

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

**215/24 Administration:** Fire Exits, Fire Meeting Point, Mobile Phones. The Clerk confirmed that there has been no requests to record the meeting.

*Cllr. Wheeler as Vice Chairman opened the meeting*

**216/24 Present and Apologies**

**Present:** Cllr. Wheeler (Chairman), Cllrs Mrs. K. Hoath and Ms. J. Morgan.

**In Attendance:** Mrs L Goldsmith (Clerk), Ward Member Alan Pickering, 5 members of the public.

**Apologies:** An apology for absence was received from Cllrs. Amsler and Haigh and the reasons for absence were accepted.

**217/24 To receive the resignation of Cllr. Drury**

Cllr. Wheeler reported that a resignation letter was received from Philip Drury on the 3 February 2025. The resignation letter was forwarded to ABC and an official Notice for the resignation has been issued. The Clerk has placed this Notice on the noticeboards and website

**218/24 Election of Chairman and to receive a signed declaration of office**

Cllr. Wheeler was proposed by Cllr. Hoath and seconded by Cllr. Morgan. Cllr. Wheeler accepted the nomination and there were no other nominations.

**Resolved: Cllr. Wheeler was elected as Chairman following a unanimous vote. Cllr. Wheeler read out and signed a declaration of acceptance of office.**

**219/24 Declarations of Interest:**

None declared.

**220/24 Minutes of meetings**

**Resolved: That the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 13 January 2025 be approved and confirmed as a true record.**

**221/24 Report from the Clerk (information purposes only):**

Hoads Wood: The Clerk reported that three people have been arrested regarding the illegal dumping of waste on the site.

PA/2024/2294, Little Robhurst, High Halden: The Clerk reported that the planning proposal for four new dwellings has been withdrawn.

**222/24 Ward Member Report**

Ward Member Alan Pickering wanted to reassure Members that Enforcement at ABC is still monitoring the situation at Hatchentan and regularly visiting the site. There are some legal challenges to overcome regarding the protection and subsequent clearance of the site. The Leader at ABC is making a case and demanding the return of the Eurostar to Ashford. An ongoing publicity campaign sets out the positive impact the return would have for Ashford. Ward Members Alan Pickering advised that ABC is unable to assist with the ongoing problem of a lorry parked in Hopes Grove.

**223/24 Open Session:**

Hatchentan: A member of the public suggested that the Environment Agency should be made aware of the dumping of waste on the site and that the owners should be identified.

Dog waste: A member of the public complained about the increasing amount of dog waste in the parish.

Ward Member Community Grant Scheme: Ward Member Alan Pickering advised that he has some remaining funds to allocate to a project in the ward.

**224/24 Highway Matters**

Members noted that the next review of the Highways Improvement Plan is due to take place in the Spring and that the Clerk will circulate some dates for a meeting and walkabout with the Community Engagement Officer.

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The Clerk has requested that Church Hill is added to the gritting schedule and is waiting to hear back from KCC.

*Standing Orders were lowered to allow a member of the public to speak*

Members discussed the issue of cars regularly parking too close to the junction of the A28 and Hookstead and the danger this creates for other motorists. It was agreed that the Clerk should mention this issue to both PC Darren Laker and the Community Warden to see if they can help.

*Standing Orders were lowered to allow a member of the public to speak.*

In response to the member of public the Clerk advised that the drainage issues from the adjacent fields resulting in water collecting on the A28 towards Bethersden has been reported.

The Clerk has reported an ongoing issue to PROW with the surface of the footpath AT151 that passes through Jubilee Field. It was noted that Cllr. Morgan and the Clerk will meet with PROW to discuss.

#### **225/24 Kent Police**

The Clerk was asked to contact Acting Inspector Bushell to remind him to get in touch with residents that he had kindly offered to come back to on a number of incidents. Members discussed the fact that there had been 10 reported catapult incidents in the parish between September and December 2024 and remain concerned that Acting Inspector Bushell considered this to be not many. It was noted that PC Darren Laker had carried out a speed check in the 30mph zone of the A28 on Saturday 18 January 2025 and hopes to carry out further checks in the 40mph zone. The Clerk will suggest that PC Darren Laker carries out the checks, where possible, early morning and late evening.

#### **226/24 Community Warden Service for High Halden**

The Clerk reported that the new Community Warden, Richard Sinden, started working in the parish last week. The Community Warden has attended two community coffee mornings and has been a visible presence exploring the parish. The Clerk has posted contact information for Richard on social media.

