; (3) the total cost of the production and delivery of the consultation leaflet, be met from the Neighbourhood Plan Earmarked Reserve and, (4) the sum of up to £500 + VAT, be authorised for the production of 4 no banners and the total cost met from the Neighbourhood Plan Earmarked Reserve.

(c) Members considered a letter dated 16th February 2026, received from the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

Members noted that the Steering Group had identified parcels of land in the parish that it considered should be recognised as “Local Green Spaces” in the Plan.

Members noted that letters had been sent to all of the relevant land owners (including the Parish Council) asking for comments prior to the official consultation leaflet going out.

Cllr Fishenden commented on the fact that a letter relating to the land at Northfield had been sent to the New Ash Green Village Association (NAGVA) and expressed concern that Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council had not been notified at the same time.

Cllr Glander explained that the letter had been sent to the NAGVA as the landowner.

The letters had been issued as a courtesy to land owners to notify them of the proposals in advance of the official consultation.

Cllr Fishenden commented on the fact that he considered that the Steering Committee should not have delegated authority to act on behalf of the Parish Council.

The Chairman responded that the Steering Group has full delegated authority from the Parish Council to deliver its plan-making functions **up to and including** publication of the Consultation Draft Plan and that the Parish Council **retains the responsibility for approving the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan prior to publication for consultation and independent examination.**

Cllr Conroy suggested that it be stated in all future correspondence, that it is from the Parish Council, not the Steering Group.

Cllr Glander reported that there had been several objections from land owners regarding the proposed designation of their land as a Local Green Space.
RESOLVED: That, (1) the letter dated 16th February 2026, received from the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group be noted and delegated authority be given to the Planning Committee to respond on behalf of the Parish Council and, (2) to avoid any confusion, it be made clear on all future correspondence/consultations, that it has been issued by the Steering Group, on behalf of the Parish Council.

13. Parish Office – Lease

The Assistant Clerk reported that there was no update and that the draft lease is still awaited from the County Council’s Solicitor.

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

14. Speed Indicator Device

Members considered a report dated March 2026, received from Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council, regarding the shared Speed Indicator Device (SID).

Members noted that Ash-cum-Ridley had requested that a formal agreement be put in place with regard to moving the SID between the two parishes.

Cllr Colwell reported that he had made some modifications to the camera, allowing it to use solar power and that this had meant that the SID had not been moved as often as it should have.

Cllr Colwell reported that the SID is difficult to move, due to its weight.

Members agreed that the Parish Council could not agree to take sole responsibility for moving the SID between Hartley and New Ash Green on a regular basis, as it does not have the manpower to facilitate this.

Currently Cllrs Colwell and Glander have been moving the camera, but understandably, they could not guarantee that this would always be the case, nor that they would be able to do this as regularly as required.

Members agreed that a joint agreement should be in place, but that the two Parish Councils should have joint responsibility for moving it.

RESOLVED: That, a meeting be arranged with both Ash-cum-Ridley and Hartley Parish Councils, to discuss the matter further.

15. Manor Field

At the meeting of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee held on 17th December 2026, it was recommended that a quotation received from Weed Management for the applications of fertilizer and Sulphate of Iron (March), Fertilizer and Herbicide (June) and Fertilizer and Sulphate of Iron (September) to Manor Field, be accepted.

This recommendation was ratified by the Council at its meeting held on 12th January 2026.

Copies of the contractors Public Liability insurance, Method Statements, Risk Assessment and COSHH certificates have been obtained and circulated to Members.

Members noted that the contractor will erect signage whilst the treatments are being applied and will only remove them when safe to do so.

As an additional precaution, signage will be erected at the entrances to Manor Field, prior to the work taking place, advising of the date that the applications will be carried out and that the area should be avoided whilst spraying is in progress.

The contractor has been instructed to observe a two meter buffer strip, measured from the centre of the hedgerow on the northern boundary of Manor Field, in order to comply with the current hedgerow regulations.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the above report be noted; (2) the Parish Council is satisfied with the Method Statement received from the Contractor; (3) the Parish Council is satisfied with the Risk Assessments received from the Contractor; (4) the Parish Council is satisfied with the COSHH assessments relating to the applications, received from the Contractor, (5) the locations of the signage to be erected at the entrances to Manor Field, be approved and, (6) the current hedgerow regulations and confirmation received from the contractor that the regulations will be adhered to, be noted.

16. Insurance

(a) Members noted that the Parish Council's insurance policy falls due for renewal on 1st June 2026 and that the current long term agreement is due to expire in May 2026.

(b) Members considered the insurance Pre Renewal Questionnaire which had been completed by the Clerk.

RESOLVED: That, the Pre Renewal Questionnaire completed by the Clerk be approved and submitted to the Council's insurer.

17. Payments

RESOLVED: That,

(a) the payment of accounts for March 2026, attached as **Appendix 1** to these minutes, be approved;

(b) the Council detail report as at 3rd March 2026, 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 January 2026 had been verified by Cllr Conroy and,

(d) it be noted that the bank reconciliations for the four bank accounts for February 2026 would be verified by Cllr Oxtoby.

Pursuant to Standing Order 3 (d), the public were excluded from the meeting during consideration of agenda item 18. Sevenoaks District Council – Land Disposal and agenda item 19, Staffing/Structural Review, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

18. Sevenoaks District Council – Land Disposal

The Assistant Clerk reported that there had been no further updates.

19. Staffing/Structural Review

(a) Members considered 3 quotations for an organisational review to be undertaken.

RESOLVED: That, the quotation received from Council HR & Governance Support for the sum of £3,945 + VAT, be accepted and that the total cost be met from the Parish Council's general reserves.

(b) At the meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 4th February 2026, it was recommended that the quotation received from Worknest for Legal Expenses insurance cover for 1 year be accepted.

The Clerk had contacted the Council's insurers to enquire as to whether this cover was included under the Council's insurance policy, but this information had not been available to the Council when considering the quotation.

Members considered an email dated 20th February 2026, received from the Council's insurers, advising that the legal cover included in the policy will provide cover for employment disputes.

In light of this, Members agreed that the cover from Worknest would not be required.

RESOLVED: That, pursuant to Standing Order 7 (a), the resolution made by the Council on 9th February 2026, to accept the quotation received from Worknest for Legal Expenses insurance cover for 1 year be reversed.

The meeting closed at 9.20p.m.

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

Schedule of Payments March 2026 - Paid by Internet Banking/DDR from Unity Trust Bank					
Ref:	Payment to	Particulars	Net	VAT	Total
64878461		PAID 12/02/26 - Payment of February statement	314.80	-	314.80
827946802		PAID 12/02/26 - Supply & fit new noticeboard @ Hoselands Green inv 11	364.00	-	364.00
343746498		PAID 12/02/26 Grounds maintenance @ BG inv 4033	594.16	118.83	712.99
972821683		PAID 12/02/26 - Quarterly grounds maintenance Pct - Dec inv LS215089	2,702.56	540.51	3,243.07
84802603		PAID 19/02/26 - Cleaning of pavilion & water temp testing. Inv 6113	158.66	-	158.66
440516990		PAID 19/02/26 - Water hygiene contract @ pavilion Feb 26 inv 79985	175.00	35.00	210.00
524654170		PAID 27/02/26 - Printing of newsletter inv SI-28934	286.00	-	286.00
454436680		PAID 27/02/26 - Cesspit emptying 06/02/26 inv 1525660	199.00	39.80	238.80
451925319		PAID 27/02/26 - Delivery of newsletter inv 5936	90.00	-	90.00
797171808		Salary 01/03/26 - 31/03/26 (previously approved)	2,545.90	-	2,545.90
48943465		Salary 01/03/26 - 31/03/26 (previously approved)	1,681.37	-	1,681.37
361582485		Salary 01/03/26 - 02/04/26 (previously approved)	1,386.53	-	1,386.53
460715876		Month 12 Employer & Employee NIC & PAYE	2,728.01	-	2,728.01
		Employer & Employee pension contributions March	2,117.44	-	2,117.44
281603642		Routine maintenance contract w/c 09/02/26-02/02/26 inv 200	1,450.00	-	-
		Repair pot holes at MF car park inv 200	46.50	-	1,496.50
31529956		Stationery inv 203404	28.88	5.78	34.66
959634813		Travel allowance 05/02/26 - Burial Ground course 35 miles @ 45p	15.75	-	15.75
642450700		Supply & installation of lift assist bollard @ MF inv 11402	1,115.00	223.00	1,338.00
414878726		Grounds maintenance Inv 4053	594.16	118.83	712.99
498225406		Garden waste sacks x 30 inv 2101501	660.00	-	660.00
119095004		Clean pavilion & water temp testing Feb inv 6157	158.66	-	158.66
66658716		Payment of March statement	242.65	-	242.65
928183277		Crown lift all trees at entrance to Manor Field inv 3353	400.00	80.00	480.00
697157790		Repair of loose slabs in Old Garden of Remembrance Inv1490	128.00	25.60	153.60
639421648		Repairs to fire door at Pavilion and repairs to holes noted in fire inspection in referees changing room inv 1491	75.00	15.00	90.00
			20,258.03	1,202.35	21,460.38

Schedule of Payments March 2026 - Paid by cheque/DDR from Barclays Bank					
Chq No	Payment to	Particulars	Net	VAT	Total
DDR		Mixed Payment Plan charges 13/01/26 - 12/02/26	9.81	-	9.81
DDR		Electricity @ Pavilion 23/11/25-22/02/26	74.59	12.23	86.82
107077		Top up Unity Bank to £120,000	65,000.00	-	65,000.00
			65,084.40	12.23	65,096.63

Schedule of Payments March 2026 - Paid by Barclaycard					
Ref:	Payment to	Particulars	Net	VAT	Total
		PAID 10/02/26 - First aid wipes re pavilion	4.12	0.83	4.95
		PAID 26/02/26 - Legionella water temperature testing kit HVH	169.50	33.90	203.40
		PAID 23/02/26 - Dell keyboard re PO	16.98	3.40	20.38
		PAID 13/02/26 - Stamps	13.92	-	13.92
			204.52	38.13	242.65

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7.31 p.m.

Cllr Fothergill reported that Kent County Council Budget had now been approved, with a 3.99% increase, but that she had concerns with regard to the deficit in the Social Services budget.

Cllr Fothergill also raised concern over the lack of funding in the budget to support the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and urged the Parish Council to encourage residents to respond to the consultation.

Cllr Fothergill reported that she was now Deputy Leader of the “Restore” party, but that this would make no difference to her role within KCC.

Cllr Fothergill reported that potholes should be fixed more permanently from June (currently they have only had a temporary fix).

Cllr Penny Cole expressed concern that KCC would be using the sale of assets to finance the budget, as this was not a long term solution.

Cllr Penny Cole reported that the school site in Hextable was being sold and that she had concerns with regard to the increase in housing vs the loss of schools.

Cllr Penny Cole asked Cllr Fothergill to establish the background to the above.

Cllr Fothergill confirmed that she would raise the question about the sale of school buildings at a meeting to be held on 19th March.

Cllr Perry Cole, on behalf of Sevenoaks District Council, wished everyone a happy Commonwealth Day.

Cllr Perry Cole reported that the Sevenoaks District food waste collections would commence from 27th April 2026 and that food waste caddies would be delivered to residents between 30th March and 24th April 2026.

A roll of compostable caddy liners will also be delivered, although subsequent caddy liners will need to be purchased by residents.

Cllr Perry Cole reported that the Sevenoaks District Council budget has now been approved, with a 2.9% increase.

Cllr Perry Cole reported that two bi-elections would be taking place in Hextable and Halstead & Knockholt.

Cllr Perry Cole reported that he had been contacted by a resident regarding the lay by on Ash Road, adjacent to Milestone School. The resident has asked whether the lay by can be returned to a grass verge.

Cllr Perry Cole advised that he was looking in to this.

Cllr Perry Cole reported that a resident had been in contact regarding the possibility of installing double yellow lines outside the Post Office on Ash Road.

Members agreed that this matter should be raised with the Finance & General Purposes Committee at its next meeting.

The meeting resumed at 9.55 p.m.

