

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 3rd September 2026 at 7.08pm.

Parish Councillors present: Cllr Fray
Cllr Williams
Cllr Barton
Cllr G Francis
Cllr Sparks
Cllr Mitchell
Cllr Koroma
Cllr Cutting
Cllr Dunkley
Cllr Wood
Cllr Pearce

Also present:

Sherrie Babington - Parish Clerk
Members of the Public

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Fray.

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 Chester – Holiday
- Cllr Styles – Holiday
- Cllr Grice – Work
- Cllr J Francis – Personal reasons
- Cllr Tildesley – Personal reasons

Apologies were also received from:

- Ward Councillor George Crozer

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.

Cllr Pearce declared an interest in the allotments item under the Clerk's Report due to his position as an allotment holder.

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

Members were reminded that Medway Council had issued revised Declaration of Interests forms. The Clerk advised that forms had been circulated and requested that any outstanding forms be completed in full, with "N/A" entered where appropriate, and returned for checking before submission to Medway Council.

There were no requests for dispensations.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting.**

Members considered the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 2nd July 2026.

It was proposed by Cllr Barton, seconded by Cllr G Francis, and agreed by all present that the minutes as circulated be approved and signed.

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

4. **Matters Arising.**

The following were reported to members:

Members were advised that the previous refusal by Medway Council to provide an additional litter bin in the Memorial Garden area had been reconsidered following intervention by Ward Cllr Sands, and that a bin would now be provided in due course.

Members noted the update.

5. **Urgent Matters.**

To consider any urgent matters raised by members.

No matters were raised.

6. **Parish Councillor Vacancy.**

Members were advised that following the statutory Notice of Vacancy no request for an election had been received and the vacancy could therefore be filled by co-option.

One application had been received from Ron Sands and circulated to members with the meeting papers.

It was proposed by Cllr Dunkley, seconded by Cllr Pearce, and agreed by all present that Ron Sands be co-opted to the Parish Council.

Resolved: That Ron Sands be elected by co-option as a Parish Councillor.

Cllr Sands signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting as a member of the Council.

Action: Clerk to complete the remaining co-option paperwork and arrange the necessary Parish Council email and records updates.

7. **Public Session.**

A member of the public raised concerns regarding the 7.5 tonne weight restriction and the implications of construction traffic associated with the Gladman development. Members discussed the likely use of temporary traffic arrangements and construction management plans. Cllr Pearce agreed to monitor any relevant Traffic Regulation Order or temporary arrangement and report back when further information became available.

Concerns were also raised regarding the emerging Esquire Developments proposal in Chattenden, including highway capacity, the road layout and the cumulative impact of further development. Members noted that no formal planning application had yet been submitted and that the Parish Council would consider the proposal in full once an application was received.

A member of the public asked for information about the cost and maintenance of a publicly accessible defibrillator for a local site. Members provided general information on the likely cost of the unit, external cabinet and installation. Cllr Pearce advised that grant funding may be available and agreed to provide further information.

8. **Financial Matters.**

a. **Financial Statement.**

To receive the financial statement and to authorise any payments.

Members reviewed the monthly financial statement, bank balances and payments. The Clerk advised that the cost of printing the summer newsletter was lower than usual because the finished format differed from that originally ordered.

Members also noted that the Medway Youth Services summer activities had taken place as planned and that the PC Grant had supported the sessions.

Resolved: That the financial statement be approved.

Proposed: Cllr Williams

Seconded: Cllr Wood

Agreed by all present

9. **Clerk's Report.**

Members received the Clerk's update on work undertaken since the July meeting, including contractor meetings for the Memorial Garden and Christmas lighting project and the letting of three vacant allotment plots to applicants from the waiting list.

Allotments – Monthly Inspections

The Clerk advised that the allotment holder who currently undertook the monthly inspections would cease doing so from 1st October 2026. Members discussed the need for the inspections to continue so that plots could be monitored against the tenancy conditions.

Cllr Wood offered to undertake the monthly allotment inspections from 1st October 2026. Members agreed to this arrangement.

Resolved: That Cllr Wood undertake the monthly allotment inspections from 1st October 2026 and report any concerns to the Clerk for action under the Council's allotment tenancy procedures.

Action: *Clerk to provide Cllr Wood with the relevant inspection information and keys.*

10. **Chairmans Report.**

The Chairman reported on activities undertaken during the summer, including attendance at a Kent Association of Local Councils briefing on asset transfers.

The Chairman also reported attendance at Community Centre, Memorial Garden and Events meetings and at the consultation regarding the proposed battery energy storage facility at Solomon's Farm.

