

Hoo St Werburgh and Chattenden Parish Council**The Minutes of the Meeting of Hoo St Werburgh and Chattenden Parish Council
Held at Hoo Village Hall on Thursday 6th November 2025 at 7.00pm.**

Parish Councillors present: Cllr Fray
Cllr Sparks
Cllr Cutting
Cllr Hopson
Cllr Chester
Cllr Pearce
Cllr Sands
Cllr Wood
Cllr Styles
Cllr Mitchell
Cllr Dunkley
Cllr Williams
Cllr Koroma
Cllr Francis
Cllr Tildesley

Also: Sherrie Babington - Parish Clerk, Ward Councillor George Crozer, and members of the public.

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Sands.

1. Apologies for Absence.

Members who cannot attend a meeting shall tender their apologies to the Parish Clerk prior to the meeting. 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.

Apologies were received and accepted for:

- Cllr Gissing - Holiday
- Cllr Barton - Work

2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations.

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.

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were no requests for dispensations.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting.

It was proposed by Cllr Sparkes, seconded by Cllr Chester, and agreed by all present that the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd October 2025 be approved and signed.

The approved Minutes were then signed and dated by the Chairman.

4. Matters Arising.

Overgrown vegetation at access junction to the Abbey Farm Development – the Clerk confirmed that this had been reported to Medway Council as agreed.

5. **Public Session.**

To allow members of the public to raise any issues with the Parish Council.

Residents raised their ongoing concerns regarding road safety at the roundabout and approach to the Abbey Farm development including:

- Overgrown vegetation and hedging obscuring sightlines for vehicles and pedestrians.
- Difficulties crossing safely, particularly at peak times, and reference to previous accidents in the area.
- The need for improved signage and vegetation clearance.

Members discussed the concerns and noted the need to improve visibility in this area.

It was agreed that:

- The PC would contact Medway Highways to request officers review visibility and signage.
- The Parish Council would further explore the introduction of a Community Speed Watch scheme.

Actions:

- ***Clerk to liaise with Medway Highways.***
- ***Cllrs Wood and Cutting to liaise with Medway Council regarding Speed Watch and report findings to a future meeting.***

6. **Urgent Matters.**

Cllr Pearce raised an urgent matter regarding the reduced number of Christmas lights visible in the village centre and requested clarification on installation numbers and associated costs.

The Chairman reported, following the Clerk's contact with Medway Council, that five column lights had been installed as ordered and agreed within the existing budget.

He stated that Christmas lighting remains a Parish Council budget item and would therefore not be delegated to the Events Committee. Any future review of the arrangements will be undertaken by the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

7. **Financial Matters.**

a. **Financial Statement.**

To receive the financial statement and to authorise any payments.

The monthly financial statement was circulated and considered by members. The bank balances and payments were reviewed.

It was proposed by Cllr Sparkes, seconded by Cllr Fray, and agreed by all present that the financial statement be approved.

b. **2026/2027 Budget.**

Members noted that the 2026/2027 Budget and Precept must be agreed by the January Parish Council meeting.

It was agreed that the Clerk would prepare a draft budget and precept recommendation for consideration by the Finance and General Purposes Committee, for presentation to the January PC meeting.

Action: Clerk / FA&GP Committee to progress draft budget and precept proposals.

8. Clerk's Report.

To consider any matters arising from the Clerk's Report.

The Clerk reminded members that the Parish Council was invited to make one nomination for the KALC Community Awards Scheme 2026, with nominations required by the end of January 2026.

It was agreed that Members would consider potential nominees and bring suggestions to the December/January meetings.

Action: Members to consider a recipient from the 2025 Award.

9. Chairman's Report.

To receive the Chairman's Report.

The Chairman reported on the following:

Brook Retaining Wall

The Chairman updated members on erosion affecting the brook retaining wall to the rear of properties on the parish. A quotation sought by Medway Council had indicated repair costs in the region of £20,000.

He explained that under riparian ownership rules, the responsibility for maintaining and funding repairs rests with the adjoining landowners.

The Chairman advised that arrangements were being made for a meeting with Medway Council (flood and drainage officers), Highways and affected property owners to discuss obligations and potential approaches to the works.

10. New Community Centre.

To receive an update for the new Community Centre.

The following report was given:

- The planning application for the new Community Centre has now been formally submitted to Medway Council.
- The Stage 2 Cost Plan has been reviewed by the Community Centre Committee. This confirmed that the core build remains deliverable within existing funding; however, there was a shortfall required to complete the full scheme, including demolition of the existing hall, landscaping and all external works.
- Arrangements were now being made for a meeting with Medway Council to discuss the release of the previously approved Section 106 funds and to explore potential additional funding support to bridge part of the shortfall.

Members noted that once planning approval is secured, further external fundraising will be essential, including applications to grant-making bodies, corporate sponsorship, and other fundraising schemes.

The Parish Council reiterated its commitment to the project and noted that the Community Centre Committee would continue to oversee detailed work on funding and phasing options.

Action: Chairman, Vice Chairman and Clerk to progress discussions with Medway Council regarding Section 106.

11. Memorial Garden.

To receive a report on the Memorial Garden.

Cllr Williams reported that the Memorial Garden project is progressing well:

- Clearance works and internal fencing have been undertaken, creating defined areas, including a dedicated section for ashes interment and an area suitable for pets.
- Preliminary landscaping has begun, and the next stage will include creating wheelchair-accessible paths within the site.
- Further planting, seeding and finishing works are to be carried out over the coming weeks, with completion anticipated shortly.
- Quotations for full rotivation and seeding of the main grassed area are being obtained for consideration.

Action: Clerk/Cllr Williams to obtain and circulate quotations for rotivation and seeding works for approval at a future meeting.

12. Parish Council Committees.

a. Events Committee.

Cllr Cutting presented the Events Committee report and gave a full update on planned and forthcoming activities.

- **Harvest Tea – 4th October 2025**

The Harvest Tea held in the Village Hall was very well attended, with all places taken and positive feedback received from residents.

Members recorded their thanks to the Events Team and volunteers for their work.

- **Christmas on the Green – Saturday 29th November 2025**

Arrangements are in hand for the annual Christmas on the Green event, to include performances by The Two Nightingales, the Salvation Army Band, the Christmas tree light switch-on and a visit from Santa.

First aid cover and music licence requirements are being confirmed.

- **Pantomime – Saturday 3rd January 2026**

The Parish Pantomime will be “Dick Whittington”, performed by Chaplin Pantos at 2.30pm in the Village Hall. Tickets will go on sale in December, with prices to be confirmed.

Members once again expressed thanks to Ward Cllr Sands for financial support through his Ward Councillor Fund.

- **New Year’s Eve Event – 31st December 2025**

The Committee confirmed arrangements for a family-friendly New Year’s Eve event in the Village Hall. Cllr Gissing has agreed to lead on this, supported by the Events Team. The format will be ticketed, with a DJ and “bring your own” food and drink.

b. Environment Committee.

Members received the Environment Committee minutes, and the following was agreed:

Pottery Road Recreation Ground

- Footpath improvement works are scheduled to commence at the beginning of November. The works will involve phased closure of footpaths to allow resurfacing and repairs.

- As part of the works, patch repairs to the car park will be carried out. This will require the car park to be closed for one day; the contractor will confirm dates in advance to allow liaison with the school and Village Hall users.

Kingshill Recreation Ground

- New self-closing gates have been ordered in line with previous recommendations.
- Footpath resurfacing works at Kingshill are also planned, though a firm start date has not yet been provided by the contractor. Members will be updated when this is confirmed.

Joint Community Centre / Environment Committee Meeting – 27th October 2025

A joint meeting of the Community Centre Committee and the Environment Committee took place to consider the relocation of play equipment at Pottery Road Recreation Ground in connection with the new Community Centre project.

It was agreed that the main build contract for the new Community Centre will include removal of the existing play equipment, and that—rather than relocating the current units—it would be more cost-effective to purchase new equipment once the Community Centre is complete and operational.

In the meantime, the Parish Council will continue to progress plans for the caged MUGA facility at Kingshill Recreation Ground to ensure that alternative recreational space is available during Community Centre construction.

Hoo Common

- An Environment Committee site meeting at Hoo Common will be arranged with Medway Valley Countryside Partnership to review tree management work for 2026.

Actions:

- ***Clerk to publicise Pottery Road footpath and car park works (including dates and closures) via social media, and direct liaison with the school and Village Hall users.***
- ***Clerk/Environment Committee to arrange a site meeting at Hoo Common.***

c. Finance, Audit and General Purposes Committee.

Members to meet ahead of January PC meeting to prepare draft budget and precept proposals for 2026/2027.

13. Planning Matters.

a. Planning Applications Received.

The following planning applications were considered by the Parish Council:

MC/25/1874 - 1 Ropers Farm , Ropers Green Lane, High Halstow, Rochester
Installation of a new swimming pool and associated filtration room/store/changing room.

Parish Council: No objection.

MC/25/1909 - 5 Guelder Rose Drive, Hoo St Werburgh, Rochester, Medway
Construction of a single storey rear extension in place of existing conservatory.

Parish Council: No objection.

MC/25/2058 - Unit 1A London Medway Commercial Park, James Swallow Way, Hoo
Relocation of compactors and installation of HGV electric vehicle charging points with associated plant, infrastructure and works

Parish Council: No objection.

MC/25/2088 - Land Between Frittonia and Number 1 , Lodge Hill Lane, Chattenden

Construction of 2 x detached dwelling houses with associated landscaping and parking to infill plot of land.

Members discussed this application in detail and agreed to raise a strong objection on the following grounds:

- *Proximity to the high-pressure gas pipeline and concerns regarding safety and suitability of additional residential development in this location.*
- *Impact on the character and setting of the lane through incremental infill.*
- *Potential ecological harm, including impacts on habitats associated with existing green infrastructure and nearby nightingale and other protected species.*

Action: Parish Council comment: Objection for the reasons set out above.

b. Planning Decisions by Medway Council.

MC/25/2073

10 Searchlight Heights Hoo St Werburgh Rochester Medway ME3 8NF

Application for a Lawful Development Certificate (Proposed) for the construction rear dormer with Juliet balcony and rooflight to front to facilitate a loft conversion to create bedroom and ensuite
Approval

MC/25/1972

Land to the South of Stoke Road Adjacent Yew Tree Lodge Hoo St Werburgh Rochester Medway ME3 9BH

Details pursuant to condition 26 (CSWMP) on planning application MC/19/3129 for Outline planning application with all matters reserved (other than means of access) for up to 100 dwellings and associated works and infrastructure.

Discharge of Conditions

MC/25/1921

Land to the South of Stoke Road Adjacent Yew Tree Lodge Hoo St Werburgh Rochester ME3 9BH

Details pursuant to condition 22 (Travel Plan) on planning permission MC/19/3129 - Outline planning application with all matters reserved (other than means of access) for up to 100 dwellings and associated works and infrastructure.

Discharge of Conditions

MC/25/1828

46 Tenor Drive Hoo St Werburgh Rochester Medway ME3 9LP

Retrospective application for a new boundary treatment

Withdrawn by Applicant

MC/25/1731

The Five Bells 1 Stoke Road Hoo St Werburgh Rochester Medway ME3 9BE

Retention of mobile seafood stall

Approval with Conditions

MC/25/1727

137 Bells Lane Hoo St Werburgh Rochester Medway ME3 9HY

Details pursuant to conditions 5 (Acoustic assessment) and 8 (Cycle Storage) on planning permission for MC/24/2533

Discharge of Conditions

MC/25/1703

1-8 Button House And 1-8 Hendry House Elmwood Road Hendry House Rochester ME3 8PG

Replacement of uPVC windows and doors for updated uPVC units.

Approval with Conditions

MC/25/1431

Unit 215 Kingsnorth Industrial Estate Hoo St Werburgh Rochester Medway ME3 9ND

Construction of a new building (Class B2), provision of tanks including the storage and processing of cooking oil, methanol and wastewater, installation of electric generators, provision of access roadway and parking and ancillary works including perimeter enclosure, overhead gantry and landscaping - retention of existing building Class B2)

Approval with Conditions

MC/25/1337

Land At Former Deangate Ridge Golf Club Dux Court Road Hoo Rochester ME3 8RZ

Details pursuant to condition 3 (Surface Water Disposal), 4 (Air Quality), 5 (LEMMP), 6 (Biodiversity Method), 7 (Landscape Details), 8 (Landscape Management Plan), 9 (AMS and tree protection), 11 (Archaeology), 14 (Parking Layout), 15 (Cycle) and 16 (Refuse) on planning permission MC/23/2597 - Change of use from former golf course to community park comprising works to existing access and car park, cycle parking, formation of footpaths, landscaping, tree/scrub planting, boundary treatments, site interpretation and benches with associated works.

Split Decision

MC/25/1163

64 Bells Lane Hoo St Werburgh Rochester Medway ME3 9HU

Construction of a vehicle crossover onto a classified road.

Approval with Conditions

c. Appeals.

Members noted the following appeal decisions:

Appeal Ref: APP/A2280/W/25/3368758 – 53 Chattenden Lane, Chattenden

Change of use of amenity land to residential garden land.

Decision: Appeal dismissed.

Appeal Ref: APP/A2280/W/25/3367776 – 47 Chattenden Lane, Chattenden

Construction of single storey side extension and part single / part two storey rear extension including change of use of side piece of land.

Decision: Appeal dismissed.

d. Other Planning Matters.

Members discussed broader planning and Local Plan issues, including:

- Ongoing concerns about the capacity of local infrastructure to accommodate additional large-scale developments.
- The submission of the Medway Local Plan, with further work on transport assessments and other evidence still required.

14. External Reports.

a. Hoo Village Hall (Oversight Committee).

Members received an update on the Village Hall from the Oversight Committee.

- Lighting upgrades and hot water improvements have been completed.

- Hall finances are stable, with bookings strong and slightly ahead of forecast.

b. Alliance of Hoo Peninsula Parish Councils.

The Chairman reported that he and Cllr Crozer were attending Peninsula Parish Council meeting to keep up to date of the views of the Alliance Parishes.

c. Police and Pact Report.

Members received a report regarding police matters and the PACT:

- The recent PACT meeting was well attended. Specific incidents such as anti-social behaviour and property damage had been followed up by the police.
- Members noted correspondence from Medway Council regarding monthly surgeries with the Community Safety Unit (CSU) Police Inspector, held via Microsoft Teams, which Parish Councillors can attend (one representative per Parish Council).

d. Ward Councillors' Reports.

Ward Councillors Sands, Pearce and Crozer reported on the following matters:

- The evolving position regarding the Medway Local Plan and likely timetable for consultation and submission.
- Ongoing discussions with Medway Council about parking enforcement, traffic management, verge parking and school-related congestion in Hoo.
- Progress with new recycling initiatives, including the roll-out of additional bins for small electrical items.
- A recent sewage incident affecting residents on Marley Road, with Southern Water now having completed clean-up works and compensation processes under way.
- Transfers of certain social housing stock to alternative providers and the need to monitor management standards.

The Parish Council thanked the Ward Councillors for their continued support and updates.

15. Date of the next meeting.

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 4th December 2025 at Chattenden Community Centre.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman closed the meeting to the press and public at 9.05pm.

Signed:_____

Dated:_____