

HIGH HALDEN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Wednesday 10 June 2025 at 7pm in the Memorial Hall

Present: Cllr. Hoath (Chairman), Cllrs: Mr. J Sargent, Ms. J. Morgan, Mr. J. Pearson, Mr. T. Kirby and Ms. S. Farmer (from 7:18pm)

In Attendance: Mr. D Rice (Clerk), 3 members of the public, Cllr. Wayne Chapman and Cllr. Alan Pickering (from 7:20pm).

38/26 Administration: Fire Exits, Fire Meeting Point, Mobile Phones. The Clerk confirmed that there had been no requests to record the meeting.

39/26 Declaration of Interest: Cllr. Kirby noted an interest in [PA/2026/0788](#) and agreed to recuse himself from the decision-making on that planning matter.

40/26 Minutes of the meeting held on the 13 May 2026

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 13 May 2026 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

41/26 Report from the Clerk (information purposes only):

The Clerk reported that Cllr. Wayne Chapman, County Councillor had sent a report for June 2026. A copy of the report had been placed on the website.

42/26 County Councillor's Report:

Cllr. Wayne Chapman noted that his report highlighted a number of issues including rogue traders being active in local communities targeting residents in their own homes, often the elderly and the vulnerable, and the consequences, financial, emotional and physical, can be devastating.

In response to a question from a member of the public, Cllr. Chapman advised those engaging rubbish removal companies should check their credentials on lists maintained by the Environment Agency and KCC Trading Standards. Cllr. Chapman reminded the meeting that even if residents had carried out due diligence on a contractor they remained responsible for their rubbish if it had been dumped illegally.

43/26 Open Session:

A member of the public highlighted the apparent inconsistencies in approach by ABC when considering planning applications. The example cited related to the planning application for land south of Ely Place, Shawlands Lane which had been refused for a local resident to build one dwelling and yet a similar application made by a developer for a site, some 100 meters away, to build multiple homes was granted. The Chairman noted that High Halden Parish Council ('HHPC') had 'called in' the initial application and the Wealden Protection Society had opined that the site should not be developed, however, Ashford Borough Council ('ABC') had granted 'permission in principle' for future development although this was dependent on specific technical approval of what would be proposed.

The Chairman noted that there was a demand for affordable shared-ownership housing as demonstrated by the Ransley Field development which had been popular with local residents and all the properties had been sold or otherwise occupied.

Cllr. Farmer joined the meeting at 7.18p.m.

There was a concern that, given the water shortages in the local area experienced in recent months, that this needed to be resolved before planning permission could be granted for further development.

Initials:.....

Ward Cllr. Alan Pickering joined the meeting at 7.20p.m.

Cllr. Chapman reported that water supply was not a matter decided by KCC but rather this was determined by central government. In the last six weeks KCC had held sessions with representatives from the Environment Agency, water companies, local farms and businesses on how best to provide resilience for the water supply in the near future. Cllr. Chapman noted that he was on the Flood Risk group which was reviewing water quality and related issues.

44/26 Local issues

a) 8 The Chennels - Felling of Oak tree

The Clerk reported that ABC had been contacted to ascertain if permission had been granted to the tenants at the property to fell the tree but no clarification had been received at the time of the meeting. The Clerk agreed to follow-up on the matter.

b) Hope House/Meadow View Hedge

The Clerk noted that Kent Highways had been contacted to arrange for the hedge and verge to be cut as the overgrown hedge was causing an obstruction to the residents at Hope House. The verge had been cut but not the hedge and it was agreed that the matter should be pursued by the Clerk.

c) Allotments – Water Provision

Cllr. Sargent agreed to follow up on the matter with Terry Haigh.

d) Sports Event – Summer (August)

The Chairman suggested arranging taster sessions for football, cricket, netball, paddle tennis and a couple of residents had agreed to help.

Charlton Athletic Football Club has recently supported a similar event in Tenterden and could be an option for High Halden.

It was agreed that the Clerk should contact the Clerk at Tenterden Town Council to assess the popularity of similar sessions held in Tenterden.

Following a discussion it was agreed that there is insufficient time to arrange one for this year and that it was preferable for the event to be held in the spring or late Summer of 2027.

e) Parish Council Stall at Summer Fayre on 18th July

It had been agreed that the HHPC would set up a stall to publicise local issues like the Local Plan 2042, re-establishing a Speedwatch group, the MUGA, the allotments, the adoption of trees in the orchard and recruitment of a new parish councillor. There would be printed plans showing the sites within the parish which had been allocated for potential development in the 2042 Plan. Cllr Farmer, Kirby and Morgan have offered to assist in manning the stall.

45/26 Community Warden/Kent Police/Anti-Social Behaviour

The Clerk reported that the Community Warden was back at work following a period of ill-health. It was agreed that the Clerk should check if his responsibilities had been documented. Cllr. Wayne Chapman offered to assist to ensure that the parish was receiving the full support of the Community Warden.

Cllr. Morgan reported an incident of sheep in a field near Hookstead being chased by some youngsters who ran off after being challenged by an adult. Following the incident police arrived from Maidstone to interview the residents. The Chairman agreed to provide details of the incident to PC Aaron Hobday and possibly ask the residents if they would be interested in joining NHW.

The Coffee Morning on 5 June was attended by PC Aaron Hobday which was well received. PC Hobday has recently been assisting with the Rural Taskforce. However, he will be in the village at various times to do some traffic monitoring. He has been asked if one of the nights could be a Wednesday when the village experiences a number of motorbikes coming through. PC Hobday will be attending future coffee mornings.

Initials:.....

Cllr. Pearson reported that an email had been received from a local resident highlighting an incident when two vehicles had been driven through the village at speeds in excess of 60 mph possibly racing each other. There was a discussion about the various measures which had been suggested by HHPC but KCC Highways had not been supportive for a variety of reasons. The Clerk was requested to set up a meeting on Zoom to discuss the Parish Council's Highways Improvement Plan and to invite Fiona Wiles, Community Engagement Officer (Ashford).

46/26 Assets of Community Value and Parish Property

The Clerk reported that Bournes had been contacted and that the Verti-drain work on the adult football pitch had been scheduled for September 2026.

The Clerk had contacted Mint Fresh regarding the condition of the bus shelters and the frequency of their cleaning visits. It was agreed that the Clerk should check on the renewal terms for the contract.

The Chairman agreed to speak to Rob Tompsett about cutting back the overgrown hedge by Hookstead Green

The installation of the post by Aspire on Jubilee Park was discussed and the Chairman agreed to ask if Rob Tompsett could quote for moving it so that it would prevent vehicles entering the playing field.

The necessary repairs to the Pavilion were discussed and it was agreed that the Chairman would follow-up with Cllr. Kirby, notably the hole in the roof above the men's changing room and the soffits and fascias which needed cleaning.

The Chairman noted that the lock for the Hookstead entrance of Jubilee Park had been cut-off as the key was lost and has been replaced with a new combination lock by Tompsetts

The grass-cutting on the Village Green had not been carried out properly, in some places areas had been scalped. Again this will be discussed with Tompsetts. We will also request that a collection cut will be completed prior to the Summer Fayre on 18 July 2026.

The Clerk added that he was following up on the status of the applications for Assets of Community Value ('ACV') status for St Mary's The Virgin Church, the War Memorial Hall, The Chequers on the Green and the Cricket Field and he would be responding with the required information. Cllr. Sargent reported that the deeds for the Memorial Hall had not been lodged with the Land Registry but that the ACV application should continue to be pursued. The Chair asked that the Clerk gives priority to o the Cricket Field.

Cllr. Chapman left the meeting at 8.10pm.

47/26 Christmas Tree Arrangements

The Village Christmas tree last year was very kindly paid for by a resident. The HHPC will look into finding a willing contributor for this year's tree.

48/26 Ward Councillor's Report

Cllr. Pickering reported on the following matters:

- a decision on the new unitary local government structure would be announced on 17 June 2026
- the Local Plan was proposing 5,000 new houses in Ashford and the surrounding urban area
- ABC was proposing to introduce new working patterns for its staff with two days in the office and three days working from home

Cllr. Pickering left the meeting at 8.20pm.

49/26 Planning

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

PA/2026/0788: Land south of Ely Place, Shawlands Lane TN26 3JA

Application with technical details related to Permission in Principle PA/2025/1497

The Chairman outlined the concerns surrounding the application noting that a draft response would be circulated to the Parish Councillors for comment and forwarding to ABC before the close of the 12 June deadline.

Initials:.....

Resolved: Oppose. Cllr. Kirby did not participate in the discussion by the Councillors on this matter or participate in the resolution.