The Chairman also recorded attendance at the funeral of former Parish Councillor Noreen Chambers and noted the Parish Council's donation and condolences to her family.

Members noted the Chairman's Report.

11. New Community Centre.

To receive an update for the new Community Centre.

Members received an update on the New Community Centre project from Cllrs Williams and Sparks as follows:

The project team had continued to meet regularly and consultants were being instructed to complete the work required to discharge the pre-commencement planning conditions. A soil investigation was expected to take place shortly, with acoustic and environmental work also being progressed. The aim was to have the pre-commencement condition information ready for submission to Medway Council by the end of September.

On funding, members were advised that the revised Section 106 funding agreement with Medway Council had effectively been agreed in principle and the Council was awaiting the final document and outstanding schedule information from Medway Council's Legal Department. The Clerk and project team would continue to press for completion.

Members were also advised that a further approximately £456,000 of indexed Section 106 funding had been identified from future committed development, although the timing of receipt would depend upon development progress.

The complexity of preparing a substantial National Lottery application was discussed. Members supported the proposal to investigate appointing an experienced professional grant writer, with costs to be brought back to the Council for approval before any appointment was made.

Work would also continue to identify and approach businesses across the Hoo Peninsula regarding potential support for the project.

Resolved:

- That the Community Centre project update be noted.
- That work continue to discharge the pre-commencement planning conditions and progress the technical project information.
- That the Clerk and project members continue to press Medway Council for completion of the Section 106 funding agreement.
- That options and costs for professional grant-writing support be investigated and reported back to the Council.
- That work continue to identify potential business and grant-funding opportunities.

12. Memorial Garden.

To receive a report on the Memorial Garden.

Cllr Williams, Chairman of the Memorial Garden Committee, presented the final report and associated policies, prepared with the Parish Clerk following the Committee's meeting the previous day.

Cllr Fray raised concern that the final report had only been circulated earlier that day and that members had not had sufficient time to consider it fully. The Clerk explained that the Memorial Garden Committee had met the previous day to finalise the outstanding matters and that the report had been completed and circulated as soon as possible thereafter.

Cllr Williams expressed his considerable disappointment at the prospect of a further delay, particularly given the amount of work undertaken by himself and the Clerk to bring the project to this stage and the length of time the Memorial Garden project had already been progressing.

Members discussed the report at length. The principal matters requiring further consideration were the proposed consecration of the ground and its implications, floral arrangements, memorial plaques and charges, memorial benches, and the proposed areas for interment, scattering of ashes and pet memorials. It was noted that the policies needed to be agreed before the Garden could become fully operational and applications could be progressed.

It was agreed that members would benefit from viewing the site before reaching a final decision. A site meeting would therefore be arranged, followed by a separate informal meeting to consider the outstanding points and policies in detail before these were brought back to the Parish Council for formal approval. In the meantime, members agreed that the time-sensitive ground preparation and grass seeding should proceed when conditions permitted.

Resolved:

- Ground preparation and grass seeding to proceed.
- A site meeting and subsequent informal meeting to be arranged to consider the outstanding Memorial Garden policies and management arrangements.
- The Clerk to recirculate the Diocese/DAC advice, report, policies and relevant plans to members in preparation for the meeting.

Action: Clerk and Vice-Chairman to arrange the site meeting and informal meeting.

13. Parish Council Committees.

a. Events Committee.

Members received a report from the Events Committee.

- Bookings for the Harvest Tea were reported to be approximately 70% full and arrangements were progressing.
- Preparations for Christmas on the Green were largely in place, with selection boxes still to be purchased.
- The Christmas Fayre scheduled for 5th December had received 12 stall requests. Members were encouraged to assist with obtaining raffle and bottle stall donations.
- Tickets for the January pantomime would be available at Christmas on the Green, with a limited early-booking discount.

The Committee was also progressing plans for the 2027 Dinosaur event, with 19 stalls already booked and further enquiries received.

Members noted that additional volunteers would be welcomed and that the Committee would need to consider the 2027 programme carefully in view of the Parish Council elections.

b. Environment Committee.

To receive a report from the Environment Committee.

Monthly Safety Inspection of Play Areas.

Members considered the August 2026 Play Area Inspection Report.

It was noted that the Parish Warden had tightened three loose fixings on the Pottery Road Junior Multi Play equipment, removing the need for the quoted £52 contractor repair.

Members considered the protruding metal pole adjacent to the Cable Runway. It was noted that this could not safely be removed in-house because of the surrounding surfacing. Safeplay had quoted £280 plus VAT to undertake the work.

Members also considered the remaining minor repairs, including missing fixing caps and a loose basket swing fixing.

An at-height inspection of the Cable Runway at a cost of £125 plus VAT was considered necessary because the equipment was not travelling fully and the relevant components could not be adequately inspected from ground level.

Members agreed that the entrance gate also required attention and that, where appropriate and safe to do so, the Parish Warden should purchase the necessary fixings or tools and undertake minor repairs in-house.

Resolved:

- That the £52 repair already completed by the Parish Warden be removed from the contractor works.
- That the remaining minor works identified in the report be approved.
- That Safeplay be instructed to remove the protruding metal pole at a cost of £280 plus VAT.
- That the Cable Runway at-height inspection at a cost of £125 plus VAT be approved.
- That the Parish Warden continue to undertake suitable minor repairs where safe and appropriate.

Proposed: Cllr Wood

Seconded: Cllr Pearce

Agreed by all present.

Action: Clerk to instruct Safeplay and arrange the removal of any associated rubbish/materials as necessary.

c. Finance, Audit and General Purposes Committee.

Christmas Lights

Members considered the circulated report regarding Christmas lighting for the village centre.

The Clerk explained that the most cost-effective scheme was the purchase option, including lights for the agreed lamp columns and 5 metre column wraps for the five smaller village-centre columns. The contractor had confirmed that the wraps could be fitted more tightly around shorter columns to ensure the lights remained above the required minimum height.

Members noted that the principal outstanding issue was the electrical infrastructure. Medway Council required its highway contractor to install the necessary infrastructure in the lamp columns, with the cost still to be confirmed. The arrangements for electricity supply and charging also required further clarification.

It was agreed that the scheme should proceed with the intention that the lights would be operational by 28th November 2026. Ward Councillors agreed to assist with discussions with Medway Council where necessary and establish the arrangements used for Christmas lighting in other Medway town centres.

Resolved: That the Parish Council proceed with the purchase option for the Christmas lighting scheme as set out in the circulated report and authorise the Clerk to progress the required infrastructure and electricity arrangements, subject to the approved budget and contingency.

Proposed: Cllr Dunkley

Seconded: Cllr Pearce

Agreed by all present.

Action: Clerk to progress the Christmas lighting order and infrastructure arrangements and liaise with Ward Councillors as necessary.

14. Planning Matters.

a. Planning Applications Received.

The following planning applications were considered by the Parish Council:

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.

Resolved: Members agreed to object to the application, having regard to the site constraints, proximity to the gas main and other planning concerns raised through the representations.

MC/26/1245 - 22A Walters Road, Hoo St Werburgh, Rochester, Medway, ME3 9JR

Construction of a detached self-build family dwelling and extension to an existing outbuilding to the rear of the site for conversion to an annexe for supported living accommodation.

Resolved: That the Parish Council raises no objection to the application.

MC/26/0436 - Chattenden Barrack and Lodge Hill Recreational , Chattenden Lane, Chattenden, Rochester, Medway

AMENDED DETAILS Outline planning permission (all matters reserved except for access) for up to 450 new dwellings (Class C3) and small-scale Class E use, together with associated open space and infrastructure and ancillary works (this application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement).

Resolved: Members confirmed their objection to the amended outline application for up to 450 dwellings. The Clerk was asked to resend the Parish Council's objection so that it was clearly recorded against the current application.

MC/26/1275 - Kingsnorth Power Station, Power Station Access Road, Hoo

Reserved matters application to consider matters of (appearance, layout, landscaping and scale) together with details to seek discharge of conditions 11 (Materials), 12 (Brick plinth), 13 (Hard and Soft landscaping), 14 (Tree survey), 15 (Landscape management plan), 16 (Boundary treatment), 17 (Landscape and Ecological management plan), 27 (Cycle storage), 29 (Refuse storage), 30 (Layout), 31 (Vehicle parking management plan), 38 (Ventilation and extraction) and 40 (Climate change and Energy efficiency statement) pursuant to outline permission MC/21/0979 - Construction of flexible EG (iii)/B2/B8 use class buildings, sui generis uses for energy uses and a lorry park, together with servicing, parking, landscaping, drainage, remediation, demolition and earthworks.

Resolved: That the Parish Council raises no objection to the application.

MC/26/1336 - Land At The Former Sturdee Club And Land At Stoke Road , Hoo

Details pursuant to condition 18 (Information Boards) on planning permission MC/23/2857 for Construction of 134no. residential dwellings (including affordable and over 55's homes), children's nursery (Class E(f)), cafe/community hub (Class E(b)/F2(b)) and commercial/retail floorspace (E(g)/E(a), new public open spaces, sustainable urban drainage systems, landscaping and biodiversity areas and play areas. Access to be from 4no. new locations from Stoke Road. Provision of roads, parking spaces and earthworks - Demolition of the Sturdee Club and associated structures.

Resolved: That the Parish Council raises no objection to the application.

MC/26/1334 - Land to the West of Sharnal Street, High Halstow, Rochester

Construction of 9x residential custom-build dwellings, with access, landscaping and associated works.

Resolved: Members agreed to object on the basis that the site was not allocated for development under the adopted development plan and on other relevant planning grounds to be set out in the Parish Council response.

MC/26/1412 - 42 Everest Drive, Hoo St Werburgh, Rochester, Medway

Construction of a single storey rear and side wrap around extension - Demolition of existing garage.

Resolved: That the Parish Council raises no objection to the application.

MC/26/1404 - Chattenden Farm, The Workshops, Lodge Hill Lane, Chattenden
Retrospective application for three existing historic barns, existing workshop, small store, and land to be used in conjunction with land rural management in association with static caravan subject to Existing Lawful Development Certificate Application - MC/26/1401) for the siting of a residential static caravan.

Resolved: Members agreed to object, including on the basis of the site's planning history, concerns regarding the stated rural management use and proximity to the SSSI.

MC/26/1560 - The Depot , Ratcliffe Highway, Hoo St Werburgh, Rochester, Medway Application Details pursuant to condition 6 (Noise assessment) on planning permission MC/22/1498 for hardstanding and enclosure of area between depot and highway for light industrial use including car sales.

Resolved: Members raised no objection to the submitted noise assessment pursuant to the existing permission.

MC/26/1626 - 3 Aveling Close, Hoo St Werburgh, Rochester, Medway, ME3 9BZ
Construction of a single storey rear extension, including the demolition of the existing rear extension.

Resolved: That the Parish Council raises no objection to the application.

MC/26/1511 - 1 Balls Cottages, Vine Cottage, Main Road, Chattenden, Rochester
Alteration of the width and height of existing brick wall to the front/north boundary of the dwelling.

Resolved: Members agreed to object to the amended wall proposal, considering that it would remain visually intrusive and over-dominant in the street scene.

b. Planning Decisions by Medway Council.

MC/26/1336

Land at the Former Sturdee Club and Land at Stoke Road Hoo St Werburgh ME3 9BJ
Details pursuant to condition 18 (Information Boards) on planning permission MC/23/2857 for Construction of 134no. residential dwellings (including affordable and over 55's homes), children's nursery (Class E(f)), cafe/community hub (Class E(b)/F2(b)) and commercial/retail floorspace (E(g)/E(a), new public open spaces, sustainable urban drainage systems, landscaping and biodiversity areas and play areas. Access to be from 4no. new locations from Stoke Road. Provision of roads, parking spaces and earthworks - Demolition of the Sturdee Club and associated structures
Discharge of Conditions

MC/26/1108

25 Church Street Hoo St Werburgh Rochester Medway ME3 9AH
Construction of single storey extension to create 2no. golf simulators (Use Class E)
Approval with Conditions

MC/26/1066

Tamarisk Main Road Chattenden Rochester Medway ME3 8PP
Construction of a porch to front, a two-storey extension to rear, a part first floor extension, removal and replacement of thatched dormer windows - Demolition of existing porch and conservatory
Approval with Conditions

MC/26/1284

Darnet Yard Kingsnorth Works Kingsnorth Industrial Estate Hoo St Werburgh Rochester Medway
Details pursuant to conditions 2 (Traffic Management Plan), 3 (EV Charging) and 4 (Flood Warning Plan) on planning permission MC/26/0137 - part retrospective application for change of use from industrial waste land to sui generis use - storage of raw materials (aggregates, sand, gravel and soil), processing of

aggregates (sorting, cleaning and mixing of cement) and distribution, together with installation of a concrete silo plant, associated concrete base and control room and retention of existing office building and associated works

Discharge of Conditions

MC/26/1203

Land At The Former Sturdee Club And Land At Stoke Road Hoo St Werburgh ME3 9BJ

Application for a Non-Material Amendment on planning permission MC/23/2857 to amend plot placement and parking strategy

Approval with Conditions

MC/26/1160

54 Main Road Hoo St Werburgh Rochester Medway ME3 9AB

Application for a Lawful Development Certificate (proposed) for construction of a single storey rear extension - removal of existing covered area

Approval

MC/26/0829

Kingsnorth Power Station Power Station Access Road Hoo St Werburgh Rochester Medway

Details pursuant to conditions 36 (Waste Management Plan) and 45 (Waste Hierarchy Study) on planning permission MC/21/0979 - Outline planning application with all matters reserved except access (to be taken from Eschol Road) for the construction of flexible EG (iii)/B2/B8 use class buildings, sui generis uses for energy uses and a lorry park, together with servicing, parking, landscaping, drainage, remediation, demolition and earthworks

Discharge of Conditions

MC/25/2256

Flanders Farm Ratcliffe Highway Hoo St Werburgh Rochester Medway ME3 8QE

The construction of a cold store building including associated engineering operations and landscaping

Approval with Conditions.

c. Appeals.

