

**HIGH HALDEN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Monday 8 December 2025 at 7pm in the Memorial Hall**

Present: Cllr. Hoath (Chairman), Mr. P. Drury, Mrs. S. Farmer, Ms. J. Morgan, Mr. J. Pearson and Mr. J. Sargent.
In Attendance: Mrs L Goldsmith (Clerk), Ward Member Alan Pickering, 7 members of the public.

166/25 ADMINISTRATION:

Fire Exits; Fire Meeting Point; Mobile Phones. The Clerk confirmed that there have been no requests to record the meeting.

167/25 APOLOGIES

Apologies: An apology for absence was received from County Councillor Wayne Chapman and Cllr. Kirby and the reasons for absence were accepted.

168/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Cllr. Hoath and Drury declared an interest in agenda item 176/25 4(a) regarding allotment rent.

169/25 CO-OPTION

The Clerk reported that ABC has advised that the casual vacancy created by the resignation of Cllr. Wheeler can now be filled. The Chairman proposed and it was agreed co-opt Sally Farmer, who had previously applied and interviewed, on to the Parish Council

Resolved: That Sally Farmer be co-opted to fill a casual vacancy.

Declaration of Acceptance of Office/Declaration of Interests

The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was read out and signed by Cllr. Sally Farmer and signed by the Clerk as Proper Officer of the Council. Cllr. Farmer will be issued with a copy of the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct and will complete a Declaration of Interests.

170/25 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Resolved: That the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 10 November 2025 and of the Extraordinary General Meeting held on the 2 December 2025 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

171/25 CLERKS REPORT/PAST MATTERS

The Clerk reported that MP Katie Lam's survey on crime and policing should have reached every household in the Weald of Kent.

172/25 COUNTY COUNCILLOR/WARD MEMBER REPORTS

Ward Member Report:

Ward Member Alan Pickering advised that he is now a Member of the Audit Committee at ABC and reported that, in his opinion, the statistics regarding the management of ABC are disappointing. The Clerk advised that ABC has decided to back option 4d, which is a four-unitary model with changes to existing council boundaries. It was noted that Ward Member Alan Pickering is kindly assisting the Clerk in trying to get a response from ABC about whether a Duty Officer will be on call over the Christmas period.

County Councillor Report

Wayne Chapman, County Councillor had sent a report. A copy of the report will be placed on the website.

173/25 OPEN SESSION

A member of the public expressed their concern about the condition of the BT Box on the green. The BT Box is no longer in use and all the equipment and lighting have been removed. The BT Box did provide a useful source of lighting for people walking across the village green in the dark.

Ward Member Alan Pickering expressed his support for planning proposal PA/2025/2168 subject to conditions that the site is not to be used for commercial use and that the proposed lighting is low level.

Two members of the public objected to planning proposal PA/2025/1979.

A member of the public queried the number of caravans on the Plurenden site.

A member of the public asked for an explanation of the planning process and speaking at the Planning Committee at ABC which was provided.

Initials:

174/25 PLANNING

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

PA/2025/1979: Caravan 100m West of Old Place Cottage, Woodchurch Road, High Halden

Change of use of land to residential caravan site, for one Romani family. To consist of one static caravan, two touring caravans, parking for two cars, with associated hardstanding, new fencing, gate, water treatment plant and infrastructure (Retrospective).

Resolved: Object. We do not believe that there are any mitigating circumstances that would outweigh the potential harm caused by this retrospective request for a change of use of the land. There are already gypsy traveller community sites on this stretch of road with a significant number of pitches. We believe there is already a sufficient supply of pitches to meet the needs of this community. There is no domestic electricity supply or sewage treatment. We do not believe this is a sustainable site as there are no pavements nor bus service to connect the site to the village. The site is outside the village confines. We continue to be disappointed that we are yet again presented with a retrospective application after we have initiated an enforcement investigation. If the Planning Officer is minded to approve the application we would ask that the Ward Member calls the application in.

PA/2025/2168: Lodgeland Farm Cottage, Harbourne Lane, High Halden

Proposed riding menage including boundary treatments and lighting to supply existing stables and equestrian land with landscaping and biodiversity enhancements.

Resolved: Support subject to conditions that the site is not used for commercial purposes and that the lighting is low level and has shields.

PA/2025/2142: Blackborne Cottage, Ashford Road, High Halden

Proposed partial replacement of existing rear conservatory.

Resolved: Support.

PA/2025/2153: Blackborne Cottage, Ashford Road, High Halden

Listed Building Consent for partial replacement of existing rear conservatory.

Resolved: Refer to Listed Building Officer.

