

Harrietsham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 25th February 2026 at 7.30pm
in the Booth Hall

Cllr T Sams welcomed all present to the meeting.

Public Discussion

The following items were raised during the public discussion:

- Potholes on the A20 and Station Road - Cllr T Sams confirmed that these have been reported to KCC Highways.
- Request for an update regarding a 20mph speed limit in Church Lane - The Clerk reported that this request had been declined by KCC Highways.
- The poor service offered by South East Water during the water outage - Cllr T Sams confirmed that this had been discussed at length during the January meeting.
- Concerns regarding light/noise pollution and traffic levels relating to the proposed Panattoni development at the old Marley site. Cllr Dean stated that Councillors had met with representatives who had confirmed they were open to suggestions and would address any concerns raised. Councillors suggested that residents attend the forthcoming public consultation on the 27th February to speak with Panattoni representatives directly.
- It was noted that the traffic surveys, currently underway along the A20, are linked to the Heathlands development.

The Clerk stated that a report had been provided by County Cllr Emberson, confirming that the budget mentioned in January had been approved, increasing the council tax by 3.99% for the forthcoming financial year. Cllr Emberson has managed to have the A20 average speed cameras reintroduced onto the agenda with the Kent & Medway Safety Camera Partnership and Kent Police and is hoping to be able to update the Parish Council in March. There had been an enquiry regarding the bollards on the A20, in the 40mph zone, and these will be upgraded in the next financial year. The Clerk added that she was unsure whether this related to the item previously raised with the HIP Officer by the Parish Council.

Cllr Roots asked for thanks to be minuted to B&S Supplies in the village, who had assisted with supplying water to residents during the water outage. A letter of thanks will be arranged. **ACTION: Clerk**

Present

Cllr T Sams (Chair), Cllr J Sams, Cllr C Roots, Cllr S Brown, Cllr R Dayes, Cllr G Dean, Cllr S Donley, Cllr S Luck, Cllr T Griffiths, RFO/Amenity Manager Mr M Cuerden and Parish Clerk Mrs A Broadhurst

4 Members of Public

1 Apologies for absence

Cllr E Powell, Cllr R Welham, County Cllr S Emberson, Borough Cllrs C Houlihan, S Povey and M Nedelcheva

2 Minutes of the last meeting

Parish Council Meeting 28th January 2026: The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr Dean; with 8 in favour, 1 abstention.

3 Disclosures and confidential items

Changes to the Register of Interests

There were no changes to the register.

Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

Cllr C Roots: Agenda Item 15 - Chair to Sign Documentation on behalf of the William Stede Charity as he is a Trustee.

Cllr S Brown: Agenda Item 15 - Chair to Sign Documentation on behalf of the William Stede Charity as he is a Trustee.

Cllr R Dayes: Agenda Item 15 - Chair to Sign Documentation on behalf of the William Stede Charity as he is a Trustee.

Requests for Dispensation

No requests were submitted.

4 Items to be taken in Closed Session

It was agreed by all present that the following items would be discussed in a Closed Session:
Agenda Item 19 - Staffing Matters

5 Planning

5.1 The outstanding planning applications were noted.

5.2 The approved applications were noted.

5.3 Other Planning Matters

Cllr Roots reported that the application for Land south of Ashford Road had been approved, however no wheel washing of vehicles on leaving the site had been included, which was very disappointing.

6 Environmental

6.1 Other Environmental Matters

- Transfer of West Street Green: The Clerk informed all present that the Parish Council would not be able to simply have the land transferred as hoped, this would need to be arranged through Adverse Possession. The Clerk had asked Weller's Law Group to progress with this, and the necessary documentation is now being gathered to support the application. This includes locating historical documents dating as far back to 1979 as possible. Wellers will be charging a fixed fee of £1,200 (+vat) and the Land Registry fees for the application. The Clerk is hoping to have the relevant documentation submitted to them imminently.
- Deed of Variation for Saxon Place s106 Agreement: The Clerk reported that she had received an email from Karen Dunn to inform her that MBC have passed the outstanding Deed of Variation to a third solicitor. BDW has, once again, supplied a legal pack for the legal agreement to be signed off. The Clerk had checked the planning portal before the meeting and the final decision is still expected in April.
- Refurbishment of Village Sign & Repair to Wall by the Stream in West Street: The Amenity Manager had met with 3 contractors and quotes had been received, however one needed further clarification as it had included replacing the bench by the stream, which was not part of the required work. After discussion it was agreed to give delegated powers to the Amenity Manager and Environmental Committee to progress with the work required (once clarification had been sought from the third contractor). Cllr Dayes then proposed that £2,700 be set aside for the remedial work to the village sign and repointing of the wall by the stream. This was seconded by Cllr Dean, with all in favour. **ACTION: Amenity Manager & Env. Cttee**
- New Bench in War Memorial: It was noted that there had been discussion at an Environmental meeting regarding installing a bench closer to the entrance of the war memorial, as the current one is located behind where the annual service is held. After discussion the Amenity Manager was asked to see whether the current bench could be relocated to the front left corner (by the Cherry tree). It was proposed by Cllr J Sams that the Amenity Manager and Environmental Committee be given delegated powers, with a budget of £2,000 to either move the bench or arrange for a replacement, if required. This was seconded by Cllr Brown, with all in favour. **ACTION: Amenity Manager & Env. Cttee**
- Clarification of Timing for Lake Treatments: The Amenity Manager confirmed that he had contacted the contractor regarding the aerator which is at an angle; they will visit to rectify this. The timing of the lake treatments will be clarified with Hawkhurst Fish Farm to ensure that the decision reached at the January meeting (to treat every other year) was the correct course of action. **ACTION: Amenity Manager**
- Glebe Field Tree Works: The Clerk reported that it has been too wet to carry out the works previously approved. The cost of installing boards to stop the machinery sinking was quoted at approx. £1,000. The work can be carried out during the Spring or Summer, but the trees would need to be photographed to ensure there were no nests before work commenced. The Clerk had voiced concerns about this, as the work is not urgent and had subsequently discussed deferring the work until after the nesting season. The contractor confirmed they will hold the price until the Autumn and Councillors unanimously agreed that this was the best course of action. **ACTION: Clerk**
- Transfer of 1/3 of Glebe Field from MBC: The Clerk reported that she has received an email from MBC containing a draft Heads of Terms for the transfer of the portion of land. The Clerk had responded to ask for an idea of the costs involved, as the Parish Council will be expected to pay the legal fees for both parties. MBC had confirmed that, if everything goes as expected, their costs would be in the region of £3,500. The Clerk had then contacted Wellers

Law Group to request a quote for acting on the Parish Council's behalf. Unfortunately, the person overseeing the adverse possession is on annual leave currently and no response had been received from their associate before the meeting. After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Griffiths that the Clerk be given delegated powers to progress the matter with Wellers, seconded by Cllr Luck; with all in favour. **ACTION: Clerk**

- The Clerk reported that the Tree Inspector had flagged that the surveys for Woodlands Walk and the Glebe Field/West Street Green cost £560 each (£1,120 total) however, if completed together, it would reduce the total cost to £700. As the Woodlands Walk survey is due, the Clerk had asked the Inspector to complete both at the same time to reduce the overall cost to the Parish Council moving forward.

7 Finances

7.1 Income and Expenditure spreadsheets: The finance sheets were proposed as accurate by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr Dean; with all in favour.

7.2 Other Financial Matters

- **Non-Payment of Allotment £200 charge:** The Clerk reported that there was an outstanding charge of £200, following a tenant being evicted from their allotment. They had been offered the opportunity to pay over 4 months, but no response had been received and the first payment date had passed on the 10th February. After discussion Cllr Dean stated that a letter should be sent to inform the tenant that the Council will now be progressing the matter through the Small Claims Court. Cllr T Sams stated that, as this is a financial matter, it should be overseen by the F&GP Committee and the RFO was asked to write to the tenant, as the correspondence from the Clerk had been ignored to date. **ACTION: RFO**

8 Highways

It was noted that a report had been circulated before the meeting.

The Clerk reported that there is a Road Safety & Active Travel Group (RSATG) seminar at KCC's Sessions House on the 21st April. Cllrs Griffiths and Donley had offer to attend, if members of the Highways group were unavailable. Cllr Luck confirmed she would be able to go, and it was agreed that Cllr Griffiths would also attend. **ACTION: Clerk**

Cllr Luck reported that new 7.5t weight restriction signs have been installed on the A20 by Chegworth Road.

Cllr Roots reported that Speedwatch had recently caught 9 drivers speeding on the A20 recently (one vehicle travelling at 45mph and three at over 40mph).

9 Post Office Closure

The Clerk reported that the Post Office will close at the end of the week (Friday 27th February) however the date for the mobile service commencing has still not been confirmed. Cllr Roots added that it appeared there was interest in the Lenham Post Office operation continuing after it is sold.

10 Kent & Medway Local Government Restructure Consultation

The Clerk reported that, from the responses received to date from Councillors, the general view was that Councillors either disagreed or strongly disagreed with all 5 of the proposed models for restructuring Kent. Councillors also strongly or strongly disagreed with the questions relating to the benefits of the restructuring. Two Councillors had suggested model 4b and one had suggested 4d. After brief discussion it was agreed that the response should state that the Parish Council strongly disagreed with the restructuring proposals and all the models contained within the consultation. The Clerk would also add that the least worst-case scenario for Harrietsham was 4B, but the Council would prefer it remained as it is currently. **ACTION: Clerk**

11 Village Hall Trust Representative

The Clerk reported that, following co-option at the last meeting, Cllr Welham had offered to become the fifth Trustee for the Village Hall and had had a walkaround with Cllr Donley. It was therefore proposed by Cllr Griffiths for Cllr Welham to become the fifth Trustee for the Village Hall Trust, seconded by Cllr Dean; all in favour.

Cllr Roots highlighted that the current Trustees need to be updated on the Charity Commission's website and the RFO (currently the acting VHT Treasurer) offered to amend this accordingly. **ACTION: RFO**

12 A20/West Street Green Christmas Lights

It was noted that quotes had been circulated before the meeting which gave the option to lease or purchase either 5, 7 or 10 column Christmas lights for along the A20. After brief discussion it was proposed by Cllr J Sams that the Parish Council lease 7 motifs for 3 years at a total cost of £11,640 (+ vat), seconded by Cllr Luck; with all in favour. There was general discussion regarding the design and the Clerk confirmed she would ask Gala to arrange some designs to be discussed at a future meeting.

ACTION: Clerk

Cllr Roots then spoke regarding the Parish Council previously investigating a power supply for West Street green. The quote at the time had been in the region of £6,000 and he proposed that this be progressed. As the motion was not seconded, it was concluded that this project would not move forward.

13 Proposed Changes to Santa's Grotto

Cllr Griffiths reported that he wished to change the Christmas event to include the wider community. Having spoken with the Church, they would be interested in arranging a Nativity. The event could also include the usual grotto, a dance group, some stalls and possibly opening the bar area in the hall. The Council would still oversee the event, with the usual assistance being required, and it was noted that the individual groups would need to produce their own risk assessments. It was agreed that this would be an agenda item for the June meeting, to discuss the details further.

ACTION: Clerk

14 Big Lunch

It was agreed that this year's Big Lunch would be held on Sunday 7th June.

15 Approval for the Chair to Sign Documents on behalf of the William Stede Charity

The Clerk and Cllr Roots explained that the William Stede Charity required the Parish Council to hold their documentation on their behalf and, following the death of the tenant, the Chair of the Parish Council was required to sign for the Trustees to progress with selling a parcel of land held by the Charity. Cllr Roots explained the history of the village charities and confirmed that the proceeds from the sale would be shared between the three charities. It was proposed by Cllr Dean for Cllr Powell to sign the various documents on the Charity's behalf. This was seconded by Cllr J Sams, with 5 in favour, 1 against and 3 abstentions.

ACTION: Cllrs Roots & Powell

16 Future Events

27th February - Panattoni (Old Marley Site) Public Consultation (Dog & Bear, Lenham 2.00-7.00pm)

17th March - Gardening Society AGM

27th March - Friends of St Johns AGM (Church 7.00pm)

11th April - HIB Annual Quiz

23rd May - Friends of St John's Bingo Afternoon (Village Hall 2.00-5.00pm)

17 Items for Future Consideration

A20 Traffic Surveys - *Cllr Roots*

Village Christmas Event - *Cllr Griffiths (June agenda)*

18 Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 25th March 2026 at 7.30pm in the Booth Hall

The Meeting was then adjourned at 8.56pm.

19 Staffing Matter

- Amenity Manager Vacancy: The Clerk gave a brief update regarding the vacancy currently being advertised.

The Clerk & RFO left the meeting at 9.05pm.

- Clerk's Salary Review: Following the Clerk's completion of CiLCA and PIALC it was proposed by Cllr Griffiths to accept the recommendation of the Staffing Committee, backdated to qualification date. This was seconded by Cllr Dean, with all in favour. **ACTION: RFO**

With no further matters to discuss the meeting was closed at 9.12pm.