

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF HARTLEY
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HARTLEY PARISH COUNCIL
HELD IN THE PAVILION, MANOR FIELD, CHURCH ROAD
12th OCTOBER 2026 AT 7.30 P.M.

Present :

Cllr Larry Abraham - *(Parish & District Councillor)*
Cllr Gary Andrews
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 David Graeme
Cllr Anne Oxtoby
Cllr Brian Ramsay
Cllr Vincent Sewell

In attendance:

Mrs Helen Boden - *(Clerk)*
Cllr Maxine Fothergill – *(Kent County Councillor)*

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Dispensations

There were no requests from Members for a dispensation.

4. Minutes

The Clerk reported that there was an error contained in the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 14th September 2026 inasmuch as (Parish & District Councillor) had been omitted after Cllr Larry Abraham's name in the list of Councillors present at the meeting.

The Clerk reported that there was also an error contained in minute item 20. Payments (e), of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 14th September 2026, as is should state (d), not (e).

RESOLVED: That,

the minutes of the meeting of Hartley Parish Council held on 14th September 2026, including the above amendments, 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 8.03p.m.

5. Burial Grounds & Gardens of Remembrance Committee

RESOLVED: That,

the minutes of the meeting of the Burial Grounds & Gardens of Remembrance Committee held on 7th October 2026 and the recommendations contained therein, be received and, where necessary, approved and adopted.

6. Planning Committee

RESOLVED: That,

the minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 23rd September 2026 and 7th October 2026 and the recommendations contained therein, be received and, where necessary, approved and adopted.

7. Neighbourhood Plan – Regulation 15 Submission

(a) Cllr Andrews reported that the final draft Neighbourhood Plan and all its associated supporting documents (including the Consultation Statement and Basic Conditions Statement), had been circulated to Councillors for their comments.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the final draft Neighbourhood Plan and all its associated supporting documents, including Appendices 1 to 5 of the draft Neighbourhood Plan, Appendix 6 – Design Code Report 2023 (2026 amended), the Consultation Statement (including the Regulation 14 Responses Spreadsheet & the SEA Reports) and the Basic Conditions Statement, be formally approved; (2) authority be delegated to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, in consultation with the Clerk and the Chairman of the Council, to make any minor text, formatting, or typographical corrections if required, prior to submission and, (3) the Steering Group be delegated authority to formally submit the finalised suite of documents to the District Council in accordance with Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, enabling the District Council to commence the public consultation under Regulation 16.

Cllr Conroy commended the Steering Group for their efforts.

(b) Cllr Andrews reported that the expenditure of £1,000, approved by the Council at its meeting held on 14th September 2026, for the final plan document to be professionally designed/formatted by a graphic designer, had been put on hold, pending the receipt of advice and guidance from the District Council as to the preferred final format and layout.

RESOLVED: That, Cllr Andrew's report be noted.

(c) Cllr Andrews reported that there was no additional expenditure required at the present time, other than that already authorised.

RESOLVED: That, Cllr Andrew's report be noted.

The Chairman commended the Steering Group for their efforts.

8. Training

Members considered a list of available training and were asked to contact the Clerk should they wish to attend.

9. Billings Hill Shaw – Community Orchard

The Clerk reported that she had contacted Cllr Maxine Fothergill with regard to making an application for the Kent County Council Combined Member Grant, towards the cost of the proposed community orchard.

Members noted that Cllr Fothergill has agreed to support the project and that an application for the sum of £1,250 has now been submitted.

Members considered 3 quotations for the supply and planting of 7 no fruit trees.

The Clerk reported that in addition to the cost of the trees, watering costs would also need to be taken into consideration.

Members noted that in addition, there would be miscellaneous costs in the region of £250, for sundry items such as stakes, ties, compost and top soil.

The Clerk reported that the cost of standpipe hire would be in the region of £37 per week, with water usage charged at £2.54 per cubic metre. There will also be a delivery cost of £75 and a charge made by the Parish Council's Routine Maintenance Contractor for watering the trees.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the Clerk's actions of making an application for the sum of £1,250, from the Kent County Council Combined Member Grant, be noted and approved; (2) the quotation received for the sum of £4,517.65 + VAT for the supply and purchase of 7 no trees (a mixture of apples and pears), including planting costs, ordering of the trees, co-ordinating volunteers and delivering a community orchard day, be accepted; (3) the estimated miscellaneous costs of £250 + VAT, for additional items required for the planting of the trees, be accepted; (4) the Clerk be authorised to apply for a 25mm metered standpipe at a cost of £37 + VAT per week, to be delivered at a cost of £75 + VAT; (5) once received and if considered suitable, the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee, be authorised to accept the quotation for the routine maintenance contractor to water the trees on a regular basis; (6) the total cost of the above be met from the Parish Council's general reserves and, (7) budgetary provision be made for 2027/28, for the ongoing watering costs and standpipe hire charges.

10. Organisational Review – Council HR and Governance Support

At the meeting of the Parish Council held on 14th September 2026, it was agreed that a copy of the Organisational Review Report be circulated to all councillors to enable them to comment on any of the recommendations not put forward by the Personnel Committee.

Cllr Conroy commented on recommendation 7 contained within the report: "That the Council seeks legal advice to determine the possibility of dissolving the Hartley Village Hall Trust, transferring all related assets to the Parish Council".

Members agreed that further advice should be sought.

There were no further comments from Councillors.

RESOLVED: That, the Assistant Clerk be requested to seek further advice to determine the possibility of dissolving the Hartley Village Hall Trust, transferring all related assets to the Parish Council.

11. Banking

Members considered a letter dated 11th August 2026, received from the Nationwide Building Society.

The letter requests that the Parish Council completes a “Business Savings Automatic Exchange of Information (AEIO) – Entity Self-Certification Form”.

Members agreed that the majority of the form was not applicable to the Parish Council and should be completed stating as such.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the letter dated 11th August 2026, received from the Nationwide Building Society, requesting that the Parish Council completes a “Business Savings Automatic Exchange of Information (AEIO) – Entity Self-Certification Form,” be noted and, (2) the Clerk be authorised to complete and return the form, as agreed by the Council.

12. Remembrance Sunday Service

Members considered a report on arrangements for the Remembrance Sunday Service to be held on the Memorial Green on 8th November 2026.

The Chairman reported that there would be a cost of £100 for the hire of a PA system for the event.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the arrangements for the Remembrance Sunday Service on Hartley Memorial Green on 8th November 2026 at 3.00p.m. as set out in the Traffic Management Plan 2026, including the Risk Assessment dated 6th August 2026 and the Medical Provision Assessment, be approved and adopted by the Council; (2) the sum of £100 for the hire of a PA system be approved and the total cost met from the Parish Council's general reserves and, (3) future arrangements for the Remembrance Sunday Service, including, but not limited to, the preparation of risk assessments, traffic management plans and applications for road closures, be delegated to the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

13. Payments

RESOLVED: That,

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

(b) the Council detail report as at 6th October 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 August 2026 had been verified by Cllr Graeme and,

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

14. Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED: That, under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that agenda item 15, Sevenoaks District Council – Land Disposal, involves the likely disclosure of exempt information, as the document provided by the District Council is requested to be kept confidential.
Cllr Maxine Fothergill, the Kent County Councillor, left the meeting at 8.44p.m.

15. Sevenoaks District Council – Land Disposal

Members considered an email dated 5th October 2026, received from Sevenoaks District Council.

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk be requested to contact Sevenoaks District Council to confirm the reasons that the Parish Council does not accept the Draft Heads of Terms.

The meeting closed at 8.51p.m.

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

APPENDIX 1

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Schedule of Payments October 2026 - Paid by Internet Banking/DDR from Unity Trust Bank					
Ref:	Payment to	Particulars	Net	VAT	Total
DDR		PAID 30/09/26 - chgs 04/06/26 - 03/09/26	0.40	-	0.40
DDR		PAID 30/09/26 - chgs 01/08/26-31/08/26	11.95	-	11.95
660113070		PAID 30/09/26 - TACC Sample Sept 26 inv 84301	87.00	17.40	104.40
187232585		PAID 30/09/26 - Provide professional support re SDC Regulation 19 response invoice HA/11	2,587.23	-	2,587.23
374711693		PAID 30/09/26 - Cut back hedges Manor Field inv 9037	620.00	124.00	744.00
DDR		Charges 01/09/26-30/09/26	12.40	-	12.40
729862163		Set out 3 no football pitches @ MF inv LS216865	905.70	181.14	1,086.84
13769544		Salary 01/10/26-31/10/26 (previously approved)	3,313.31	-	3,313.31
32061341		Salary 01/10/26-31/10/26 (previously approved)	1,761.66	-	1,761.66
99661451		Month 7 Employer & Employee NIC & PAYE	2,062.22	-	2,062.22
62545767		Employer & Employee pension contributions October	1,718.06	-	1,718.06
833078439		Routine maintenance contract September	707.50	-	707.50
82411898		Dog bin emptying Jul-Sept 2026 inv 2104955	336.70	67.34	404.04
484598856		Renewal of DPO service 10/10/26-09/10/27 inv M3959	150.00	30.00	180.00
928229375		Grounds maintenance BG inv 4241	594.16	118.83	712.99
761313356		Clean pavilion September inv 6506	244.06	-	244.06
		Reimburse costs re SID modifications	78.50	-	78.50
167395000		Water at allotments 01/09/26-30/09/26	55.34	-	55.34
485831356		12 weeks of football sessions @ W/Ave inv 2291	768.00	-	768.00
			16,014.19	538.71	16,552.90

APPENDIX 1

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October 2026 - Paid by cheque/DDR from Barclays Bank					
Chq No	Payment to	Particulars	Net	VAT	Total
DDR		Mixed Payment Plan charges 13/08/26 - 13/09/26	11.15	-	11.15
DDR		Electricity @ Pavilion 24/08/26-24/09/26	48.20	2.41	50.61
107080		Top up Nationwide Bank account	25,000.00	-	25,000.00
107081		Top up Unity Bank account	50,000.00	-	50,000.00
			75,059.35	2.41	75,061.76

Adjournment

Before the County and District Councillors gave their reports, the Chairman made a special presentation to the Clerk to celebrate her 25 years of service to the Parish Council.

“As Chairman of Hartley Parish Council, I have the honour tonight of celebrating a truly remarkable milestone. Today, we present the 25-Year Service Award to our indispensable Parish Clerk, Helen Boden.

A quarter of a century is an incredible achievement. A vast amount has changed in our village and across local government over the last 25 years. But during all that change, the one constant for Hartley has been the unwavering dedication, expertise, and professionalism of Helen.

Being a Parish Clerk is no ordinary job. You have to be an administrator, a financial officer, a legal expert, and a diplomat all at once. Helen is the backbone of our parish Council. From ensuring our annual audits pass flawlessly, to guiding numerous councillors through complex regulations, she has handled it all with absolute professionalism.

But Helen’s impact isn’t just measured in agendas and minutes typed or budgets balanced. It is measured in her character. She is the person who keeps us all on track. She handles public enquiries with calm grace and works tirelessly behind the scenes to make sure our parish thrives. To our residents, she is the trusted face of local government; to the council, she is our anchor; and to me as Chairman, she is an irreplaceable ally.

Helen, twenty-five years of keeping Hartley running smoothly is an immense achievement to our community. On behalf of the entire council and our residents, thank you for your loyalty, your hard work, and your wonderful spirit.

Please join me in a round of applause as I present the 25 Year Service Award to our Parish Clerk, Helen Boden”.

Cllr Fothergill reported that the last KCC full council meeting had taken place shortly after the Parish Council meeting, at which, the request to enable older people to use their bus passes before 9.30a.m. was turned down.

Cllr Fothergill reported that the Government has postponed the Local Government Reorganisation until further notice.

Cllr Fothergill reported that she had recently met with Jim Dixon MP to discuss the recent Post Office closures in New Ash Green and Longfield.

Members noted that the MP had been very supportive and was currently working with the Post Office to find a solution.

Cllr Fothergill reported that highway issues are ongoing, but that the current contractors appear to be more responsive than the previous contractors.

Cllr Fothergill reported that there were still concerns with regard to reporting online and that she will continue to work with officers to resolve the issues.

Cllr Abraham thanked Cllr Fothergill for funding the new chairs in the Pavilion.

Cllr Perry Cole reported that the new wheelie bin rollout is ongoing and that the new waste collection regime has now started.

Members noted that some areas still haven't received their bins.

Cllr Perry Cole reported that on 31st October, Sevenoaks District Council's new Scheme of Delegation is due to be introduced.

This means that the number of Members will be reduced and that planning decisions will now be made by the planning officers. The option for Members to call planning applications in to the committee will no longer be available.

Cllr Perry Cole reported that following further changes to the NPPF, applications for more than 150 homes will be referred to the Secretary of State for a decision.

Cllr Perry Cole reported that he and Cllr Penny Cole had recently met with the Planning Enforcement Officer at Sevenoaks District Council regarding possible parking restrictions outside the Post Office.

Members noted that at the meeting, the Parking Enforcement Officer had asked that a survey be carried out to ascertain the busiest times of the day, to be presented to the District Council.

Cllr Perry Cole reported that he and Cllr Penny Cole had recently completed their Speed Watch training, along with several members of the public and that they were now waiting for the Police to come forward with a list of sites.

Cllr Perry Cole reminded members that he and Cllr Penny Cole had recently sent out surveys to all residents asking for their views on parking outside the Post Office.

Cllr Conroy asked that the results of the survey be circulated to Members.

The meeting resumed at 8.03p.m.

