

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT HORSMONDEN VILLAGE HALL
ON MONDAY, 6 JULY 2026 AT 7:30PM

Present:

Cllrs Richards, Boon, Davis, Russell, Jenkinson, Sheppard, Larkin, Baxter-Smith and Baylis

In attendance:

Lucy Noakes (Clerk)

Anna Blyth (Deputy Clerk)

Cllr Mark Munday (part of the meeting)

Mr Andrew Winser (Chair of HDAG)

1. Apologies for Absence and declarations of interest

Cllrs Darrah, Mobbs & Knight gave their apologies prior to the meeting.

Cllr Baxter-Smith arrived at 7.34pm.

2. Public Session (no decisions)

No members of the public had requested to speak in the public session.

3. Minutes of Parish Council Meetings

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 1 June 2026 had been circulated beforehand by the Clerk. They were agreed for accuracy and proposed for acceptance by Cllr Boon; seconded Cllr Jenkinson and voted for unanimously by those present at that meeting and signed by the Chair.

4. Parish Council Finance

a. Agree payments listing up to and including 5 July 2026 as attached (Appendix 1- See end of document)

The Clerk showed a copy of the list of payments up to and including 5 July 2026 as a total of £10,711.16. Cllr Russell proposed approval of the schedule of payments; seconded Cllr Jenkinson. Unanimous.

Cllrs Jenkinson and Larkin agreed to release and authorise payments from the bank this month.

b. Bank Reconciliations for bank accounts at 30 June 2026

The bank balance for the Council's Unity Trust Bank (current account) at 30 June 2026 was displayed with a total at £100,695.85.

This was confirmed as correct against the respective bank statement and signed by the Chair.

c. Agree costs following emergency electrical works on the Village Green (Retrospective)

The Clerk reported that emergency electrical works had been required following damage to an underground electrical cable on the Village Green. During the erection of the marquee for the

Summer Festival, a marquee pin had pierced the underground cable supplying the PCs electrical boxes and an emergency call-out was arranged with PJ Electrical to locate and isolate the fault.

It was noted that the original invoice for these works had been higher; however PJ Electrical kindly agreed to reduce the labour charge by three hours resulting in a revised invoice total of £695.45 (net) to more accurately reflect time spent on site. This cost included the hire of specialist equipment to identify the precise location of the cable break. As a temporary measure, the electrical supply to the second service box was disconnected to enable the Summer Festival to proceed safely.

The following week, PJ Electrical carried out the permanent repair by excavating and repairing the damaged cable at a cost of £485.00 (net). The Clerk sought retrospective approval for these emergency works and the associated expenditure.

Cllr Sheppard proposed acceptance of the costs as detailed above (total £1,180.44 plus VAT); seconded Cllr Boon. Unanimous.

d. Discuss/ agree revised 3 year contract with Flotek (previously Microshade) for email and data management

The Clerk reported that Flotek (formerly Microshade), the PCs provider of email and data management services, had submitted a new three-year contract for consideration. The new contract is offered at a cost of £206.63 per month, compared with the current charge of £259.86 per month, representing a saving to the PC while maintaining the existing service provision.

Cllr Sheppard proposed that the PC accept the new 3 year contract with Flotek at £206.63 per month; seconded Cllr Larkin. Unanimous.

e. Consider Envirocure's quotation for providing a 3 year Risk Assessment for legionella risk management at The Institute Building and Horsmonden Public Conveniences

Prior to the meeting, the Clerk had circulated a quotation from Envirocure to undertake Legionella risk assessments for the PCs two public buildings: the Institute Building and the Public Conveniences. The quotation totalled £580 and covers a three-year period.

The Clerk explained that the risk assessments form part of the PCs statutory responsibilities for water safety and Legionella risk management within their publicly owned buildings and recommended that the quotation be accepted.

Cllr Sheppard proposed acceptance of the cost as detailed; seconded Cllr Larkin. Unanimous.

f. Discuss and agree to appoint a solicitor for land transfer when necessary

The Clerk advised that, in relation to the proposed village hall land transfer associated with the Brenchley Road development, the PC should be prepared to proceed once the transfer is offered. As the transfer could take place at any time, it was considered prudent to agree to the appointment of a solicitor in advance, to avoid unnecessary delays.

The Clerk had approached four firms of solicitors for quotations. One firm was unable to provide a quotation due to a conflict of interest, as they are acting on behalf of the developer. The

remaining quotations were considered by Cllrs, with the discussion focusing on two firms that the PC have previously worked with and whose fees were broadly comparable.

Cllr Jenkinson proposed that the PC instruct Surrey Hill Solicitors, at the appropriate time, to deal with the village hall land transfer on behalf of the PC; seconded Cllr Larkin. Unanimous.

The Clerk advised that it had been indicated by the solicitors that the developers would normally meet the reasonable legal costs associated with a land transfer, subject to confirmation by the developer.

g. **Consider excavation and replacement of cable for village green supply boxes**

Following the emergency electrical repairs referred to under Item 4(c), the Clerk reported that PJ Electrical have advised that the underground electrical cable serving the village green supply boxes is currently buried at a depth of approximately 300mm, whereas a minimum depth of 800mm is recommended for electrical safety .

A quotation had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting from PJ Electrical detailing costs to excavate and relay the cable at the recommended depth – total £1,560 plus VAT.

The Clerk reported that the PC had recently received the interest from their bond investment with United Trust, which would be sufficient to cover the cost of the works should it be decided to go ahead, as this expense had not been precepted for .

Cllrs discussed and agreed that, as a preventative and safety measure, it would be prudent to undertake the works to reduce the likelihood of similar incidents occurring in the future.

It was noted that the organisers of the Horse Fair are aware of the location of the cable and do not install ground fixings as part of their event, therefore the cable is not expected to be disturbed at their event in September.

Cllr Shepherd proposed that PJ Electrical be instructed to excavate and relay the underground electrical cable to the recommended depth of 800mm, at a cost of £1,560 plus VAT, with the works to be carried out following the Horse Fair in the autumn; seconded Cllr Larkin. Unanimous.

h. **CLOSED SESSION – Discuss and review new village hall consultation responses**

The Chair proposed that the meeting move into closed session, which was unanimously agreed by those present. With the permission of the Chair, Mr Andrew Winser remained in attendance in his capacity as Chair of HDAG.

Cllrs reviewed and discussed the responses received regarding the new Village Hall consultation.

Following consideration of the submissions against the agreed requirements, Cllrs identified a shortlist of three consultants to be invited to the next stage of the process. It was agreed that further discussions and interviews would be arranged with the shortlisted parties to enable the PC to determine the preferred option.

Cllr Jenkinson proposed that the PC approach the three agreed consultants and invite them to the next stage of the process; seconded Cllr Baxter-Smith. Carried.

Cllrs also discussed the potential suitability of the Sports Club site as a possible location for a village hall. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to the Sports Club to establish the current

position regarding its future new pavilion proposals and to clarify whether those plans remain under consideration, or whether a standalone village hall on the site could be a potential option. This information will help establish whether the sports ground is a viable option before the PC make any further decisions in regarding the consultation.

Cllr Boon proposed that the Clerk should draft a letter to the Sports Club as detailed above; seconded Cllr Jenkinson. Unanimous.

The Chair proposed that the PC exit closed session at 8.34pm.

5. Planning

a.

Planning Application:	26/01298/FULL
Proposal:	<u>First floor extension</u>
Location:	Little Cacketts Farm, Hayman's Hill, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8BX
Recommendation	Approval
Proposal	Cllr Davis; seconded Cll Russell. Unanimous.
Comments	Recommend approval as a suitable extension to the property. All works should be carried out in line with Horsmonden Parish Councils Sustainability policy.

Planning Application:	26/00611/FULL
Proposal:	<u>Removal of part of front verge; construction of crossover and dropped kerb</u>
Location:	18 Orchard Crescent, Horsmonden, Tonbridge Kent TN12 8LG
Recommendation	Neutral
Proposal	Cllr Boon; seconded Cllr Jenkinson. Unanimous.
Comments	The Parish Council have concerns regarding parking in this vicinity and would ask Highways opinion on the suitability of the proposal.

Planning Application:	26/00525/SUB
Proposal:	<u>Resubmission of details in relation to Condition 22 - (external lighting) of 21/02027/FULL, as approved under 22/03656/SUB.</u>
Location:	Bassetts Farm, Goudhurst Road, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8AS
Recommendation	Refusal
Proposal	Cllr Baxter-Smith; seconded Cllr Larkin. Unanimous.
Comments	The Parish Council wishes to remind the Local Planning Authority of the comments made by previous consultees, including the Conservation & Nature Officer, regarding the importance of preserving the rural dark skies at Bassetts Farm and ensuring that external lighting is kept to an absolute minimum.

	The current application seeking retrospective approval for between six and nine streetlights appears to conflict with those earlier recommendations. It is particularly concerning that these streetlights have already been installed before the matter has been fully considered through the planning process. The Planning Authority is therefore respectfully requested to give full weight to the previous consultee comments and to ensure that any decision remains consistent with the original ecological and landscape objectives for this rural site.
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b. Feedback on planning application [24/00078/HYBRID Bassetts Farm](#)

Railings on the new footpath at Old Station Garage: The Clerk reported that, following concerns being raised about visibility when exiting Old Station Garage, she had contacted KCC Highways. Highways confirmed that the existing railings had already been amended to improve visibility and comply with safety requirements however, it has now been proposed that the first three panels are replaced with a post-and-rail key clamp design to improve visibility further. Cllrs considered the proposal and, having reviewed photographs circulated prior to the meeting, expressed concerns that the proposed design would be easier for children to climb and could present a H&S risk.

It was proposed by Cllr Jenkinson that the PC write to KCC Highways to object to the proposed further replacement railings on H&S grounds; seconded Cllr Baxter-Smith. Unanimous.

Active spring and footpath verge: The Clerk reported that the issue of the active spring flowing on to the raised footpath on Goudhurst Road remains unresolved, although it has temporarily subsided due to the recent dry weather. It is understood that Persimmon Homes continue to seek access to the land to undertake works, but access has not yet been granted by the landowner. Cllrs noted that the planting along the footpath verge had deteriorated and was not being maintained. The Clerk also advised that Old Station Garage had queried who would be responsible for the future maintenance of the planted area. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact the developer to seek clarification on maintenance responsibilities and to raise the ongoing concerns regarding the stability of the bank.

The Clerk advised that she had contacted the Case Officer at TWBC to follow up on a response to the PCs comments submitted under application 26/00525/SUB as whilst the concerns relating to street lighting had been considered, there has been no response to the other matters raised by the PC, including those relating to landscaping.

c. TW/25/02758/REM – Land South of Brenchley Road, Brenchley Road, Horsmonden, Tonbridge. Update following meeting with Fernham Homes.

The Clerk advised that she had received correspondence from the National Trust regarding potential routes for the proposed footpath link from the Brenchley Road development into Sprivers. The correspondence, which had been between the developer and the National

Trust, included suggested routes, along with advice on the appropriate materials and construction of the footpath. Cllrs noted that this was a positive update.

The Clerk also confirmed that Lambert & Foster would be holding individual meetings with affected parishioners at the Village Hall in July regarding the proposed footpath/pavement link from the Brenchley Road development into the village centre.

The Chair provided a brief update following a meeting with Fernham Homes, advising that the transfer of land for the Village Hall was expected to be offered shortly and that groundworks for the development were anticipated to commence in the new year.

The Chair proposed that item 6 be brought forward and discussed before entering into a further closed session. This proposal was voted for unanimously by those present.

