HIGH HALDEN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Wednesday 13 May 2025 at 7pm in the Memorial Hall

12/26 Election of Chairman and to receive a signed Declaration of Acceptance of Office
Cllr. Hoath was proposed by Cllr. Sargent and seconded by Cllr. Morgan. Cllr. Hoath accepted the nomination and there were no other nominations.
Resolved: Cllr. Hoath was elected as Chairman following a unanimous vote. Subsequent to the meeting Cllr. Hoath signed a declaration of acceptance of office.

13/26 Present and Apologies
Present: Cllr. Hoath (Chairman), Cllrs: Mr. J Sargent, Ms. J. Morgan, Mr. J. Pearson and Mr. T. Kirby
In Attendance: Mr. D Rice (Clerk), 8 members of the public.
Apologies: Ward Cllr. Alan Pickering and Cllr. Farmer

14/26 Election of Vice Chairman and to receive a signed Declaration of Acceptance of Office
Cllr. Pearson was proposed by Cllr. Hoath and seconded by Cllr. Morgan. Cllr. Pearson accepted the nomination and there were no other nominations.
Resolved: Cllr. Pearson was elected as Vice Chairman following a unanimous vote. Subsequent to the meeting Cllr. Pearson signed a declaration of acceptance of office.

15/26 Administration: Fire Exits, Fire Meeting Point, Mobile Phones. The Clerk confirmed that there had been no requests to record the meeting.

16/26 Declaration of Interest: None.

17/26 Appointment and Scope of Internal Auditor
The Clerk advised that the internal audit function must be sufficiently independent from the management of financial controls and procedures of the Parish Council. The person carrying out internal audit must be competent to carry out the role in a way that meets the business needs of the Parish Council. The internal auditor must not have any involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the Parish Council, or with the Council's financial controls and procedures. The Clerk advised that Mr Lionel Robbins is willing to continue to act as the Internal Auditor for the Parish Council. The date set for the Clerk and Mr Robbins to meet is 2nd June 2026.
Resolved: To appoint Mr. Lionel Robbins as the internal auditor.

18/26 Eligibility to use the General Power of Competence
The Clerk advised that the Parish Council does not meet the eligibility criteria for the General Power of Competence adopted at its meeting held on the 18 May 2023 due to the number of unelected Councillors. The Clerk advised that the power is lost until the next Parish Council election.

19/26 Election of representatives to other bodies
Resolved: That the following be elected.
/26/1 Memorial Hall Management Committee: Cllr. Sargent.
/26/2 High Halden Village Events Committee: Cllr. Hoath and Cllr. Sargent.
/26/3 KALC: Cllr. Hoath

20/26 Annual Review of Core Policies
Resolved: No changes were required and to adopt the following policies:

- *Grants Policy and Application Form*
- *Complaints Policy*
- *Community Engagement Policy*
- *Equality & Diversity Policy*
- *Data Protection & Document Retention Policy*
- *Publication Scheme*

Initials: …….

- *Health & Safety Policy*
- *IT Policy*
- *Financial Regulations*
- *Annual Risk Assessment*
- *Standing Orders*
- *Financial Regulations*

21/26 Minutes of the meeting held on the 13 April 2026
Resolved: That the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 13 April 2026 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

22/26 Report from the Clerk (information purposes only):
The Clerk reported that Cllr. Wayne Chapman, County Councillor had sent a report for May 2026. A copy of the report had been placed on the website.

23/26 Ward Member Report:
Ward Cllr. Alan Pickering had sent his apologies and there was nothing to report.

24/26 Open Session:
A member of the public queried the status of the planning application for Hatchentan which has been approved. The Chairman gave an update noting that a copy of an injunction relating to the site had been requested by the Parish Council in October 2025 but this had only been recently provided. This delay seriously impeded the Parish Council's response to Ashford Borough Council's ("**ABC**") Planning Department, regarding the retrospective planning application. The Parish Council will submitting a follow-up letter to Simon Cole.

A member of the public queried if the Parish Council would be taking any action on the stationing of mobile homes on the Field West of Old Place Cottage. The Parish Council will be responding to the Planning Officer's Report and the Chairman will be representing the Parish Council at the Planning Committee Meeting on 20 May.

A member of the public queried the planning application for permission in principle to build nine dwellings on the land between Bourne House and Summerhill Cottages. This matter would be discussed by the Parish Council later in the meeting.

25/26 Parish Council Vacancy:
The Chair requested, and it was agreed, that this item be deferred to be discussed under Confidential Items.

26/26 Highway Matters
Annual Review of the Highways Improvement Plan ("HIP").
It was agreed that a zoom meeting should be arranged by the Clerk with the members of the Parish Council to discuss the HIP.

27/26 Local issues

a) **The sale of High Halden station**
The owners at Sportsman wished to purchase the site with the intention of upgrading it for local businesses and to establish a tea-room. They were advised that the site now sits within the parish of Biddenden.

b) **Felling of Oak tree, 8 The Chennels**
The Clerk commented that he had contacted ABC to ascertain if they had provided the necessary permission for the felling of the oak but at the time of the meeting confirmation had not been received.

c) **Hope House hedge and verge**
The Clerk noted that Kent Highways had been contacted to arrange for the hedge and verge to be cut as the overgrown hedge was causing an obstruction to the residents at Hope House.

d) Litter Reporting

The Chair requested that any requests for litter removal should be reported to the Clerk to follow up with ABC. Alternatively, members of the public could use the app Fix My Street. Cllr. Morgan reported that the Litter Pick which had taken place on the 4th May Bank Holiday had been successful and she thanked all the volunteers and The Chequers on the Green for their hospitality.

Four members of the public left the meeting at 7.43pm.

e) Allotments – water access/usage and water meter

A tenant had asked if hose pipes could be used to water the allotments. However, the Tenancy Agreement states that the use of hose pipes is not permitted, frequent hose pipe bans made provision (and monitoring) difficult and they should make efforts to collect rainwater. Cllr. Sargent agreed to speak to Terry Haigh about the provision of water going forward.

f) Stall at High Halden Summer Fayre

The Parish Council will have a stall at the Summer Fayre and that leaflets and information will be provided on a variety of issues including Neighbourhood Watch, Speedwatch, the MUGA, the allotments and the adoption of trees in the orchard. There would also be details of the sites within the parish which had been allocated for development in the 2042 Plan.

28/26 Community Warden/Kent Police/Anti-Social Behaviour

There were no specific items to report.

The police are looking to reinvigorate Neighbourhood Watch in the local parishes and it was agreed that consideration should be made as to how this could be arranged within High Halden

There was a discussion on Community Speedwatch and it was noted that many vehicles were being driven too fast through the village. Various measures had been considered but these had not been able to be implemented including the extension of 30mph through the village. There were concerns that Speedwatch was not effective and we do not have sufficient volunteers to run the scheme at present.

The Coffee Morning on the 5th June will be attended by PC Aaron Hobday (all being well) to discuss any community issues.

29/26 Review of Section 106 and Future Projects

Members agreed that it would be helpful for the Parish Council to meet informally on Zoom with the Clerk to run through such items as the S.106 allocation and future projects including the provision for young people and to obtain an update of grass pitch funding.

30/26 Assets of Community Value and Parish Property

The Clerk agreed to follow up on the status of the applications for Assets of Community Value status for St Mary's The Virgin Church, the War Memorial Hall, The Chequers on the Green and the Cricket Field and to arrange for Bournes to carry out the remaining work on the adult football pitch.

Cllr. Morgan highlighted that the bus shelters were not cleaned to a satisfactory standard. It was agreed that the Clerk would investigate the matter with Mint Fresh to confirm when they had last attended.

31/26 Christmas Tree Arrangements

The Village Christmas tree last year was very kindly paid for by Terry Haigh. The Parish Council will look into finding a willing contributor for this year's tree.

32/26 Planning

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

PA/2026/0629-31: Tenterden Business Centre, Ashford Road

Variation of Condition 12 of planning permission 22/00605/AS to replace the approved application 19/01525/AS with a new unit to provide ancillary space and services. **Resolved: Support.**

Initials: …….

OTH/2026/0721: 1 Durrant Green, Ashford Road
Biodiversity Enhancement Plan and condition 9 (Construction Ecological Management Plan for planning permission PA/2025/1580. **Resolved: No comment.**

PA/2026/0757: Land between Bourne House and Summerhill Cottages, Ashford Road
Permission in principle for the erection of nine dwellings.
The Chairman asked Cllr. Sargent to provide some background to the application. Cllr. Sargent reported that the site had been subject of a planning application for twenty-eight houses in 2021 which had received over sixty objections. At that time the Parish Council had maintained that the development represented exceptional and unplanned growth on one of the last remaining green spaces on the road to Tenterden and it would put pressure on the community's infrastructure. The application was refused following the planning officer's recommendation and the matter was appealed by the developer. The appeal was refused on the basis that the development was disproportionate to the local community and was not considered to be sustainable as there was no access to shopping facilities and local services.

It was agreed that an objection should be drafted by Cllr. Sargent for submission by 20 May 2026 for ratification at the next Parish Council meeting. The Clerk was requested to contact Ward Cllr. Alan Pickering to 'call in' the application if ABC were minded to approve the application. **Resolved: Object.**

The Parish Council noted ABC's decisions since the last meeting with the Parish Council's response in italics:

PA/2025/2238: Harbourne Vineyard, Harbourne Lane, High Halden
Use of a current winery building for the sale of wine and wine tasting, including the sale of hot refreshments, snacks and local gifts. Siting of a composting toilet for staff and visitors.
Approved by ABC: 20.04.2026 *Support*

PA/2026/0109: 30 Tilden Close, High Halden
Proposed first floor side extension and front porch.
Approved by ABC: 23.03.2026 *Support*

PA/2026/0230: Texel Cottage, Little Hookstead Farm, Wren's Nest Lane, High Halden TN26 3NH
Change of use to land to extend residential curtilage and erection of an outbuilding (retrospective)
Approved by ABC: 20.04.2026 *No objection*

PA/2026/0130: Romney Cottage, Little Hookstead Farm, Wrens Nest Lane, TN26 3NH
Change of use of land to extend residential curtilage and erection of an outbuilding. Proposed timber structure to accommodate an outdoor kitchen.
Approved by ABC: 20.04.2026 *Support*

PA/2026/0468: Orchard Cottage, Shawlands Lane, High Halden
Single-storey extension including attached garage, front porch extension and rear extension
Approved by ABC: 30.04.2026 *Support*

REFUSALS: None to consider.
WITHDRAWN: None to consider.

Two members of the public left the meeting

<u>Other Planning Matters</u>
Hatchentan, Land south-east of Hatchentan, Plurenden Road, High Halden
A letter had been drafted to Simon Cole, Assistant Director Planning and Development at ABC and had been approved following circulation to the members of the Parish Council. The letter had been written following a review of the 2018 Injunction Order and other matters including governance concerns in relation to the

approval of planning permission for the site. This would be ratified by the Parish Council later in the meeting and circulated to Terry Mortimer, Monitoring Officer and Ward Cllr. Alan Pickering.

The Chair noted that a further letter would be prepared which would also be sent to Simon Cole and copied to Terry Mortimer and Ward Cllr. Alan Pickering requesting Bank Holiday cover by the Enforcement team for the late May and August Bank Holidays.

ENF/2025/0310: Field West of Old Place Cottage known as Oak Tree Field, Woodchurch Road, High Halden
The Chairman reported that a detailed written response would be prepared and sent to the Planning Officer, Matthew Apperley and copied to Simon Cole ahead of the Planning Committee meeting to be held on 20 May 2026 and the Chairman would present a case of objection at the meeting.

APPEALS:
AP-90812 & AP-90813: Potkiln Farm, High Halden TN26 3IJ:
Replace window with French doors – listed building consent and planning permission refused.
The Clerk was requested to follow up on the status of this matter.

33/26 RESOLUTIONS:

1. Ratify letter to ABC re Hatchentan
It was unanimously resolved that the letter to Simon Cole dated 13 May 2026 be ratified.

2. Asset Register
The Clerk circulated a copy of the current Asset Register which remained unchanged from the previous meeting.

3. Use of Village "Green" Space
Following the request from Tom Dodd for 'bootcamps' to be held on the village 'green' space, it was noted that, despite prior permission not having been granted by the Parish Council, the classes were held on the Village Green and this had led to adverse comments from the community in terms of noise and disturbance.
Resolved: To approve that Jubilee fields be offered to Mr. Dodd and that this would be reviewed again at the next PC meeting.

One member of the public left the meeting at 8.55 p.m.

4a. Update re the Clerk applying for a credit card
The Clerk had emailed Unity Bank but had not yet received a response and this would be followed up.

4b. s.106 update
The Clerk reminded Members that not all of the agreed drainage works had taken place to the football pitch last year so the Parish Council had only spent £1,850.00 of the £3,150.00 granted. It was noted that ABC had confirmed in writing that the remaining funds could be spent on the improvements to the drainage on the football pitches within two years of the date of the funding agreement (19th June 2025) and ABC had therefore agreed for HHPC to carry any remaining funds over to the next financial year, as long as they are spent by June 2027.

4c. To receive the updated accounts as at the 30 April 2026
Members received the updated accounts for 2026/2027 as at 30 April 2026.

4d. To receive a bank reconciliation as at the 30 April 2026
Members received the bank reconciliation as at the 30 April 2026
Resolved: Cllr. Sargent to sign the bank reconciliation in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

4e. To receive the timesheets for the Caretaker and Park Keeper

Members noted the timesheets from the Caretaker for April 2026 and the Park Keeper for March and April 2026.

4f. To agree payments in accordance with the Budget:
The invoices against the payment schedule were checked.

Receipts:

Date		Amount
30/04/2025	Ashford BC 50% of Precept	22,500.00

Balances as at 30 April 2026
Unity Trust Current Account: £22,857.21
Unity Trust Savings Account: £36,825.07
Total: £59,682.28

Payments:

	Payee	Invoice	Description of Transaction	Gross
BACS	Tompsett	TL/INV3764	Grounds Maintenance	906.94
BACS	Zurich Insurance		Insurance renewal	1060.49
BACS	PCC of Denswood		Clock repair/ongoing maintenance grant 2025/26	1000.00
BACS	Memorial Hall		Hall hire	160.00
BACS	MI Payroll	4057	Payroll services	25.00
BACS	David Rice		Clerk's salary 1 to 30 May 2026	524.75
BACS	HMRC		Clerk's Tax/NI	510.37
BACS	Clerk & Councils Direct		Magazine Subscription	15.50
BACS	Mint Fresh		Bus stop cleaning	82.98
BACS	Marcus Digby		Park keeper services March	97.68
BACS	Marcus Digby*		Park keeper services April	101.68
BACS	Barrie Croucher*		Caretaking Services April	50.84
DD	Unity Trust		Monthly Charge May	7.00

Initials: …….

DD	Hugo Fox		Email account	20.99
DD	Hugo Fox		Website	4.79
BACS	Jan Morgan		Expenses Annual Parish Meeting refreshments	43.94
BACS	David Rice		Expenses April	56.60
		Total		**4669.55**

* Wages increased to national minimum wage from 1st April 2026

5. Policies & Administration
Resolved: That a Privacy Policy be adopted and added to the website by the Clerk.

6. Parish Council Meeting Dates
Resolved: It was unanimously resolved that the Parish Council Meeting dates be changed to Wednesday evenings with immediate effect. The Clerk was requested to confirm the new arrangement with the booking team at the Memorial Hall and advise Ward Cllr. Alan Pickering and County Cllr. Wayne Chapman.

34/26 Information items:
a) KALC
There were no updates from KALC.

b) Village Hall Committee
Cllr. Sargent reported that the sagging floor in the Memorial Hall had been investigated and the defective joists would be replaced where needed.

c) HHVEC Update:
The Chairman noted that Car Boot Sales have been arranged for the Bank Holidays on 25 May and 31 August 2026 and the Summer Fayre will be held on 18 July 2026.

9.00pm: In accordance with the Standing Orders a resolution was passed to continue with the meeting.

35/26 Items for the next Parish Council meeting:
- To review Mr Dodds use of the Jubilee Fields for 'bootcamps'
- Hatchentan Bank Holiday Enforcement Cover
- Old Place Cottage Planning Committee Meeting update
- Allotments water supply
- Christmas tree arrangements
- Review wording of the policy relating to the use of Village 'Green' Space

36/26 Confidential Items:
The application by a member of the public to join the Parish Council to fill a casual vacancy was considered.

37/26 Date of the next meeting.
Parish Council Meeting: Wednesday 10 June 2026 at 7pm

With no further business to transact the meeting closed at 9.15pm

Signed: …… Date: ……

Initials: …….