



Hoo Saint Werburgh and Chattenden Parish Council

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To all Members of the Parish Council.

Notice is hereby given, that the next Meeting of the Parish Council is to be held on Thursday 6th July 2023 at 8.30pm in Pottery Road Village Hall, Members are hereby summonsed to attend.

1. Apologies.

Members who cannot attend a meeting shall tender their apologies to the Parish Clerk prior to the meetings, under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence shall be accepted.

2. Declaration of Interest.

To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers.

To consider any Dispensation requests received by the Parish Clerk and not previously considered.

3. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting.

To consider the minutes of the previous meeting and if in order sign as a true record.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes.

a. Safe Crossing of Bells Lane.

MC emailed with request for a safe crossing on Bells Lane at the junction to Fourwents Road – currently awaiting a response.

b. Water Leak Elm Ave.

This is in the hands of Medway Council as the Highway Authority and Southern Water.

c. Additional Allotment Land Letter.

Awaiting a date for a meeting with The Brice Charity representatives.

5. Public Participation.

To discuss any questions received by members of the public.

6. Urgent Matters (if any with the Chairman's consent).

To consider any urgent matters raised by members.

7. Parish Council Administration.

a. Civility and Respect Pledge.

Parish Council to consider signing up to the national Civility and Respect Pledge.

b. Parish Council Committees Review of membership.

To ratify the Committee membership reviewed under delegated authority:

8. Financial Matters.

a. To consider the monthly financial statement.

Financial Statement will be circulated in paperwork at PC meeting.

9. Parish Council Committees.

To receive the reports and recommendations from the following PC Committees.

a. Environment Committee.

To consider the report and recommendations from the Environment Committee Meeting held on Monday 3rd July 2023

10. Planning Matters.

a. Planning Applications Received.

No applications to consider.

b. Other Planning Matters.

To consider other planning matters.

Letter from Medway Council

I am writing to let you know that at this evening's Cabinet meeting (13 June) the Leader urged Homes England and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to remain committed to delivering the HIF project to improve local infrastructure on the Hoo Peninsula, as there is now a risk of the government's housing agency withdrawing its support.

You will be aware that earlier this year it was announced that we were in discussions with Homes England regarding our proposed HIF project as a result of the significant impact of the global recession and high inflation rates on anticipated construction costs and constrained public expenditure. As a result, we have paused our plans for rail developments on the peninsula and started to explore the potential for alternative transport options to improve access for residents.

At the time we also submitted a detailed remediation plan to Homes England in March which outlined how the scheme could be delivered to the budget originally agreed back in 2019, and first proposed in 2017, against a global backdrop of rising construction costs and high inflation.

Although no final decision has been taken, we have now been informed that there is a risk of central government pulling its support for our HIF funding which would result in the loss of £170 million of vital investment not going ahead in new infrastructure, including:

- The cancellation of a programme of investment in new roads;*
- The loss of opportunities to develop sustainable public transport solutions on the Hoo Peninsula to help improve connections throughout the surrounding villages and into the Medway towns;*
- The withdrawal of public access to 26 hectares of land currently under mixed ownership to create new community parklands and wetland reserves within an area of 111 hectares managed for nature;*

- *The loss of significant employment opportunities on the peninsula that would benefit local residents across Medway.*

I would stress that at this point no final decision has been taken at government level and we are working hard to secure this critical funding for Medway. I have written to the Chairman and Chief Executive of Homes England raise our concerns and seek a way forward by identifying pragmatic solutions that will allow this much needed infrastructure to be provided. I have also written to ministers and colleagues from DLUHC and the Treasury to inform them of our position and to encourage them to work with us to secure a positive outcome for the delivery of HIF.

Our lack of progress on the Local Plan has undoubtedly been a factor in the situation we find ourselves in. However, it is vital to remember that stopping the HIF project would not stop new homes coming, as demonstrated in a great many appeal decisions within Medway, Kent and the Southeast. Our government housing targets remain unchanged. But it would stop the vital roads, public transport and public access to green spaces that current residents have been clamouring for. It will also jeopardise crucial new jobs coming to Medway. Importantly, the HIF funding unlocks other contributions from developers to support the delivery of vital community assets such as new schools, healthcare and community facilities as well as other important much needed infrastructure on the peninsula.

Please find attached a copy of the press release we will be issuing this evening.

We are in very sensitive negotiations with the government at the moment and it would be hugely disappointing to lose this funding that will bring important improvements to residents on the peninsula.

11. Neighbourhood Plan Report.

To receive an update report from the NHP Group.

12. Date of the next meeting – Thursday 7th September 2023.

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Mrs Sherrie Babington

Parish Clerk