

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
AMENITIES AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
HELD AT HARTLEY LIBRARY, ASH ROAD
ON WEDNESDAY 20th MAY 2026
AT 6.00p.m.**

Present:

Cllr David Conroy
Cllr Laurence Glander
Cllr Anne Oxtoby – (*Chairman*)
Cllr Vincent Sewell

In Attendance:

Mrs H Boden – (*Clerk*)
A representative from the New Ash Green Football Club
A representative from Hartley De Sales Football Club – (*Arrived at 6.25p.m.*)
A representative from the New Ash Green & Hartley Cricket Club
2 Members of the public

1. Election of Chairman

RESOLVED: That,
Cllr Mrs Anne Oxtoby be elected Chairman of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee until the Annual meeting of the Council in May 2027.

2. Election of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED: That,
Cllr Vincent Sewell be elected Vice-Chairman of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee until the Annual meeting of the Council in May 2027.

3. Apologies for absence

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

4. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Sewell declared an interest in minute item 12, (b), Pavilion - Charges, as he is a member of a group that hires the Pavilion and took no part in discussion or voting on the matter.

5. Minutes of previous meeting

RESOLVED: That,

the minutes of the meeting of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee held on 18th February 2026, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

6. Terms of Reference and Delegated Powers

At the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 11th May 2026, it had been suggested that it would be useful if the Committee and Advisory Committee Terms of Reference followed the same template and it was agreed that the Chairman of the Council and the Clerk would create a template to be considered by the individual Committees and Advisory Groups.

The Committee reviewed the revised Terms of Reference and Delegated Powers of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee.

RECOMMENDED: That,

the Terms of Reference and Delegated Powers of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee, as set out in **APPENDIX 1** attached to these minutes, be approved and adopted by the Council.

Pursuant to Standing Order 3 (e), the Chairman invited the 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 members of the public expressed an interest under agenda item 11 (b), Billings Hill Shaw. RESOLVED: That,

pursuant to Standing Order 10 (a) (ix), the order of business be altered so that agenda item 11 (b), Billings Hill Shaw, be brought forward.

7. Billings Hill Shaw

(a) Members had been requested to consider an update on the proposed orchard project at Billings Hill Shaw.

The Clerk reported that she was currently awaiting further information from the North West Kent Countryside Project and that she would continue to chase this.

Cllr Glander reminded Members that the success of the project would be dependent on being able to water the trees on a regular basis.

Cllr Glander suggested that the Parish Council's Routine Maintenance Contractor be contacted to ask whether he would be prepared to water the trees once planted, using a standpipe at the entrance to Billings Hill Shaw and if so, what the likely cost would be.

RESOLVED: That, (a) the Clerk's report be noted and, (b) the Clerk be requested to contact the Parish Council's Routine Maintenance Contractor to ask whether he would be prepared to water the trees (once planted) and if so what the likely cost would be.

(b) At the meeting of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee held on 18th February 2026, the Committee considered an email received from a resident, regarding a piece of land located at Billings Hill Shaw which is owned by the Parish Council.

The Clerk was requested to obtain further information from the resident.

At the Chairman's invitation, the members of the public were invited to address the Committee.

The member of the public reported that they and two of their neighbours had been maintaining the land for a number of years and would now like to purchase the land if possible.

Cllr Oxtoby advised that the Council currently has no land disposal policy.

The member of the public reported that some years ago, the Parish Council had issued a Licence, permitting the residents to maintain the land at a peppercorn rent, but that this had not been paid for many years.

The Committee agreed that it had no objection in principle to the continuation of the Licence, but that legal advice would need to be sought.

RECOMMENDED: That, the Clerk be requested to locate the original Licence and that advice be sought from the Parish Council's Solicitor as to whether it is still valid, or requires updating.

The Members of the public left the meeting at 6.11p.m.

8. Football at Manor Field

(a) There was no report from Hartley De Sales Football Club.