PA/2026/0878: 18 Wildflower Grove, High Halden TN26 3FE

Application for a garden room. **Resolved: Support**

NOT/2026/0955: Marten Farm, Martens Lane, High Halden TN26 3JP

Application for change of use, conversion of agricultural building to house. **Resolved: No Objection**

PA/2026/0897: Little Acorn Farm, Harris Lane, High Halden TN26 3JP

Lawful Development Certificate, change of use & permanent siting of mobile home with associated residential curtilage. **Resolved: Concern that this was another retrospective planning application**

The Parish Council noted ABC's decisions since the last meeting with the Parish Council's response in italics:

PA/2026/0368 – Hadlemore Oak, Redbrook Street, High Halden

Orangery – Approved by ABC with conditions 27.05.2026 - *Support*

PA/2026/05437 – Berenden Park, Ashford Road, High Halden

Conversion of garage to room – Approved by ABC with conditions 28.05.2026 – *Support*

REFUSALS: None to consider.

WITHDRAWN: None to consider.

Two members of the public left the meeting

Other Planning Matters

Hatchentan, Land south-east of Hatchentan, Plurenden Road, High Halden

A letter had been received from Simon Cole, Assistant Director Planning and Development at ABC on 10 June 2026 responding to the letter on 15 May 2026 sent by the HHPC and this would be circulated to the councillors for discussion at the next Parish Council meeting on 8 July.

The Parish Council's request for Bank Holiday cover by the Enforcement team has been agreed by ABC.

ENF/2025/0310: Field West of Old Place Cottage known as Oak Tree Field, Woodchurch Road, High Halden

The Chairman reported that a detailed written response had been prepared and sent to the Planning Officer, Matthew Apperley and copied to Simon Cole ahead of the Planning Committee meeting held on 20 May 2026. A further submission was made by Matthew Apperley in response to the HHPC additional comments. But unfortunately HHPC were not permitted to respond, therefore it was read out at the meeting by Cllr. Alan Pickering. The Chairman and a resident gave presentations at the meeting, however, these appeared not to be taken into consideration and the application was upheld on the evidence of Mr Apperley's planned visit when he witnessed evidence of the site being inhabited. It was noted that the period in which a judicial review could be considered had not yet expired and it was for local residents to consider whether they wished to take any further action. It was agreed that consideration needed to be given as to the best way of approaching similar planning applications in future and the Clerk was requested to set up a meeting on Zoom to discuss this matter further.

APPEALS:

AP-90812 & AP-90813: Potkiln Farm, High Halden TN26 3IJ:

Replace window with French doors – listed building consent and planning permission refused.

On 26 May 2026 it was confirmed that on appeal the application was again refused.

Initials:.....

50/26 RESOLUTIONS:**1a. Correspondence for ratification**

It was unanimously resolved that the letter to Simon Cole dated 16 May 2026 requesting Bank Holiday Enforcement Cover May 2026 be ratified.

1b. Receipt of Injunction and follow up on outstanding matters

It was unanimously resolved that the letter to Simon Cole dated 15 May 2026 regarding matters following receipt of a copy of the Injunction be ratified.

1c. Old Place Cottage – Response to Matthew Apperley – Report to the Planning Committee

It was unanimously resolved that the response to Matthew Apperley dated 16 May 2026 for the Planning Committee be ratified.

1d. Old Place Cottage – Planning Committee presentation on 20 May 2026

It was unanimously resolved that the presentation materials for the Planning Committee on 20 May 2026 be ratified.

1e. Bourne House/Summerhill Cottages – Parish Council comments

It was unanimously resolved that the letter to Matthew Apperley dated 20 May 2026 with comments on the planning application be ratified.

2. Asset Register

The Clerk circulated a copy of the current Asset Register which remained unchanged from the previous meeting.

3. Use of Jubilee Fields

Following the PC's offer to Tom Dodd for the use of the Jubilee Fields for 'bootcamps', the Clerk confirmed that there had been no response.

4. Finances**4a. To receive the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2026**

- (i) **To receive the Internal Auditor's Report and note its comments:** It was noted that the Internal Auditor inspected the accounts on 3rd June 2026 and found the financial records to be up to date and accurate.
- (ii) **To receive the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2025-2026:** Received and noted.
- (iii) **To approve the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1):** Received and noted.
Resolved: That the Annual Governance Statement 2025-2026 be approved and for the Clerk/RFO and Chair to sign.
- (iv) **To approve the Accounting Statement (Section 2):**
Resolved: To approve the Accounting Statements 2024-2025 and for the Chair to sign.
- (v) To set the commencement dates for the exercise of Public Rights
Said dates are the 22 June 2026 to 31 July 2026 and the announcement will be made on 19 June.

4b. To receive the updated accounts as at the 31 May 2026

Members received the updated accounts for 2026/2027 as at 31 May 2026.

4c. To receive a bank reconciliation as at the 31 May 2026

Members received the bank reconciliation as at the 31 May 2026.

Resolved: Cllr. Sargent to sign the bank reconciliation in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

Initials:.....

4d. To receive the timesheets for the Caretaker and Park Keeper

Members noted the timesheets from the Caretaker and the Park Keeper for May 2026.

4e. To agree payments in accordance with the Budget

The invoices against the payment schedule were checked and agreed, by Cllr Sargent. Note: as recommended by the Auditor that the Chair should not be signing the payments sheet.

4f. To agree updated Payment List for 10 June 2026

The invoices against the payment schedule were checked.

Balances as at 31 May 2026

Unity Trust Current Account: £14,698.03

Unity Trust Savings Account: £40,825.07

Total: £55,523.10

Payments:

	Payee	Invoice	Description of Transaction	Gross
BACS	Tompsett	TL/INV3801	Grounds Maintenance	906.94
BACS	Lionel Robbins		Internal audit	140.00
BACS	Satswana		DPO renewal	180.00
BACS	Npower		Pavilion electricity	53.64
BACS	Npower		Pavilion electricity	76.52
BACS	Npower		Overdue Pavilion electricity	150.64
BACS	MI Payroll		Payroll Services	25.00
BACS	David Rice		Clerk's salary 1 to 30 June (to be paid 30/06)	525.20
BACS	HMRC		Clerks Tax/NI (to be paid 19/07)	509.92
BACS	Mint Fresh		Bus stop cleaning	55.32
BACS	Marcus Digby		Park keeper services May	127.10
BACS	Barrie Croucher		Caretaking Services May	76.26
DD	Unity Trust		Monthly Charge June	7.00
DD	Hugo Fox		Email account	20.99
DD	Hugo Fox		Website	4.79

Initials:.....

BACS	David Rice		Expenses May	56.60
		Total		2915.92

4g. Update re Clerk applying for credit card

The Clerk explained that a Corporate Purchasing Card (the 'Card') was available from Unity Trust. The costs for the Card were £50 for setting it up and a £3 monthly fee.

Resolved: That the Clerk make an application for the Corporate Purchasing Card and the application form be signed by Cllrs. Sargent and Morgan as signatories on the HPC Unity Trust Bank accounts.

4h. s.106 update

The Chairman confirmed that additional s.106 funds were due in connection with the application relating to the Meadow View development. The Clerk was requested to confirm any conditions relating to the s.106 application.

51. Policies & Administration

a.) Village Green Policy

The Chairman explained that a review of the Village Green Policy had been carried out, amendments made and circulated.

Resolved: That the Village Green Policy as revised and circulated be adopted and added to the website by the Clerk.

b) Booking Form for Village 'Green' Space

The Chairman noted that a review of the booking form for the Village 'Green' Space had had been carried out, amendments made and circulated.

Resolved: That the Booking Form for Village 'Green' Space as revised and circulated be adopted for future use and made available on the website.

c) Revised Meeting dates

The meeting dates for 2026-2027 had been moved to the second Wednesdays instead of second Mondays of each month.

Resolved: That the revised meeting dates for 2026-2027 be approved.

52/26 Information items:

a) KALC

- (i) It was noted that from October 2026 it would not be possible to "call-in" planning applications to enable a longer period of review. If however, applications conflicted with planning policy or had implications for traffic or the local infrastructure, the Ward Councillor could still be asked to "call in" the application.

A member of the public left at 9.00 pm.

9.00pm: In accordance with the Standing Orders a resolution was passed to continue with the meeting.

- (ii) ACRE had requested funding pledges from parish councils in order to support village halls coping with emergency matters like environmental and financial challenges. It was agreed to consider pledging some funds to ACRE.

b) Village Hall Committee

Cllr. Sargent reported that both he and Kim Buggins would be resigning from the Village Hall as Chairman and Secretary respectively at the end of the financial year on 30th September 2026. Repairs are needed to the roof and floor.

Initials:.....

c) HHVEC Update:

The Chairman noted that a Risk Assessment and Public Liability Insurance confirmation had been received for Simia in relation to the circus-themed event to be held on the Village Green on 18th July. **Resolved: To donate £50 to HHVEC for a raffle prize at the Summer Fayre.**

53/26 Items for the next Parish Council meeting:

- Jubilee Fields ditch clearance
- New wheelie bins for the Pavilion
- Hopes Grove pothole to be reported to ABC
- Staffing Committee meeting to be held in July
- Christmas tree arrangements
- Hope House hedge

54/26 Date of the next meeting.

Parish Council Meeting: Wednesday 8 July 2026 at 7pm

With no further business to transact the meeting closed at 9.40pm

Signed:

Date:

Initials:.....