PA/2025/2139: Land to the South East of Forge House, Biddenden Road

Chalet-style building for use as self-contained holiday lets/accommodation.

Resolved: Support. We would like the existing planting and hedges retained and the current car park tidied and completed when construction works are completed.

PA/2025/2038: Tenterden Business Centre, Ashford Road, St Michaels

Variation of condition 12 (Use Class) for planning permission 22/00605/AS "To replace the approved Unit 4 of application 19/01525/AS with a new unit to provide ancillary space and services to units 1,2, and amendments to parking layout"; to allow for part of unit 4 to be mixed use, to include a veterinary practice Class E(c).

Resolved: Support.

8.12pm Ward Member left the meeting and one member of the public.

OTH/2025/2201: Land North of Durrants Green, Oak Grove Lane, High Halden

Details submitted pursuant to conditions 3 (Materials), 4 (Walls & Fences) & 11 (Drainage works) of planning permission PA/2024/1942.

Resolved: Refer to Planning Officer to decide.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE AGENDA: None received.

DECISIONS: Response from HHPC in *italics* where applicable.

Approvals:

PA/2025/1702: Storage Land at Homestall Farm, Ashford Road, High Halden

Change of use of land to a commercial vehicle depot and storage yard (Retrospective). Proposed new building for vehicle and material storage and associated landscaping.

Resolved: Object. The Parish Council does not want to see another infill building and we object to the height. Otherwise, we have no objections.

Initials:

NOT/2025/0585: Egerden Farm, Martens Lane, High Halden

Prior approval for the change of use and associated operational development of an agricultural building and land within its curtilage to 3no. dwelling houses.

Resolved: Object. We are concerned about the increase in traffic/vehicles on this single-track access road. We consider this proposal to represent an overdevelopment of the site.

PA/2025/1875: Old Place Farm, Woodchurch Road, High Halden

Erection of closed boarded fence and replacement gates with brick piers (retrospective).

Resolved: No objection.

PA/2025/1920: Old Place Farm, Woodchurch Road, High Halden

Single storey extension to barn/outbuilding with associated fenestration (retrospective).

Resolved: No objection. We are disappointed that this is another retrospective application for this site and we encourage the applicant to visit the planning portal to seek advice and support for any future developments.

PA/2025/1910: Harbourne Farm House, Harbourne Lane, High Halden

Erection of two storey and single storey side extension and a single storey rear extension following the demolition of an existing single storey side extension and rear conservatory, 3 new dormer windows to the rear elevation. Proposed changes to the fenestration. Erection of a timber pergola to the rear elevation.

Resolved: Support.

PA/2025/1595: Coach House, Hookstead, High Halden

Proposed single-storey side extension.

Resolved: Support. We would like to support the objection of the neighbouring property regarding concerns about privacy.

PA/2025/1580: Land to the west of 1 Durrant Green, Ashford Road, High Halden

Two storey self-build detached dwelling with associated parking area.

Resolved: Object on the grounds that the egress is already dangerous to accommodate even more vehicles and that the proposed house is too big and does not fit in with the existing dwellings in the vicinity. We would like to request that the Ward Member calls the application in if the Planning Officer is minded to approve it.

Refusals:

PA/2025/1674: Potkiln Farm, High Halden

Replace window and brick surround with French doors to North East elevation.

Resolved: Refer to the Listed Building Officer.

PA/2025/1715: Potkiln Farm, High Halden

Listed Building Consent to remove window and brick infill below and to the right of and insert timber double glazed french doors to North East elevation.

Resolved: Refer to the Listed Buildings Officer.

Withdrawn: None to consider.

OTHER PLANNING MATTERS

ENFORCEMENT CASES:

ENF/2025/0309: Hatchentan, Plurenden Lane, High Halden:

It was reported at the last meeting that Enforcement has cleared the site. The Clerk has asked ABC for confirmation that a Duty Officer will be on call over the Christmas period.

ENF/2025/0310: Field West of Old Place Cottage known as Oak Tree Field, Woodchurch Road, High Halden, alleged stationing of mobile homes for residential purposes.

It was noted that a planning proposal has been submitted.

ENF/2025/0286: Coombewood Fishery, Redbrook Street High Halden, alleged erection of tepee.

The Clerk reported that Enforcement has contacted the interested parties and has invited them to submit a planning proposal for a change of use of land.

Initials:

APPEALS

AP-90772 - Land 100m East of, Homestall Farm, Ashford Road, High Halden,

Erection of 2no. residential dwellings, associated parking, landscaping and widening of existing access.

Resolved: To ratify the wording of a statement submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in between meetings and by the deadline of the 25 November 2025.

175/25 PARISH MATTERS

1. Community Warden/Kent Police/Anti-Social Behaviour

a) To discuss any recent ASB issues.

Cllr. Hoath reported that sadly a group of young people waiting for the school bus had been seen removing baubles from the Christmas tree on the village green and throwing these at the passing traffic. The Clerk had advised the Community Warden who had attended the next morning.

b) To arrange to meet with the new Beat Officer

The Clerk reported that Kent Police have now been able to double the number of rural Beat Officers to balance with those based in the urban wards and the town centre. PC Aaron Hobday has been assigned to work with PC Darren Laker in the area. Unfortunately, PC Aaron Hobday is unable to make any of the Parish Council meetings due to be held over the next few months. The Clerk has suggested a separate meeting and is waiting for PC Aaron Hobday to suggest some dates and times.

2. Recruitment of new Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer

Cllr. Hoath reported that an Extraordinary Meeting was held on the 2 December 2025 to receive the resignation of the Clerk and to discuss advertising the role. It was noted that the job advert has been placed on both the KALC and Parish Council website, on social media and on the noticeboards. Cllr. Hoath thanked the Clerk for everything she has done for the parish over the past five and a half years.

3. Review of provision/facilities for young people

Cllrs. Hoath has arranged to meet with representatives from Vibe UK about what activities they can offer young people in the parish at 11am on Friday 19 December 2025 at the sports pavilion. Cllr. Morgan and the Clerk will try and attend. The Community Warden had suggested that Ward Member Alan Pickering could fund the proposed ramps for the recreation ground from his Member Grant. The Clerk will discuss this suggestion with Ward Member Alan Pickering.

4. Highways:

a) Outstanding

The lamppost on The Chennells has not been repaired: The Clerk to ask Ward Member Alan Pickering for assistance in getting the lamppost repaired as ABC is not responding.

b) New Faults to be reported

Large pot hole on A28 on the approach to the village from Bethersden just outside the 30mph zone.
Hedge between Halden Close and Hookstead encroaching on the footpath along with debris, impacting visibility for cars exiting Halden Close.

Hedge on the A28 towards Tenterden has been cut but debris has been left on the footpath.

Broken drain cover on Hookstead near to The Chennells.

Blocked drain on A28 near junction to Hopes Grove.

The Clerk to find out from the Highways Steward who is responsible for removing accumulated debris on the side of footpaths.

The Clerk to ask the Community Warden to place some advisory notices on cars that continue to park on the Hookstead/A28 junction.

Initials:

5. Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)

The Clerk reported that the Community Engagement Officer has now updated the HIP and a copy will be placed on the website.

6. Ordinance Survey Map: Deferred to the next meeting.

7. High Halden Infrastructure Needs/S106 Considerations

It was noted that Cllr. Hoath has sent some comments on the report to the Clerk. The Clerk advised that the statement can now be kept on file until such time that ABC releases information about the sites being allocated to parishes in the draft Local Plan.

8. KALC Community Awards 2025:

Resolved: To discuss this as a confidential item.

176/25 RESOLUTIONS

1. Dates of Meetings 2026

Resolved: To adopt the dates of the meetings for 2026.

2. Grounds Maintenance Contract 2026-2028

Cllrs. Drury, Morgan and the Clerk met with three contractors, (a fourth did not wish to quote), on the 26 November 2025 and did a walkabout with each one. All three contractors have since submitted a quote. Members considered a spreadsheet prepared and circulated by the Clerk giving details of the quotes.

Resolved: To award the grounds maintenance contract for one year to Tompsetts Landscaping for a total cost of £7,226.27 (excluding VAT).

3. Grass Pitch Funding

Members discussed the report from Pitchpower noting that the football pitches are eligible for a total grant of £40,960.20 from the Football Foundation which would be paid across 6 years. The funding can be spent on enhanced maintenance operations and should be used to undertake the recommendations that are in the report. The Clerk advised that match funding is required for years 3-6 as set out in the table below.

	Grant	Parish Council Contribution	Total	
Year 1	£10,240.00	£-	£10,240.00	100%
Year 2	£10,240.00	£-	£10,240.00	100%
Year 3	£6,826.70	£3,413.30	£10,240.00	67%
Year 4	£6,826.70	£3,413.30	£10,240.00	67%
Year 5	£3,413.40	£6,826.60	£10,240.00	33%
Year 6	£3,413.40	£6,826.60	£10,240.00	33%
Total	£40,960.20	£20,479.80	£61,440.00	67%

The Clerk advised that Brewmasters would be willing to assist with the required match funding if finances allow. It was noted that the Parish Council has spent more than this sum on the pitches over the last 6 months. The Clerk suggested and it was agreed that it made financial sense for the Parish Council to accept and apply for the grant funding.