#### **227/24 Community Orchard**

The Clerk reported that ABC delivered the trees on the 17 January 2025 and that a 'tree planting' day is due to take place from 10am on Saturday 22 February 2025. Members discussed a suggestion that an orchard is planted at Hookstead. The Clerk has contacted ABC to see if they would agree to 8-10 trees of the 30 delivered being planted at Hookstead. A response is awaited and it was agreed that a decision about this could be made in between meetings if necessary.

*Standing Orders were lowered to allow a member of the public to speak*

Concerns about the possible survival of trees on Hookstead were addressed.

#### **228/24 BT Box on the village green consultation**

BT has advised the Clerk that the consultation on removing the equipment is due to finish on the 12 February 2025. BT has advised that kiosks are normally sold as seen but that they would be willing to provide the Parish Council with a paint kit to repaint the kiosk along with a few panes of glass if they decide to adopt. If BT do remove the equipment and the kiosk is not adopted BT will still be responsible and have advised that they will look after the kiosk 'as best as possible'. In response to a query about whether the kiosk can be moved BT has advised that it is not something that they would recommend as a kiosk is quite heavy and fragile and is prone to cracking if moved. In addition, before moving the power would have to be disconnected.

*Standing Orders were lowered to allow a member of the public to express their concerns about the future cost of vandalism to the kiosk should the Parish Council adopt it.*

Members discussed some of the concerns given in the responses to the survey that a change of use would not stop the BT Box being vandalised and that the cost of the ongoing repairs could be a financial burden to the parish.

**Resolved: To not adopt the BT Box at this point in time.**

#### **229/24 Neighbourhood Development Plan**

The Clerk discussed some of the benefits of preparing and having a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) and advised Members that a Locality Grant has been available in the past from Government which normally covers the cost of the process and employing a consultant. It is not known whether the grant funding will still

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be available in the next financial year but the new National Planning Policy Framework mentions NPDs so the expectation is that grant funding will be available. The Clerk suggested that the previous invaluable work on the village confines project could feed into the process of developing a NDP,

*Standing Orders were lowered to allow Ward Member Alan Pickering to advise Members that Bethersden Parish Council has had difficulties in preparing a NDP in terms of gaining support and the overall cost.*

Members discussed the possible benefits and opportunities of preparing a NDP.

**Resolved: The Clerk to arrange some virtual meetings with recommended planning consultants to learn more about the process of preparing a NDP.**

## **230/24 Planning**

### **Planning applications**

#### **PA/2024/2162: Land to the south east of Forge House, Biddenden Road**

New single storey chalet building for use as a holiday let/accommodation ancillary to The King Hotel.

**Resolved: Support. We would like the existing planting and hedges to be retained and we would like to see the current car park tidied up and completed when the constructions works are finished.**

#### **PA/2025/0062: Land East of Hope House**

Variation of condition 6 (approved plans) of planning permission PA/2024/0298, variation of condition 11 (approved plans) of reserved matters approval 22/02548/PA to allow for amendments to parking arrangement for plot 12.

**Resolved: No comment.**

**Planning applications received after the distribution of the agenda:** None received.

**Decisions from ABC:** *Response from HHPC in italics*

### **Approvals:**

#### **OTH/2024/2340: Church House, Church Hill, High Halden**

T1 Oak, fell and treat stump with eco plugs.

*Resolved: We would be sorry to lose such an established tree but will leave the decision to the Tree Officer*

**Refusals:** None to consider.

### **Other Planning Matters**

#### **Enforcement Case: Hatchentan, alleged illegal dumping of waste:**

Members discussed the ongoing condition of the site and expressed concern about the recent bonfires and burning of the waste materials which could be toxic. Members noted that Enforcement at ABC is actively monitoring the site but agreed that the Clerk should report this site to the Environment Agency and also undertake a land search to try and establish ownership.

#### **AP- 90723: Greenluck Farm, Harris Lane:**

Members noted the new appeal for the refusal of three 2 bedroom log cabin style dwellings with associated parking and garden areas. The Clerk was asked to reiterate the Parish Council's reasons for objecting to the Planning Inspectorate

#### **AP-90668: Appeal Land known as Oakleigh Field west of Oakleigh Farm, PA/2024/0217:**

It was noted that the appeal has now been dismissed.

#### **AP- 90688: Appeal Homestall Farm, Ashford Road, PA2024/0799:**

Appeal still in progress.

*8.05pm Ward Member Alan Pickering left the meeting.*

## **231/24 Financial Report:**

### **/24-1 Bank Mandate**

The Clerk reported that an application to add Cllr. Morgan as a signatory to the Unity Trust bank account is still being processed. It was agreed that following the resignation of Mr. Drury that an additional signatory is required.

**Resolved: To add Cllr. Hoath as an additional signatory to the Unity Trust bank account and to remove Mr. Drury.**

### **/24-2 To receive the updated accounts for 2024/2025**

Members received the updated accounts for 2024/2025

### **/24-3 Clerks Appraisal**

Cllr. Drury and Wheeler met virtually with the Clerk on Wednesday 22 January 2025 to carry out an appraisal.

**Resolved: Following a positive appraisal to award the Clerk an increment rise from SCP29 to SCP30.**

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**/24-4 To receive a bank reconciliation as at the 10 February 2025**

Members received the bank reconciliation as at the 10 February 2025

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

**/24-5 To agree payments in accordance with the Budget:**

Cllr. Wheeler checked the invoices against the payment schedule and it was and it was **resolved** for Cllrs.

Morgan and Wheeler to authorise the payments online when Cllr. Morgan has been added as a signatory. Cllr.

Wheeler as the Chair, initialled the payments list in accordance with the adopted Financial Regulations.

**Payments :**

Reference	Payee	Invoice	Description of Transaction	Gross
11/25	Louise Goldsmith		Expenses	64.25
12/25	Ashford Borough Council	ALM24.054	Fencing repairs Jubilee Park	526.56
13/25	M I Payroll		Payroll Services	25.00
14/25	Npower	IN12176581	Sports Pavilion Electricity	150.59
15/25	Ripley		Christmas Tree	50.00
16/25	Ashford Borough Council	ALM24.059	Bi-annual Tree Survey	800.88
17/25	Barrie Croucher		Caretaking Services /key cutting	45.76
18/25	Brewmasters Football Club		Key Cutting	7.00
19/25	Ashford Borough Council	ALM24.060	Playground repairs	3026.59
20/25	Mint Fresh	182JAN25	Bus Stop Cleaning	77.22
DD	Unity Trust		Monthly Charge	6.00
DD	Hugo Fox		Website	2.99
DD	ICO		Annual Subscription	35.00
DD	Google Cloud	5143506759	Gmail Account	48.00
SO	HMRC		Clerks Tax and NI	247.26
SO	Louise Goldsmith		Salary	832.84
SO	Kent County Playing Fields		Annual Subscription	20.00
		<b>Total</b>		<b>5965.94</b>

**Receipts:**

Date		Amount
Various	Allotment Rent	205.00

**Balances as at 10 February 2025**

**Unity Trust Current Account: £33,705.80**

**Unity Trust Savings Account: £10,444.09**

**Total: £44,189.89**

**232/24 Information items:**

**/24-1 HHVEC Update:**

The new Chair of HHVC sent the following report. A new member has joined who will assist on the treasury side of HHVEC. A VE Day 80th Anniversary celebration is planned for Thursday 8 May 2025 with the lighting of the beacon on the green along with a sing song and a pop-up choir. The pub will be serving fish and chips throughout the day. Cllr. Hoath is kindly organising an exhibition of memorabilia to be displayed in the pub. HHVEC is in discussions regarding holding a Boot Fair on Jubilee Field on Bank Holiday Monday, 26 May 2025. Saturday 28 June 2025 has been earmarked as the date for the summer event on the village green. The theme will be a 60's summer party. There will be live music, dancing groups, a dog show and a tug of war.

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**/24-2 KALC**

The Clerk has circulated a copy of the minutes of the Area Committee meeting held on the 29 January 2025.

**/24-3 Devolution Paper**

Members noted that Kent has not been accepted onto the Devolution Priority Programme and as such will not be postponing elections.

**/24-4 Consultation: Kent & Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy:** Noted.

**233/24 Items for the next Parish Council meeting:**

No 2 and 2a Bus Service: To discuss the continuation of the service.

**234/24 Confidential Items:**

None to consider.

**235/24 Date of the next meeting.**

**The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 10 March 2025 at 7pm in the Memorial Hall.**

With no further business to transact the meeting closed at 8.23pm

Signed: .....

Date: .....

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