The Committee questioned whether a Saturday Soccer School was currently being run by the Club.

As there was no representative present, the Clerk was requested to contact the Club to find out.

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk be requested to contact Hartley De Sales Football Club to ascertain as to whether a Saturday Soccer School is currently taking place at Manor Field.

(b) The Committee considered an email dated 21st March 2026, received from Hartley De Sales Football Club, advising that next season's FA rules mean that children's matches for under 7s will have to be 3 v 3.

To facilitate this, 4 small pitches of 15m x 10m will need to be set out and the club would like to use the space between the two pitches for this.

No markings would be required, as white markers are laid out, but it would require the area to be cut during the season.

The representative from Hartley De Sales Football Club arrived at 6.25p.m.

The Clerk confirmed that the whole of Manor Field was cut at the same time, so the area would not need additional cutting.

The representative from the New Ash Green Football Club expressed concern that the 3 v 3 matches would not be able to take place at the same time as 9 v 9 or 11 v 11 matches, for health and safety reasons.

Members agreed that they had no objection to the proposal in principle, subject to the two clubs liaising to ensure that the matches are staggered to prevent any health and safety issues.

RESOLVED: That, the request received from Hartley De Sales Football Club for 4 small pitches of 15m x 10m to be set out in the space between the Hartley De Sales FC and New Ash Green FC pitches, using white markers, be agreed in principle, subject to Hartley De Sales FC and New Ash Green FC liaising to ensure that it is safe to do so and that all health and safety requirements are adhered to.

(c) The representative from the New Ash Green Football Club reported that the Committee had recently met and that they had been asked to pass on its thanks for supporting the Club's continued use of the pitches and training at Manor Field.

The representative asked whether it would be acceptable for the portable goals to be stored on the field during the summer, provided that they are chained up and the nets are removed.

Cllr Glander commented on the fact that the goals would need to be moveable to allow the grass in the surrounding area to be cut.

The representative confirmed that the wheels were not locked and could be easily moved if required.

The representative asked whether the Council would have any objection to the teams training at Manor Field during the summer months.

The Committee agreed that they had no objection to this.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the report from the New Ash Green Football Club be noted and, (2) the request from the New Ash Green Football Club for the portable goals to be stored at Manor Field during the summer, be approved, provided that they are chained up with the nets removed and able to be moved to enable the grass cutting to take place.

The representatives from Hartley De Sales and the New Ash Green Football Clubs left the meeting at 6.33p.m.

9. Cricket at Manor Field

(a) The representative from the New Ash Green & Hartley Cricket Club reported that the showers were working well.

The representative reported that the Club was currently experiencing issues with their mowers.

Also, the fridge in the kitchen at the Pavilion does not appear to be working efficiently as it is not very cold and the freezer compartment is iced up.

Members noted that both teams had won their first games on Saturday.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the report received from the representative of the New Ash Green & Hartley Cricket Club be noted and, (2) the representative from the New Ash Green & Hartley Cricket Club be asked to make arrangements to defrost the freezer and to advise the Clerk whether or not this resolves the issue.

The representative from the New Ash Green & Hartley Cricket Club left the meeting at 6.41p.m.

(b) The Committee considered the fees to be charged for the use of the ground and the Pavilion during the 2026 season, starting on 25th April 2026 and finishing on 5th September 2026.

Members noted that last year, it had been agreed that the fees to be charged be increased by 5%, to £1,461, for the use of the ground and the Pavilion for the 2025 season, but that due to issues with the showers, as a gesture of goodwill, a discount of 5% be applied, reducing the fee payable to £1,392.00.

It was suggested that the fees for 2026 remain at £1,461.00.

RECOMMENDED: That,

the fees to be charged to the New Ash Green and Hartley Cricket Club remain at £1,461.60 for the use of the ground and the Pavilion for the 2026 season.

10. Cricket at Longfield Hill

There was no report from Meopham Cricket Club.