Members received an update regarding planning appeals.

Members noted that the Gladman appeal at land off Ratcliffe Highway had been allowed. Cllr Pearce reported that, although the appeal had been allowed because of the wider housing land supply position, the Inspector had nevertheless accepted a number of concerns raised locally, including sustainability, countryside impact and conflict with the Neighbourhood Plan.

Members also noted the enforcement appeal relating to Vine Cottage, 1 Balls Cottages, Main Road, Chattenden, which was to be determined by written representations.

An update was provided on the outstanding Taylor Wimpey appeal decision. Members were advised that the Inspector had invited further submissions following subsequent planning decisions and changes to national planning policy, with a decision now expected later in September.

d. Other Planning Matters.

Local Plan Examination Hearing

Members noted that phase one of the Medway Local Plan examination hearings would commence on 15th September 2026, with phase two planned for November. Professional representations were being made on behalf of local campaign groups, including the Save the Hoo Peninsula campaign.

Cllr Pearce advised that the Save the Hoo Peninsula campaign had raised nearly £20,000 and had instructed Richard Buxton Solicitors for the hearings.

Members discussed the possibility of the Parish Council making a future financial contribution. The Clerk advised that any request should be submitted through the Council's grant application process so that it could be properly considered at a future meeting.

Action: Clerk to provide the grant application form for any formal funding request.

15. Parish Council Strategic Plan.

Members considered the outcome of the availability consultation for the informal Strategic Planning Workshop.

Saturday 17th October 2026 had received the highest level of availability and members agreed that the workshop should take place on that date from 9.00am to 1.00pm at Hoo Village Hall, subject to final venue arrangements.

Members agreed that Local Government Reorganisation and potential asset transfers should form an important part of the workshop. Members were encouraged to identify assets or services that the Parish Council may wish to consider taking on in the future.

Resolved: That the Strategic Planning Workshop be held on Saturday 17th October 2026 from 9.00am to 1.00pm, with the Clerk authorised to make the necessary arrangements and prepare the programme.

Action: Clerk to confirm the venue and circulate the workshop details and programme.

16. External Reports.

a. Hoo Village Hall.

Members received the written report from the Hoo Village Hall Manager.

Members received an update on the Village Hall. Further decorating works had been undertaken with the assistance of Community Payback, including work to the foyer, hall and toilets.

The planned meeting with the school regarding use of the Village Hall car park had been cancelled by the school at short notice and would be rearranged. Members remained concerned about school-related parking and asked that the matter be pursued firmly.

Members also discussed improved signage making clear that the car park was for Village Hall users. The Clerk was asked to obtain quotations for suitable additional signage.

Action: Cllr Dunkley to rearrange the meeting with the school. Clerk to obtain quotations for additional car park signage.

Members noted the report.

b. The Alliance of Hoo Peninsula Parishes.

No update was received.

c. Police and PACT Report.

Members were advised that the next PACT meeting would take place on 29th September 2026.

Representatives from the Police, Community Safety, Speedwatch and other partner organisations were expected to attend. The meeting would have an open agenda, with parking and access among the matters likely to be discussed.

Members were advised that, as part of suicide awareness activity, an illuminated support bench would be installed in Hoo on Saturday 26th September 2026, with contact details for support organisations displayed on the bench.

d. Ward Councillor Reports.

Cllr Sands reported on work with residents regarding property boundary/watercourse issues, arrangements to update names on the War Memorial, suicide awareness work, organised racing on Ratcliffe Highway and liaison with local community organisations.

Cllr Pearce advised that a fuller written report would be circulated. His verbal update included the proposed battery energy storage facility near Solomon's Farm, Local Government Reorganisation, the Save the Hoo Peninsula campaign, public rights of way and grounds maintenance, road safety and parking outside the school, and the Gladman appeal decision.

Members noted that Local Government Reorganisation would have significant implications for parish councils, including the potential transfer of assets and services, and that these matters would be considered further at the Strategic Planning Workshop.

17. Date of the next meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday 1st October 2026 at Chattenden Community Centre.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman closed the meeting to the press and public at 9.40pm.

Signed: _____

Chairman

Dated: _____