Resolved: The Clerk to complete the paperwork for the grant funding with the Parish Council being the applicant but to advise Hornets and Brewmasters that financial contributions over the period from both football clubs are expected.

Initials:

9pm: 4 members of the public left the meeting.

In accordance with Standing Orders it was resolved to continue with the meeting.

4. Budget/Precept 2026-2027

a) To approved the Budget for 2026-2027

Cllrs. Hoath and Drury declared a pecuniary interest and left the room. Cllr. Pearson took over as Chair

Members discussed the allotment rent for 2027 noting that the rent is due to increase from £40.00 to £45.00 per plot on the 1 January 2026.

Resolved: The allotment rent of the period from the 1 January 2027 to the 31 December 2027 to remain at £45.00 per plot.

Cllrs. Hoath and Drury returned to the meeting. Cllr. Hoath resumed as Chair.

A copy of the draft budget, prepared by the Clerk and Cllr. Sargent had been circulated to all Members.

Members discussed the budget noting that the expenditure for 2026-2027 is estimated to be £51,370.00.

Resolved: That the Budget for 2026-2027 be accepted

b) To set the Precept for 2025-2026

Members discussed the level of reserves and budget requirements for 2026-2027 and agreed that the precept needs to be raised. The Council Tax base calculation was discussed and noted.

Resolved: That the Precept for 2026-2027 be £45,000.00 representing an estimated 13.9% increase equating to £6.53 for a Band D property

5. Asset Register

It was noted that the Clerk is in the process of updating the current Asset Register and will present this at the next meeting.

6. Finances

a) Bank

Resolved: To add Cllr. Sargent to the bank mandate for the Unity Trust account.

b) To receive the updated accounts

Members received the updated accounts for 2025/2026.

c) To receive a bank reconciliation as at the 30 November 2025

Members had received a copy the bank reconciliation as at the 30 November 2025.

Resolved: Cllr. Morgan to sign the bank reconciliations for the 30 November 2025 in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

d) To agree payments in accordance with the Budget:

The invoices against the payment schedule were checked.

Resolved for Cllr. Drury and Cllr. Morgan to authorise the payments online. Cllr. Hoath as the Chair, initialled the payments list in accordance with the adopted Financial Regulations.

Balances as at 30 November 2025

Unity Trust Current Account: £17,887.52

Unity Trust Savings Account: £40,392.99

Total: £58,280.51.

Receipts: There were none.

Initials:

Payments

Reference	Payee	Invoice	Description of Transaction	Gross
95/25	Louise Goldsmith		Expenses (reimbuse)	185.76
96/25	M I Payroll	3753	Payroll Services	25.00
97/25	Mint Fresh	HHP192	Bus Stop Cleaning	55.32
98/25	National Allotments Association	S22011	Annual Membership Fee	84.00
99/25	Npower	32MQ2222	Pavilion Electricity	113.76
100/25	Barrie Croucher		Carektaking Services	97.68
101/25	Bourne Sport	3776	Vertidraining of pitches	1020.00
102/25	Morgan Fire	6186914	Fire extinguishers for pavilion	738.00
DD	Unity Trust		Monthly Charge	6.00
DD	Hugo Fox		Email account	20.99
DD	Hugo Fox		Website	2.99
DD	Hugo Fox		Website	143.86
SO	HMRC		Clerks Tax and NI	326.44
SO	Louise Goldsmith		Salary	875.38
		Total		3695.18

177/25 REPRESENTATION AT MEETINGS/TRAINING

- a) **KALC Area Committee:**
The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 26 November 2025 have been circulated.
- b) **Village Hall Committee:**
Cllr. Sargent reported that there are two new Trustees who have been proactive in getting works done to the village hall floor.
- c) **Parish Forum 24 November 2025:** It was noted that unfortunately nobody could attend the Parish Forum held on the 24 November 2025. The Clerk reported that it has been a useful event and will try and obtain a copy of the presentations.

178/25 CORRESPONDENCE/CONSULTATIONS: None to note.

179/25 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

Staffing Committee: To agree membership. Apologies for the next meeting: Cllrs. Drury and Pearson.

180/25 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Parish Council Meeting: Monday 12 January 2027 at 7pm

Part 2 Exclusion of Public and Press – In accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings Act 1960), the public and press be excluded from the meeting by the reason of its confidential nature.
Noted: no members of the public or press present.

The meeting closed to the public at 9.25pm

181/25 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS:

KALC Community Award: Members agreed a nomination.

With no further business to transact the meeting closed at 9.31pm

Signed:

Date:

Initials: