

HIGH HALDEN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Monday 12 May 2025 at 7pm in the Memorial Hall

22/25 Election of Chairman and to receive a signed Declaration of Acceptance of Office

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

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

23/25 Present and Apologies

Present: Cllr. Haigh (Chairman), Cllrs: Mrs. K. Hoath, Ms. J. Morgan, Mr. J. Pearson and Mrs. L. Wheeler

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

Apologies: None to receive.

24/25 Election of Vice Chairman and to receive a signed Declaration of Acceptance 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 Vice Chairman following a unanimous vote. Cllr. Wheeler read out and signed a declaration of acceptance of office.

25/25 Administration: Fire Exits, Fire Meeting Point, Mobile Phones. The Clerk confirmed that there has been no requests to record the meeting.

26/25 Co-Option

25-1 Co-option of a new Parish Councillor

In between meetings John Pearson applied to become a Parish Councillor.

The Chairman proposed that John Pearson be co-opted to fill a casual vacancy.

Resolved: That John Pearson be co-opted to fill a casual vacancy.

25-2 Declaration of Acceptance of Office

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

27/25 Declarations of Interest: None.

28/25 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

Resolved: To appoint Mr. Lionel Robbins as the internal auditor.

29/25 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.

30/25 Election of representatives to other bodies

Resolved: That the following be elected.

/25/1 Memorial Hall Management Committee: Cllr. Wheeler.

/25/2 High Halden Village Events Committee: Cllr. Hoath

/25/3 KALC: Cllr. Hoath and Haigh

Initials:

31/25 Annual Review of Core Policies

Resolved: No changes 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*
- *Health & Safety Policy*

32/25 Minutes of the meeting held on the 14 April 2025

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 14 April 2025 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

33/25 Report from the Clerk (information purposes only):

Former Parish Councillor, Karen Harris: The Clerk reported that the Parish Council has sent a condolence card to the family of the late Karen Harris who recently sadly passed away. Karen Harris was a Parish Councillor for a number of years and a stalwart of the community. A minute's silence was observed in memory of Karen Harris.

34/25 Ward Member Report:

Ward Members Alan Pickering advised Members that in line with Government thinking ABC is introducing a policy for enhanced workplace support for menopausal women. 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. Ward Members Alan Pickering has used £750.00 of his grant to support the village hall.

35/25 Open Session:

A member of the public reported an increase in fly tipping on Martens Lane.

A member of the public asked if a petition of 86 signatures requesting a reduction in the speed limit for Redbrook Street could be revisited as part of the review of the Highways Improvement Plan with KCC.

PA/2025/0490: Two members of the public spoke against this planning proposal.

A member of the public asked if the Parish Council could investigate whether planning permission is required for a structure erected at Coombewood Fishery, Redbrook Street.

36/25 Highway Matters

Annual Review of the Highways Improvement Plan.

The Clerk has submitted a list of suggested priorities to be discussed with the Community Engagement Officer. The Clerk is waiting for some dates for a virtual meeting to discuss the priorities. The Clerk has reported to the appropriate body an alleged damaged sign on Church Hill, fly tipping in Martens Lane, potholes on Martens Lane and the damaged verges in Hookstead.

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

37/25 Kent Police/Community Warden

There was no report. Cllr. Hoath advised Members that she and other affected residents have still not received any feedback from Kent Police regarding incidents of catapulting. Members agreed that this situation is not acceptable. It was agreed that the Clerk should contact the new CSU Inspector, Simon Johnson, to express the disappointment of the Parish Council with the fact that residents have reported incidents but have not received any updates/feedback.

Initials:

38/25 Review of Section 106 and Future Projects

Members agreed that it would be helpful, given the number of new Councillors, to meet informally outside a Parish Council meeting with the Clerk to run through such items as the S106 allocation and the projects that were identified and being worked on by the previous Parish Council. It was agreed for Members and the Clerk to meet on Thursday 5 June 2025 at 5pm at Jubilee Park.

39/25 Football Pitch Drainage

/25-1 Proposal to submit a S106 application for the suggested works to the pitches

Member considered a revised quote from Bournes for suggested works to the pitches. Members discussed the quote and agreed to accept part, but not all of the works. Members agreed to not carry out any vertidrainage or sand spreading to the pitches this year as the sand levels on both pitches appear to be quite good. It was also agreed that it would be beneficial to not spend all of the remaining S106 funding this financial year.

Resolved: The Clerk to submit an application to ABC for S106 funding for a total of £3,150.00 for repairs to the goal mouths, fertilizer treatment to both pitches, mole draining to the main pitch and practice area,

/25-2 To receive an update on Brewmasters and Hornets Football Clubs applications for Kent County Football Association Funding.

The Clerk reported that both Brewmasters and Hornets Football Clubs have submitted an application to the Kent County Football Association, (KCFA), for funding for works to the pitches. The Clerk reported that Brewmaster have a Pitchpower meeting with the KCFA at 10am on Sunday 22 June 2025. The Clerk and Cllr. Haigh will attend the meeting.

40/25 Sports Pavilion

It was noted that Cllrs. Haigh, Hoath, Morgan, Wheeler and the Clerk will be meeting the caretaker tomorrow evening to carry out the annual inspection of the pavilion and to discuss expanding the use of the facilities. The Clerk has circulated a copy of the current hire agreement for the sports pavilion and a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding in place with both football clubs for the use of the pavilion and the pitches. It was noted that the Memorandum of Understanding expires at the end of August 2025.

41/25 KALC Extraordinary General Meeting 19 June 2025

The Clerk advised that KALC has organised an Extraordinary General Meeting to discuss the implications of the proposed Local Government Reorganisation for Parish Councils. The meeting is to be held at Aylesford Community Centre at 2pm on the 19 June 2025.

Resolved: Cllrs. Hoath and Morgan to attend the KALC Extraordinary General Meeting on the 19 June 2025.

42/25 Christmas Tree Arrangements 2025

Cllr. Hoath advised that the main Christmas tree is to be paid for by a private donation but that new decorations are required. Members discussed a suggestion of erecting smaller Christmas trees which could be decorated by local residents/groups. Cllr. Hoath offered to liaise with the HHVEC and report back about the decorations, the erection of the main tree an idea of having smaller Christmas trees. Cllr. Hoath suggested that it would be helpful to produce a guidance leaflet on the restrictions/legislation in place for village greens.

43/25 Community Resilience Planning

Members discussed the possible benefits of preparing a Community Resilience Plan. Cllr. Hoath advised that at the last KALC Ashford Area Committee Meeting, Action with Communities in Rural Kent, ACRE, had given some information on preparing a Community Resilience Plan and had suggested that parishes merge to form a cluster group. It was suggested and agreed that the Clerk contacts Bethersden and Woodchurch Parish Councils to see if they would be interesting in merging and developing a joint Community Resilience Plan. The Clerk will also investigate what training is currently available on community resilience planning.

44/25 Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)

Members considered a survey prepared by the Clerk to find out if the community think it would be a good idea for the Parish Council to develop an NDP should government funding be available.

Resolved: The Clerk to post the online survey on social media, noticeboards and the website.

Initials:

45/25 Planning

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

PA/2025/0620: Ryeland Barn, Little Hookstead Farm, Wrens Nest Lane, High Halden

Change of use of land to extend residential curtilage. Erection of garden store and open store. Proposed single storey side extension (part retrospective).

Resolved: Support.

PA/2025/0756: Little Acres, Ashford Road, High Halden

Proposed double car barn with home office.

Resolved: We would support a single storey building but not the proposed double storey building. We object to the bulk of the proposed building and the effect the proposal will have on the street scene. It is not clear whether the existing hedging will be retained which would be preferable. We would like to draw attention to the fact that Listed Buildings flank the property.

PA/2025/0490: The Stables, Redbrook Street, High Halden

Change of use of existing residential building as full time holiday let. Change of use of land to hardstanding for parking and turning area (retrospective).

Resolved: Object. We support the views of the objections on the portal from neighbouring properties. We object on the grounds that the proposal is out of character in the area. No business plan has been submitted to support the proposal. The inclusion of three parking spaces does not match the size of the proposed building. The current delay with complying with the existing enforcement notices is disappointing.

NOT/2025/0402: Lion House, Church Hill, High Halden

T2 Apple – with basal decay fell to ground level; T8 Conifer island – 4 x bramble choked western red cedar fell to ground level.

Resolved: To leave the decision to the Tree Officer. We are mindful of the nesting season.

NOT/2025/0820: Land approx. 400m north east of Rawsley Farm, Cripple Hill, High Halden

Prior notification for an agricultural storage building.

Resolved: Support.

DECISIONS FROM ABC: *Response from HHPC in italics*

APPROVALS:

21/02226/AS – Lower Tiffenden, Redbrook Street, Woodchurch

Replacement dwelling with detached garage and landscaping including change of use of land to residential.

Resolved: We support this application because the beautifully planned building stands in an appropriate large countryside landscape. The new building incorporates environmentally required and desired building regulations for now and the future. It also does not impact on other buildings in its close by. Modern architecture must move away from 'pastiche' building where a cutting-edge modern approach can be accommodated.

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.

REFUSALS: None to consider.

WITHDRAWN: None to consider.

Other Planning Matters

ENFORCEMENT CASES:

Hatchentan, alleged illegal dumping of waste: See item 34/25 for an update.

ENF/2025/0107: Old Place Farm, Woodchurch Road, alleged erection of building.

The Clerk reported that Enforcement at ABC is assessing their findings before deciding what action to take.

Initials:

APPEALS:

AP- 90723: Greenluck Farm, Harris Lane:

Two bedroom log cabin style dwellings with associated parking and garden areas. Appeal in progress.

AP- 90688: Appeal Homestall Farm, Ashford Road, PA2024/0799: Appeal in progress.

One member of the public left the meeting.

46/25 Financial Report:

/25-1 Bank Mandate

The Clerk reported that Cllr. Haigh has been added as a signatory to the Unity Trust bank.

/25-2 Prizes for winners of dog waste poster competition

Resolved: To approve a decision in between meetings to purchase a total of £50 in Amazon vouchers as prizes for the winners of the dog waste poster competition.

/25-3 To receive the updated accounts for 2025/2026

Members received the updated accounts for 2025/2026

/25-4 To receive a bank reconciliation as at the 30 April 2025

Members received the bank reconciliation as at the 30 April 2025

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

/25-5 To agree payments in accordance with the Budget:

The invoices against the payment schedule were checked. It was **resolved retrospectively** for Cllrs. Haigh and Morgan to authorise the payments online. Cllr. Haigh as the Chair, initialled the payments list in accordance with the adopted Financial Regulations.

Receipts:

Date		Amount
30/04/2025	Ashford BC 50% of Precept	20000.00

Balances as at 30 April 2025

Unity Trust Current Account: £9,564.92

Unity Trust Savings Account: £44,913.76

Total: £54,478.68

Payments:

Reference	Payee	Invoice	Description of Transaction	Gross
40/25	Louise Goldsmith		Expenses	78.18
41/25	Lionel Robbins	2025/17	Independent Internal Audit	140.00
42/25	M I Payroll		Payroll Services	25.00
43/25	Npower	32MQ2222	Sports Pavilion Electricity	98.18
44/25	Tompsetts		Fencing and gate	2366.40
45/25	Barrie Croucher		Caretaking Services March & April 2025	130.46
46/25	Mint Fresh	185APR25	Bus Stop Cleaning	51.48
47/25	SLCC	MEM254-108-3	Annual Subscription	138.36
48/25	Louise Goldsmith		Reimbursement vouchers	50.00
49/25	Zurich Insurance	544322272	Annual Insurance	895.61
DD	Unity Trust		Monthly Charge	6.00
DD	Hugo Fox		Website	2.99
DD	Google Cloud	5190497604	Gmail Account	34.00
SO	HMRC		Clerks Tax and NI	311.35
SO	Louise Goldsmith		Salary	850.80
		Total		5178.81

Initials:

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

47/25 Information items:

/25-1 HHVEC Update:

Cllr. Hoath reported that the VE Day 80th Anniversary celebration held on Thursday 8 May 2025 was very well attended. A Proclamation was read out by local celebrity, Linda Bassett and the beacon on the green was lit. HVEC is holding a Boot Fair on Jubilee Field on Bank Holiday Monday, 26 May 2025. It was noted that the Clerk has received and circulated a copy of the risk assessment and insurance documents for the Boot Fair. Comments on the risk assessment have been given to the organisers.

One member of the public left the meeting

/25-2 KALC: Cllr. Hoath will attend the next Area Committee meeting due to be held on the 28 May 2025.

/25-3 Local Government Reorganisation: There was no update.

48/25 Items for the next Parish Council meeting:

Proposal for a new football club to hire the pitches

Review of the Memorandum of Understanding with Hornets and Brewmasters Football Clubs.

Review of the hire agreement for the sports pavilion

Proposal to produce a guidance note on village greens.

Proposal to form a Staff and Administration Committee and agree terms of reference and membership

49/25 Confidential Items:

None to consider.

50/25 Date of the next meeting.

Parish Council Meeting: Monday 9 June 2025 at 7pm

With no further business to transact the meeting closed at 9.13pm

Signed:

Date:

Initials: