

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF HARTLEY
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HARTLEY PARISH COUNCIL
HELD IN THE PAVILION, MANOR FIELD, CHURCH ROAD
ON MONDAY 13th APRIL 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 Lesley Driscoll
Cllr Laurence Glander – *(Chairman)*
Cllr David Graeme
Cllr Anne Oxtoby
Cllr Vincent Sewell

In attendance:

Mrs Helen Boden - *(Clerk)*
Cllr Maxine Fothergill – *(Kent County Councillor)*
Cllr Shaun Fishenden – *(Chairman of Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council)*
Cllr Steven Glover – *(Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Councillor)*
PC Collins – *(Kent Police)*

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Carl Crane, due to family commitments and Cllr Brian Ramsay, due to family commitments.

RESOLVED: That,

the absences of Cllr Carl Crane, due to family commitments and Cllr Brian Ramsay, due to family commitments, be accepted and approved.

2. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Dispensations

(a) The Council considered a request from Cllr Crane to grant a dispensation in relation to the transaction of business on matters relating the Hartley Village Hall Trust.

RESOLVED: That,

pursuant to paragraph 15 of the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 10th November 2014, the request from Cllr Crane for the

Council to grant a dispensation to enable participation in discussion and voting on any matter/s relating to the Hartley Village Hall Trust until the next ordinary election in May 2027 on the grounds that, the Council is the sole trustee of the Charity, and to do otherwise would impede any business to be transacted by the Council on matters relating to the Trust, be approved.

(b) There were no further requests from Members for a dispensation.

4. Minutes

(a) RESOLVED: That,
the minutes of the meeting of Hartley Parish Council held on 9th March 2026, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

(b) RESOLVED: That,
the minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Hartley Parish Council held on 18th March 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 8.01p.m.

PC Collins and Cllr Steven Glover left the meeting.

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

There were no expressions of interest from members of the public.

5. Councillor Resignation

The Council was informed of the resignation of Cllr Ian Ross as a member of Hartley Parish Council.

RESOLVED: That, the resignation of Cllr Ian Ross, as a member of Hartley Parish Council, be received and noted.

The Clerk reported that a Notice of Vacancy had been displayed on the Parish Council's noticeboard and website on 1st April 2026.

The Clerk reported that if by 23rd April 2026 (14 days excluding Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays, after the date of the notice) a request for an election to fill the said vacancy is made in writing to the Proper Officer by TEN electors for Hartley Parish Council, an election will be held to fill the vacancy. If an election is not requested, the vacancy will be filled by co-option as soon as is practicable.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the Clerk's report be noted; (2) if by 23rd April 2026, an election is not requested, the vacant position be advertised on the Parish Council's noticeboards, the Parish Council's website, in The Hart magazine and on local social media sites, inviting eligible individuals interested in being co-opted as a parish councillor, to complete an application form and,

(3) any application forms duly received, be reported to the Council at its meeting to be held on 8th June 2026 and for the co-option process to also be carried out at that meeting.

6. Membership of Committees

The Clerk reported that the Terms of Reference of the Hartley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group state that the Steering Group will be made up of 3 Parish Councillors, one of whom shall be appointed Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Steering Group, together with up to 9 volunteers.

Members noted that Cllr Ross had been the Vice-Chairman of the Steering Group, so in view of his recent resignation, it would be necessary for one of the other Council Members to take his place.

The Clerk reported that she had reminded the Chairman of the Steering Group of this requirement.

Cllr Conroy reported that a meeting of the Steering Group was due to take place on 15th April and that the matter would be considered at the meeting.

RESOLVED: That,

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

(2) confirmation of the appointment of the new Vice-Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group be reported at the next meeting of the Council.

7. Planning Committee

RESOLVED: That,

the minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 18th March 2026 and 1st April 2026 and the recommendations contained therein, be received and, where necessary, approved and adopted.

8. Parish Office – Lease

Members considered the draft Lease and Solicitor's Lease report dated 19th March 2026, for renewing the lease on the Parish Office, which expired on 31st March 2026.

The Clerk reported that she had requested clarification from the Solicitor on a number of issues, the details of which were noted by the Council.

The Chairman reported that there would be an additional sum of £1,244 Stamp Duty Land Tax to pay, which will need to be paid to HMRC immediately following completion.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the above reports be noted; (2) the Lease Report dated 19th March 2026, received from the Parish Council's Solicitor, including the queries raised, be received and noted; (2) the Council agrees the terms of the Renewal Lease by reference to an Existing Lease, as circulated with the agenda papers and instructs the Council's Solicitor to complete the Lease on the Parish Office in Hartley Library with Kent County Council and authorises the Chairman of the Council to sign the Lease on behalf of the Council;

(3) the Chairman of the Council be authorised to sign the required declaration before completion, indicating that the Parish Council understands that the lease is excluded from the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954, which means that it will not have any entitlement to a new lease at the end of the current term; (4) the Stamp Duty Land Tax fee of £1,244, to be paid to HMRC immediately following completion, be noted and approved; (5) the total cost of the Stamp Duty Land Tax, be met from the Parish Council's general reserves and, (4) delegated authority be given to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the Parish Council, to carry out any additional actions considered necessary in order to finalise the lease.

8.12p.m. Cllr Steven Glover returned to the meeting.

9. Speed Indicator Device

The Chairman reported that a meeting had been held with the Clerks and Chairmen of Ash-cum-Ridley and Hartley Parish Councils and Cllr Jim Colwell, to discuss future arrangements for the shared speed indicator device.

Cllr Colwell reported that he had modified the pole in Hartley and attached a solar cell to increase the battery life.

At the meeting, Cllr Colwell had agreed to install a solar cell on the pole in New Ash Green and Ash-cum-Ridley had agreed to re-imburse him for the cost incurred.

The Chairman reported that Ash-cum-Ridley PC had suggested that the New Ash Green Village Association be approached to ask whether they would be able to move the camera between Hartley and New Ash Green on a 2 monthly basis.

If not, Cllr Colwell and Cllr Glander reported that they would be happy to continue moving the camera between the two locations, as and when possible.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the above report be noted; (2) arrangements for the regular re-location of the camera between the two sites be confirmed, once a response has been received from the New Ash Green Village Association; (3) Cllr Colwell be authorised to make the necessary modifications to the pole in New Ash Green, to enable the camera to run on solar power and, (4) the total cost of the modifications be met by Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council.

10. Sevenoaks District Council – Garden Waste Sacks

Members considered a letter dated 16th March 2026, received from Sevenoaks District Council, regarding an increase in the cost of garden waste sacks supplied to the Parish Council.

Members noted that with effect from Monday 13th April 2026, the price of sacks will be increasing to £24.00.

As per the agreement with Sevenoaks District Council, a bundle of sacks can be sold to the public for a maximum value of £5 over the supplier price. This means that the Parish Council can charge up to £29.00 per bundle.

The Clerk reported that a bundle of garden sacks is currently sold to residents at a cost of £25.00.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the letter dated 16th March 2026, received from Sevenoaks District Council, regarding an increase in the cost of garden waste sacks

supplied to the Parish Council, be noted and, (2) the cost of a bundle of garden sacks sold to residents, remains at £25.00.

11. Pavilion

The Clerk provided Members with an update on arrangements for the re-opening of the changing rooms at the Pavilion, for the cricket season.

At the meeting of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee held on 18th February 2026, the Committee considered arrangements for the opening of the changing rooms and wc, including arrangements to ensure the safe use of the showers.

At the end of the cricket season, arrangements had been 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.

The changing room showers/hand wash basins and toilets had been taken out of use for the winter and the water temperature monitoring and flushing in these areas was discontinued.

In view of the above and as recommended by the Council's water hygiene contractor, arrangements were made on 19th March 2026, for the disinfection of the water tank, calorifier 1 and associated pipework and for two Legionella samples to be taken 48 – 72 hours afterwards.

Members noted that during the two week wait for the results to come back, the weekly flushing of the outlets (including showers) was required to be carried out.

In order to flush the showers safely, the spray nozzle of each showerhead should be taken out and then the water should be run. If the nozzles can't be removed, the contractor would need to cover each showerhead with a large plastic bag with a hole at the bottom to allow the water to drain out of the bag preventing any spray/vapour from being created.

The routine maintenance contractor, the Clerk, Assistant Clerk and Cllr Glander had attended a training session with the water hygiene contractor on 3rd April 2025 and had been instructed on how to flush the showers and other water outlets safely.

The water hygiene contractor recommended that a plastic bottle be placed over the shower nozzle whilst flushing the showers and provided the routine maintenance contractor with the required equipment.

The Clerk had contacted the water hygiene contractor to ask whether additional face and eye protection would be required when carrying out the water flushing.

Advice had been received that a disposable P3 mask would be sufficient and that there would be no need for eye protection.

P3 masks as well as goggles, have been provided to the routine maintenance contractor along with the Council's "water flushing risk assessment" and he has been instructed to wear the mask and goggles at all times whilst carrying out the water flushing tasks.

Members were satisfied that the Council is doing everything practically possible to mitigate the risk of Legionella.

The Clerk reported that the results of the Legionella testing undertaken on 22nd March had come back as not detected.

The water hygiene contractor has confirmed that the showers/changing rooms are now safe to be opened to the public.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the above report be noted;

(2) the Cricket Club be requested to inform the Clerk as soon as possible if they do not use the showers on a particular week, so that arrangements can be made with the routine maintenance contractor for an additional flush to be carried out and,

(3) no additional action is required, as the Council is satisfied that it is doing everything practically possible to mitigate the risk of Legionella.

12. Spring Tea

Members considered an email dated 7th April 2026, received from Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council, asking whether, with parish boundaries making it difficult to identify which residents belong to which parish, and in an effort not to exclude anyone that may benefit from attending a social occasion, Hartley Parish Council would be interested in providing a donation or co-hosting a “Spring Tea” event for those residents who are on their own, or socially isolated.

Cllr Fishenden advised that Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council would be working in conjunction with the Community Warden, Jackie West, to ensure that Hartley residents would be involved with the event.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) a donation of half of the cost of the provision of the event, up to a maximum of £250, be donated by the Parish Council and,

(2) the total cost be met from the Donation budget.

13. Payments

RESOLVED: That,

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

(b) the Council detail report as at 31st 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 4 bank accounts and Barclaycard for March 2026 would be verified by Cllr David Graeme and,

(d) it be noted that the bank reconciliations for the Council’s four bank accounts and Barclaycard for February 2025 had been verified by Cllr Anne Oxtoby.

Pursuant to Standing Order 3 (d), the public were excluded from the meeting during consideration of agenda item 14, Sevenoaks District Council – Land Disposal, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

14. Sevenoaks District Council – Land Disposal

The Assistant Clerk reported that the District Council's Finance & Investment Advisory Committee had met on 8th April 2026, and that Hartley Parish Council's Community Asset Transfer application had been considered as part of the agenda.

The Clerk reported that there had been a number of concerns with regard to the report circulated at the meeting and that Cllr Penny Cole had raised the issues at an online briefing prior to the meeting, as she had been unable to attend the Committee meeting itself.

Cllr Penny Cole reported that Cabinet was due to consider the Committee's recommendations at a meeting to be held on 21st April 2026.

After some discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council should contact the Leader of Sevenoaks District Council, to address the issues discussed.

RESOLVED: That,

the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the Parish Council, be delegated authority to write to the Leader of Sevenoaks District Council, copying in the Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer, to advise them of the Parish Council's views and concerns, prior to the Cabinet meeting on 21st April.

The meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.

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

Schedule of Payments April 2026 - Paid by Internet Banking/DDR from Unity Trust Bank					
Ref:	Payment to	Particulars	Net	VAT	Total
DDR		Account charges 01/02/26 - 28/02/26	11.80	-	11.80
DDR		Account charges 01/03/26-31/03/26	13.15	-	13.15
DDR		Account charges 05/12/25-04/03/26	0.60	-	0.60
		PAID 17/03/2026 - Review of Payroll April 2025-March 2026	120.00	-	120.00
337175013		PAID 18/03/2026 - Hartley Neighbourhood Plan Reg 14 Advice	1,450.00	290.00	1,740.00
427904597		PAID 24/03/2026 - Dog bin emptying Jan-Mar inv 2101713	336.70	67.34	404.04
704329636		PAID 24/03/2026 - Clean Pav March inv 6196	158.66	-	158.66
971766283		PAID 26/03/2026 - Fertiliser & Iron MF inv 40375	518.44	103.69	622.13
		PAID 26/03/26 - Water @ Pavilion 01/01/26-28/02/26	43.33	-	43.33
937240975		PAID 26/03/2026 - Roof repairs @ Pavilion inv 371	3,270.00	654.00	3,924.00
598666333		PAID 27/03/2026 - Chlorination and water sampling inv 80721	544.00	108.80	652.80
385461981		PAID 27/03/2026 - Pitchmarker x 2 inv SI264020	72.38	14.48	86.86
65211999		PAID 30/03/2026 - Repairs at Pavilion inv 864	60.00	-	60.00
141198022		PAID 31/03/2026 - AI training inv 14549025423	40.00	8.00	48.00
715421084		Salary 01/04/26 - 30/04/26 (previously approved)	2,854.70	-	-
		Reimburse re Logmein subscription	328.44	-	3,183.14
910626081		Salary 01/04/26 - 30/04/26 (previously approved)	1,788.18	-	1,788.18
708422475		Month 1 Employer & Employee NIC & PAYE	2,285.47	-	2,285.47
651685957		Employer & Employee pension contributions April	1,667.39	-	1,667.39
189795076		Payment for delivery of N/Plan leaflets	54.00	-	54.00
118768953		Business rates re Parish Office	1,480.70	-	1,480.70
396745087		Photocopier rental 01/04/26 - 30/06/26 inv KPS448072	157.34	31.47	188.81
218317867		Annual Subscription inv 10018	2,000.00	400.00	2,400.00
880861148		Leaflet delivery re Neighbourhood Plan	167.60	33.52	201.12
252388956		Annual Subscription linv 4458/2026/27	110.00	-	110.00
			19,532.88	1,711.30	21,244.18

Schedule of Payments April 2026 - Paid by cheque/DDR from Barclays Bank					
Chq No	Payment to	Particulars	Net	VAT	Total
DDR	Barclays Bank PLC	Mixed Payment Plan charges 13/02/26 - 12/03/26	10.26	-	10.26
			10.26	-	10.26

Schedule of Payments April 2026 - Paid by Barclaycard					
Ref:	Payment to	Particulars	Net	VAT	Total
	Post Office Ltd	PAID 08/04/26 - 8 x 2nd class stamps	7.28	-	7.28
			7.28	-	7.28

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7.31 p.m.

Cllr Fothergill reported that she had contacted KCC Members and the local MP regarding the proposed Local Government Re-organisation and would keep the Council updated on further developments.

Cllr Perry Cole reported that the new waste collection service was on track and that food caddies had now been delivered or are in the process of being delivered.

Cllr Perry Cole reported that the White Oak Leisure Centre had celebrated its 4th birthday in February, and that it has received over 2 million visitors since it opened in 2022.

Cllr Perry Cole reported that a new spa is currently being built, which should take approx. 16 weeks.

Cllr Penny Cole reported that she had lobbied the Leader of the District Council regarding the Parish Council's Community Asset Transfer application.

PC Collins reported that in general, the Police receive very few calls from Hartley.

PC Collins reported that there had recently been a spate of burglaries/thefts in Hartley and the surrounding areas.

PC Collins reported that she and other Officers patrol Hartley on a regular basis.

Cllr David Graeme asked whether there was any possibility that the ANPR camera could be re-instated in Hartley.

PC Collins advised that she did not think that this would be possible, but that she would raise the matter with her Inspector.

PC Collins reported that there was still an issue with motorbikes in Hartley Wood and that this was due in part to the issue with the gate, which keeps being vandalised and is therefore not secure.

The Chairman advised that the gate is the responsibility of KCC Public Rights of Way and that the Parish Council is constantly asking them to address the security issues, to no avail.

Cllr Glover commented on the fact that a number of farms had experienced vandalism to their fencing and that there had been more motorbike activity in recent weeks.

Cllr Glover reported that there had been 2 fires in the last month and that one of the fires had caused the death of a number of sheep. Another incident had been the setting on fire of a caravan.

PC Collins asked to speak to Cllr Glover after the meeting to discuss the issues further.

The meeting resumed at 8.01p.m.

