

**Harrietsham Parish Council**  
**Finance and General Purposes Committee**  
**Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 8th January 2026 at 7:30pm**

**1. Present:** Cllrs Brown, Dean, Luck, Roots and M Cuerden (RFO/Amenity Manager)

**Apologies:** Cllr T Sams

Members of the public: None

In the absence of the usual Chairman, Cllr Dean proposed Cllr Roots as stand-in, seconded by Cllr Luck, all in Favour

**2. Disclosures:** None

**3. Minutes of the last meeting:** (6th November 2025) were approved at the following Council meeting. Another set was signed for our records.

**4. Review of 2025/26 accounts to date.** The RFO went through each income and expenditure heading in turn, answering questions as they arose. Having also estimated the likely income and expenditure for the remaining quarter, the conclusion was that both should be pretty much on budget, with only a minor variance.

Cllr Roots specifically asked about the Christmas Lights, and what was the financial position after the end of their lease – which he thought may well be 2025. MC said he'd check with the Clerk.

He also reported that we had received a late grant request from the primary school. They were requesting £827.95 as the full cost towards setting up a rabbit-proof allotment. It was not, however, immediately clear if this figure had fully taken into account any possible VAT refund that the school could claim. In any event, our budgets are quite tight, so it was agreed to **Recommend to Council** that a grant of £750 be offered – proposed Cllr Dean, Seconded Cllr Luck, all in favour.

The bank balances were checked and confirmed by the Chair.

**5. Internal Audit – interim report:** The RFO reported that the Internal Auditor had conducted an interim, mid-year audit, covering April to October, and found that all was in order. We were therefore well placed for the final audit in April.

**6. 2026/27 proposed budget:** The RFO presented a draft budget for next year, based on actuals year-to-date, estimated figures for the final quarter of the year, and then assumptions for the following year. Following a debate, during which minor modifications were incorporated, it was agreed to propose a budget of £226,712pa, which would require a precept of £186,615. This would give a precept, per Band D property, of £137.39, being a 8.19% increase on the current rate of £126.99. It was noted that the increase of £10.40 is just 20p per week. It was agreed to **Recommend to Council** the budget - proposed by Cllr Roots, seconded Cllr Brown, with all in favour.

During the discussion, councillors asked if, at some point, they could have a breakdown of the staff overtime costs spent on behalf of the Village Hall Trust.

**9. Date of next meeting** – Thursday 23rd April 2026 at 7:30pm. (It was noted that this is a week later than usual, to allow more time for the audit to be completed.)

Meeting closed at 8:25pm.