Members queried how long was left on the lease at Longfield Hill.

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk be requested to make this information available for consideration at the next meeting.

11. Financial Report

RESOLVED: That, it be noted that the Council accounts for 2026/27 were in the process of being set up following year end and that a financial statement setting out detailed income and expenditure by budget heading in respect of the Allotments, Open Spaces and the Pavilion, since 1st April 2026 was not available.

12. Pavilion

(a) Water Hygiene

(i) The Committee considered the results of the monthly water temperature checks at the Pavilion, carried out by the cleaning contractor, for February, March, April and May.

RESOLVED: That, the results of the monthly water temperature checks at the Pavilion, carried out by the cleaning contractor, for February, March, April and May, be noted with no action required, as the Committee is satisfied that the results were within scope.

(ii) Members noted that following the water testing carried out by the Council's water hygiene contractor in May, the engineer had highlighted some points that he wanted to bring to the Council's attention:

- The calorifier located in the outside plant room had a temperature below 60c. *It is advised that stored water calorifiers have flow temperatures of 60c or above*
- Some of the hot temperatures were below 50c. *It is advised that hot temperatures are 50c or above. If this does not improve when completing the monthly temperature checks, please let us know and we will endeavour to help you resolve this*

- The combi in the kitchen had a temperature below 50c. *It is advised that this temperature is 50c or above*

The Clerk reported that she had contacted the water hygiene contractor to obtain further clarification as follows:

- the engineer carrying out the temperature testing did not have a key to the outside plant room, so the temperature on the calorifer could not have been tested.

The water hygiene contractor confirmed that the engineer had not been able to access the area, so had taken the temperature from the closest outlet to the plant room.

The Clerk reported that she and the Assistant Clerk had visited the site and taken the temperature from the calorifier, which had been 64.1c (within scope). A video had been sent to the water hygiene contractor of the testing procedure and the temperature on the probe and they had confirmed that the temperature was within scope and that the procedure adopted for taking temperatures from the calorifier was correct.

- The outlets where the engineer had advised that the temperatures were too low i.e the hot temperature in the home team changing room and the hot temperature on the hand wash basin in the disabled toilet were re-tested by the Clerk and Assistant Clerk. The temperature of the hot water on the hand wash basin in the home team changing room was 61.5 and in the disabled toilet 50.2, both within scope.

The Clerk reported that she had contacted the water hygiene contractor to advise them, of this and to ask whether, due to the fact that a thermostatic mixing valve (tmv) was fitted to the tap in the disabled toilet, the engineer had taken the reading from the pipework? The Clerk also asked for confirmation from the water hygiene contractor that she was correct in taking the reading from the pipework before the tmv.

Members noted that an emailed response had been received from the water hygiene contractor on 13th May, advising that the temperatures and procedure used by the Clerk for taking the water temperatures in these areas was correct and that it had been an error on the engineer's part.

The Clerk also sought confirmation from the water hygiene contractor that due to the fact that the tmvs for the showers are located in the loft, it is not possible to test the pipework before the tmvs, therefore, as the water is from the same source as the water supply to the taps on the hand wash basins, as long as the hot and cold water temperatures on these are within scope, this means that the water supply to the showers is also within scope.

Members noted that an emailed response had been received from the water hygiene contractor on 13th May, confirming that the above assumption was correct.

- The Clerk and the Assistant Clerk had visited the site to obtain the temperature on the combi boiler in the kitchen which had been showing on the display as 67.6.

The Clerk reported that she had contacted the water hygiene contractor who had advised that the most accurate way to gauge the temperature on the combi boiler was to take it from the pipe work. The Clerk advised that the temperature of the hot water from the taps in the kitchen and toilets supplied by the combi boiler was above the recommended 50c and asked whether this meant that the combi boiler temperature was also above 50c.

In an email dated 20th May, the water hygiene contractor confirmed that although at the time of the engineer's visit, the temperature was below 50c, this can change throughout the day, which could account for the difference.

The Clerk reported that the results of the recent water sampling carried out at the Pavilion had shown the Coliforms and Escherichia Coli test results had all been within scope, but that the TACC levels on the cold tap on the hand wash basin in the changing room had been elevated.

Members noted an email dated 19th May, received from the Council's water hygiene contractor advising that the cleaning and flushing regime should be increased and that they would resample that location on their next visit.

The Clerk reported that she had contacted the water hygiene contractor to advise that the Council currently flushes the outlets at the stored water end of the building twice a week and to ask if this is sufficient and also what additional cleaning was recommended.

Members noted an email dated 20th May, received from the Council's water hygiene contractor, advising that the taps should be given a deep clean midway through flushing and that flushing the outlets twice a week would be sufficient.

The Clerk reported that she had asked the cleaning contractor to carry out a deep clean of the water outlets and that disinfection of the water outlets be carried out twice monthly.

The water hygiene contractor suggested that the showers be flushed as hot as they will go, to ensure that any bacteria that can be killed or flushed is.

The Clerk reported that she had advised the contractor that there were tmvs on the showers, so the water coming out is regulated.

Members noted an email date 20th May, received from the water hygiene contractor, confirming that this was not an issue.

The Clerk reported that the results of the water sampling for Legionella were still awaited.

RECOMMENDED: That,

(1) the Clerk's report above and the responses received from the Council's water hygiene contractor be noted and approved and, (2) no additional action be taken, as the Council is satisfied that it is doing everything practically possible to mitigate the risk of Legionella.

(iii) The Clerk reported that one of the water temperature testing probes contained in the Legionella testing kit had become damaged.

RESOLVED: That,

the Clerk's actions of purchasing a new water temperature testing ribbon surface probe at a cost of £52 + VAT be approved.

(iv) The Clerk reported that the thermometer contained within the Legionella temperature testing kits is required to be recalibrated annually.

The Clerk reported that although the thermometer in the kit located at the Pavilion had not recently been recalibrated, a new kit had recently been purchased for Hartley Village Hall and the water temperatures at the Pavilion had been checked by the Clerk and Assistant Clerk, using this and compared with the kit located at the Pavilion and the temperatures had been consistent.

Despite this, the Clerk recommended that the Legionella testing kit located at the Pavilion, be sent off to be recalibrated and the probes checked.

RESOLVED: That,

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

(2) the Legionella water testing kit located at the Pavilion be sent off to Electronic Temperature Instruments Limited, to enable a manufacturers recalibration of the Therma 1 within the kit and for the probes to be checked at a cost of £32 + VAT with a £6.50 + VAT return carriage fee.

(v) Members had been requested to consider whether the Legionella Risk Assessment requires updating.

At the meeting of the Parish Council held on 11th May 2026, Members noted that a Legionella Risk Assessment (LRA) had been carried out at the Pavilion in 2024 and that according to the Council's water hygiene contractor, in line with the Low Risk Rating given, the next LRA was due in 2029.

At the meeting, Members noted that the Clerk had questioned whether, in view of pipework alterations carried out in 2025, an additional LRA should be undertaken.

The Council had considered emails dated 1st May 2026 and 5th May 2026 received from the Parish Council's water hygiene contractor in response to the Clerk's enquiry and were satisfied that an additional LRA was not required.

The Clerk reported that she had included this as an Amenities & Open Spaces agenda item as she considered that an updated LRA may be beneficial.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the Clerk's report be noted;

(2) the emails dated 1st May 2026 and 5th May 2026, received from the Parish Council's water hygiene contractor, regarding the necessity for an additional Legionella Risk Assessment to be undertaken, be noted, with no further action required, as the Council is satisfied that it is doing everything practicably possible to mitigate the risk of Legionella.

(vi) Members considered whether the Calorifier located in the boiler room at the Pavilion requires descaling.

Cllr Glander commented that although it was "kettling" slightly, in view of the fact that the showers appeared to be working well and that the water temperatures were all within scope, the situation could be assessed at a later date.

The Committee agreed that it was not necessary to carry out a de-scale at the current time.

RESOLVED: That,
no further action be taken at the current time with regard to the de-scaling of the calorifier located in the boiler room at the Pavilion, as the Committee is satisfied that it is working efficiently.

(b) Charges

The Committee reviewed the charges for the hire of the Pavilion.

Members noted that at the meeting of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee held on 28th May 2025, it was agreed that the hourly charge for the hire of the Pavilion be increased by £1 per hour.

The current hire charges are as follows:

- An hourly charge of £13 for the weekday hire of the Pavilion, discounted to £11 for regular hirers
- An hourly charge of £15 for the hire of the Pavilion at the weekend. This excludes regular hirers whose hourly charge is £11
- Requests from hirers for a reduction of the hire charge in respect of events organised for charitable purposes, to be considered on an individual basis.

RECOMMENDED: That,

(1) the hourly charge for the hire of the Pavilion remains at £13 per hour during the week and £15 per hour at the weekend (to exclude regular hirers whose hourly charge will remain at £11 per hour, (both during the week and at the weekend) and,

(2) the current policy whereby the Council considers, on an individual basis, any requests from hirers of the Pavilion for a reduction of the charges in respect of events organised for charitable purposes, remains the same.

(c) Boilers

The Clerk reported that the annual major service of the boilers at the Pavilion had been carried out on 24th April 2026 and that no issues had been found.

RESOLVED: That,
the Clerk's report be noted.

(d) Cleaning

The Committee considered an email dated 25th March 2026, received from the current cleaning contractor at the Pavilion.

Members noted that there had been no price increase since July 2023 and that the cleaning contractor was proposing a slight increase to take effect from April 2026.

RESOLVED: That,
the Clerk be requested to contact the cleaning contractor to confirm that the Council is happy to accept the increase, subject to the

disinfection of the water outlets being increased from once to twice a month.

(e) Calor Gas

Members considered a letter dated 14th April 2026, received from Calor Gas Ltd, advising that from 17th April 2026, a temporary surcharge will be applied to the price the Council pays for its bulk LPG supply.

RESOLVED: That,
the letter dated 14th April 2026, received from Calor Gas Ltd, advising that from 17th April 2026, a temporary surcharge will be applied to the price the Council pays for its bulk LPG supply, be noted.

13. Trees

(a) Quantified Tree Risk Assessment

Members considered the Quantified Tree Risk Assessment report, dated 7th May 2026.

The Committee noted that only one tree, located in Gorse Wood, had been identified as requiring works, due to it being dead, beside a footpath and loose in the ground.

The Clerk reported that prior to the report being received, a resident had reported a possibly dangerous dead tree in Gorse Wood and arrangements had been made for it to be removed.

The Clerk reported that following receipt of the report, she had contacted the Tree Surgeon who had confirmed that the tree that had been removed was the tree identified in the report.

The Clerk highlighted the fact that three additional trees had been highlighted in the report, with one tree located in Rectory Meadow requiring ivy growing on it to be cut and two others, 1 located in Manor Field and the other located in Foxborough Wood, require monitoring.

The Clerk suggested that the local Tree Surgeon be asked to inspect the trees requiring monitoring, but the committee considered that they should be inspected in the Autumn.

The Clerk highlighted the boundary and survey issues on page 3 of the report.

With regard to Longfield Hill, there is a large Ash in the SW corner of the site which is difficult to access. Ownership of the tree is unclear, but it has ash dieback. Some works to the tree may be necessary if ash dieback develops further.

The Committee agreed that as the Ash tree is not located next to a footpath, no action should be taken at the current time.

The report also highlighted the fact that the old wooden markers in Foxborough Wood are now gone. Similarly, in Hartley Wood, some of the boundary markers cannot be found. The report recommended that at some stage it would be useful to resurvey and replace the lost markers.

Members noted that the Tree Inspector is now retiring and it will be necessary to find an alternative contractor to carry out the next inspection in summer 2027.

RECOMMENDED: That,

(1) the Quantified Tree Risk Assessment report dated 7th May 2026, be noted;

(2) the boundary and survey issues highlighted in the report be noted with no further action to be taken at the current time;

(3) the trees highlighted in the report as requiring action be noted with the action taken as follows:

- **Gorse Wood** – monolith (dead) seems loose in the ground – remove- fell near ground. *Confirmation has been received from the local Tree Surgeon that he has removed the tree.*
- **Foxborough Wood** – Beech, fungal bracket; some ivy, vertical wound, monitored since 2022 – No immediate action – monitor. *No action to be taken at the current time, but tree to be inspected by a local Tree Surgeon in the Autumn.*
- **Rectory Meadow** – Prunus – Lean, heavy ivy – Cut ivy – *The Clerk be requested to contact the North West Kent Countryside Project to ask them to cut the ivy when they are next at Rectory Meadow.*
- **Manor Field** – Beech – large beech with Ganoderma fungal brackets (NW & SW) 4 metres from fallen boundary fence c. 20m tall – No immediate action – monitor - *No action to be taken at the current time, but tree to be inspected by a local Tree Surgeon in the Autumn and,*

(4) the Clerk be requested to contact local Tree Surgeons to ask whether they would be able to conduct a Quantified Risk Assessment in Summer 2027 and to seek quotations for the work.

(b) Gorse Wood

Members noted that a resident had recently reported a possible dangerous tree located in Gorse Wood.

The Clerk made arrangements for the tree to be inspected by a Tree Surgeon and it was recommended that the tree be felled at a cost of £150 + VAT.

The Clerk reported that the Tree Surgeon has since confirmed that this tree was the tree highlighted in the recent Quantified Tree Risk Assessment report as requiring removal. RESOLVED: That, the Clerk's actions of making arrangements for the dangerous tree located in Gorse Wood to be removed at a cost of £150 + VAT, be approved.

(c) Woodland Avenue

The Clerk reported that a report had been received regarding trees located on land owned by Hartley Parish Council at Woodland Avenue, which were overhanging the footpath, presenting a possible hazard to pedestrians.

The Clerk reported that a Tree Surgeon had inspected the trees which were on both sides of the road.

Members noted that there were several trees located adjacent to the allotment site, but that as they were outside the allotment boundary, they are the responsibility of Kent Highway Services (KHS).

Members noted that the Clerk has reported the trees to Kent Highway Services and that the fault tracker on the KHS fault reporting website states that the work has been programmed.

The Clerk reported that she had made arrangements for the trees owned by the Parish Council at Woodland Avenue recreation ground, to be cut back at a cost of £450 + VAT. The Clerk reported that the Tree Surgeon had confirmed that due to it being bird nesting season, only the branches that are causing an issue will be removed and the trees will be thoroughly inspected for nesting birds, prior to any work being carried out.

RESOLVED: That,

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

(2) the Clerk's actions of making arrangements for the trees located on land owned by the Parish Council at Woodland Avenue recreation ground that are overhanging the footpath, to be cut back at a cost of £450 + VAT, be approved and confirmed.

14. Playgrounds

(a) Playground Inspections

The Committee considered the Operational Inspection Report dated 16th April 2026, received from the Parish Council's Playground Inspectors.

Members noted that Chantry Avenue recreation ground and Longfield Hill recreation ground had been classified as a low risk 10 and that Woodland Avenue recreation ground had been classified as a medium risk 12.

The Committee considered the list of items highlighted as requiring attention, noting that all items had been classified as either "low" or "medium" risk.

The report advised that low risk items may continue in use. Action may be required, but that monitoring should be undertaken. The necessary action will be indicated on the report where appropriate.

The Committee agreed that as the next inspection would take place within 3 months' time, this would be sufficient monitoring and that any action noted in the report would also be monitored at the next inspection.

Medium risk items may continue in use. Action required as indicated on the report, will be necessary within 3-6 months, as finance allows.

The Committee agreed that action should be taken with regard to the following low risk items detailed in the inspection report:

Chantry Avenue

- Unfenced goal end 1 (Basket ball post side) – There is metal corrosion present – Treat corrosion
- Unfenced goal end 2 - There is metal corrosion present – Treat corrosion
- Roundabout – The item requires lubricant – Lubricate item
- Roundabout - There is metal corrosion present – Treat corrosion
- Swing – Junior (metal) - There is metal corrosion present – Treat corrosion
- Swing – Toddler (metal) - There is metal corrosion present – Treat corrosion

RECOMMENDED: That,

(1) the quotation received from Safeplay Playground Services Ltd, for the sum of £708 + VAT, to carry out the works detailed above, be accepted and,

(2) the total cost of the above works be met from CIL funds.

Members agreed that no action be taken at the current time with regard to the remaining low risk items detailed in the Inspection Report dated 16th April 2026.

Members considered the following medium risk item detailed in the Inspection Report:

Woodland Avenue

- Picnic table (recycled plastic) – the item is loose in the ground – re-secure item in the ground

The Clerk reported that on 28th April 2026, the routine maintenance contractor had confirmed that he had secured the picnic table in to the ground.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the Clerk's report be noted;

(2) no further action be taken with regard to the list of items classified as a "low" risk at Chantry Avenue recreation ground, Longfield Hill recreation ground and Woodland Avenue recreation ground.

(b) Goal Posts – Woodland Avenue

The Committee had been requested to consider any quotations received for the re-siting of the goal posts at Woodland Avenue recreation ground.

The Clerk reported that quotations had been sought but that none had yet been received.

RESOLVED: That,

the matter be deferred to the next meeting.

(c) MUGA – Woodland Avenue

Members noted that the Clerk had received a report that a patch of safety surfacing on the MUGA had been damaged, causing a trip hazard.

RESOLVED: That,
the Clerks actions of making arrangements for the safety surfacing to be repaired at a cost of £327.80 + VAT, be approved and confirmed.

15. Allotments

The Committee considered the allotment charges for the period 1st October 2027 to 30th September 2028.

RECOMMENDED: That,

the allotment charges for the period 1st October 2027 to 30th September 2028, be increased by 5%.

16. Routine Maintenance Contract 2026/27

The Clerk reported that despite placing advertisements on the Parish Council's noticeboards, website and newsletter, only one quotation had been received.

The Committee considered the quotation received for the Routine Maintenance Contract for 2026/27.

RECOMMENDED: That,

the Routine Maintenance Contract for 2026/27, be awarded to Mr G Pike of Graham's Gardens.

17. Risk Assessments

The Committee considered the Council's current risk assessments, relating to the Parish Council's amenities & open spaces.

Members considered that the risk assessments as reviewed by the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee at its meeting held on 28th May 2025 and subsequently approved by the Council, were satisfactory.

RECOMMENDED: That, the risk assessments relating to the Parish Council's amenities and open spaces, as reviewed by the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee on 28th May 2025, be confirmed and approved.

18. Manor Field

(a) At the meeting of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee held on 18th February 2026, the Committee considered an email received from the Parish Council's Solicitor regarding the previously proposed footpath leading from Hartley Burial Ground to the car park at Manor Field.

At the meeting, the Clerk reported that she had contacted the Council's Solicitor with a query relating to the email and was awaiting a response.

Members noted that the matter has now been closed and the remaining funds held on account, returned to the Parish Council.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the Clerk's report be noted and, (2) no further action be taken with regard to the proposed footpath leading from Hartley Burial Ground to the car park at Manor Field.

(b) The Clerk reported that a new lift assist bollard has now been installed at Manor Field.

Members were informed that the bollard had recently sustained some damage and that the cost of repair had been £181 + VAT.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the Clerk's report be noted and, (2) the Clerk's actions of arranging for the bollard to be repaired at a cost of £181 + VAT be approved and confirmed.

19. Hartley Wood

Prior to the meeting, the Clerk and Members of the Committee had carried out a walkabout in Hartley Wood.

Members noted that motorbikes were still causing an issue in the woods.

The Clerk reported that the entrance gates owned by Kent Public Rights of Way, were constantly being vandalised and were not fixed quickly.

Members noted that at the recent Annual Parish Meeting, PC Weatherall had advised that he was liaising with the Public Rights of Way Officer with a view to finding a solution to the problem.

PC Weatherall had mentioned a specific type of gate that had been used in other areas which may resolve some of the issues in Hartley.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the Clerk be requested to contact PC Weatherall to obtain further information regarding the gates and,

(2) the Clerk be requested to obtain further information as to the ownership of land in Hartley Wood, to ascertain as to whether it would be possible for the Parish Council to install any fencing/gates to try to alleviate the problems.

20. Grass Cutting Contract

The Committee considered a letter dated 21st April 2026, received from Landscape Services, the Parish Council's grass cutting contractor.

The letter advised that due to the recent rise in fuel costs, prices are being monitored daily and that should the current situation continue or change significantly, there may come a point where a short-term price adjustment is necessary.

Should this become the case, the Parish Council would be contacted clearly setting out the position and any proposed changes.

RESOLVED: That,

the letter dated 21st April 2026, received from Landscape Services, the Parish Council's grass cutting contractor, be noted.

21. Date of next meeting

To be arranged.

The meeting closed at 7.50p.m.

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

Chairman of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee

AMENITIES & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference

Delegation from the Council

These Terms of Reference were agreed by the Parish Council at its meeting held on ***** and recorded in the minute number *****

Membership

The Committee shall be elected, and may be re-elected, at the Annual Meeting of the Council.

Procedures

- (1) The Committee shall operate in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.
- (2) At the first meeting of the Committee after the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, the Committee shall elect a Chairman and, if the Committee deems necessary, a Vice Chairman for the forthcoming year from amongst the Committee membership. The Chairman and Vice Chairman, if appointed, may be re-elected.
- (3) The Committee shall submit its minutes for adoption to the next meeting of the Parish Council.
- (4) The Clerk or Assistant Clerk shall provide administrative support for the Committee.

Committee functions

- (1) To manage the operation of the Manor Field, Pavilion and all open spaces, woodland, playing fields, recreation grounds, play grounds owned by the Council and the allotments at Woodland Avenue; and such land owned by the Council at the village pond and lay-by, with the exception of the open space known as Northfield. Such operation shall include making recommendations to the Council on scales of hiring charges for the use of facilities together with conditions of hire.
- (2) To arrange for the maintenance of the Pavilion.
- (3) To review and monitor the grass cutting contracts together with the maintenance of all open spaces and to ensure that they are in safe condition for their use by the public.
- (4) To undertake and monitor health and safety inspections of all playground equipment.
- (5) To prepare an annual budget for review by the Council's Finance & General Purposes Committee each year and to monitor expenditure against the annual budget approved by the Council.
- (6) To keep under review opportunities to secure funding support from external sources.
- (7) To be responsible for dealing with all matters relating to public rights of way to ensure the general upkeep of footpaths within the Parish, making recommendation to Council where necessary.

Delegated Powers

1. To authorise expenditure on those matters which fall within the responsibility of the Committee up to the sums contained in the annual budget approved by the Council, provided that any new schemes shall be subject to prior approval in principle by the Council.
2. To respond, on behalf of the Council, to orders for the diversion, stopping-up, extinguishment or creation of a public path.