6. Updates from Borough/County Councillors

Cllr Mark Munday advised that he was still awaiting a response from the bus operators regarding the potential relocation of the school bus stop on Goudhurst Road to the new Bassetts Farm development. At this stage he confirmed that discussions are focused on ensuring the development is suitable to accommodate a bus service, including appropriate access and turning facilities. A further update will be provided in due course.

Cllr Munday also confirmed that he had spoken with the resident who had raised concerns about the current location of the bus stop and had advised her that, if she wished to pursue the matter further, she could consider starting a petition through KCC website with the support of neighbouring residents.

The Clerk advised that she had received correspondence from KCC Highways regarding the HIP grant funding and had some concerns over the wording, as it appeared to suggest there was uncertainty about the availability of the funding from TWBC. Cllr Munday reassured the PC that the funding was in place and further updates will be provided as they become available.

d. CLOSED SESSION – Consider possible responses TWBC Scoping Consultation – 14 July – 11th August

The Chair proposed that the meeting move into closed session, which was unanimously agreed by those present. With the permission of the Chair, Mr Andrew Winser remained in attendance in his capacity as Chair of HDAG.

The PC considered the forthcoming TWBC Scoping Consultation and discussed the importance of developing a consistent and evidence-based response on behalf of Horsmonden. It was recognised that the consultation provided an opportunity to take a coordinated approach, with the aim of avoiding further uncoordinated expansion of the village.

Cllrs considered a summary document prepared by the Chair of HADAG, Mr Winser. As the consultation documents were not yet available, it was agreed that the Horsmonden Development Advisory Group (HDAG) would meet on 14 July to review the Scoping Consultation once formally received and prepare recommendations for consideration by the PC at their Planning Committee meeting on 21 July. Cllr Russell confirmed that he would check Village Hall diary to ensure availability for the meeting on the 14 July.

The Chair proposed that the PC exit closed session at 9.40pm.

e. Feedback and updates on planning and enforcement matters

The Clerk provided a brief update on the main outstanding planning enforcement matters. Cllrs noted that there had been no significant progress since the previous meeting. The cases remain ongoing, with one awaiting a planning decision and another being addressed in part through the planning application process.

7. Parish Council Decisions/Administration

a. Parish Highways/footpath/street lighting/landscaping and tree works – consider temporary dog fouling signage ahead of large public events

The Clerk advised that the vehicle activated sign (VAS) on Goudhurst Road, outside Lamberts Place, continues to operate intermittently. Whilst it is currently functioning, it was noted that the sign has experienced ongoing reliability issues and may need to be replaced in the future. It was suggested that, if replaced, the existing VAS could potentially be relocated to further up Goudhurst Road near to the Bassetts Farm junction to assist with future speed monitoring. Cllrs agreed that provision for a replacement VAS should be considered during the budget-setting process.

Cllrs discussed the ongoing issue of badgers digging holes on the village green. Temporary warning signs have been installed but are not proving sufficiently durable. It was agreed that the Clerks would obtain quotations for permanent signs. Cllr Larkin also suggested investigating the use of in-ground deterrent lights, which may help discourage badgers and foxes from accessing the area. It was noted that residents have reported foxes and badgers regularly emptying litter bins on the green, particularly following the Wednesday evening fish and chip van and the Thursday evening pizza van.

The provision of additional dog fouling signs around the village green was also discussed. The Deputy Clerk advised that small circular signs were available for installation on existing posts, and these would be considered for use in appropriate locations.

It was reported that the hedge along the cut-through between Back Lane and the village green requires cutting back. The Clerks will report this to KCC.

b. HIPS (Highways Improvement Plan) [HIPS](#)

The Deputy Clerk confirmed that the annual Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) review meeting with KCC had been arranged for 16 July, with Cllrs Russell and Davis also due to attend.

Cllrs considered whether any additional items should be added to the HIP for discussion. It was noted that the results of the recent automatic traffic count (ATC) on Green Road were expected to be available in time for the meeting and it was agreed that Green Road should remain the PCs top priority.

Other matters identified for discussion included the lack of parking within the village centre, the future replacement and/or relocation of the vehicle activated sign (VAS) on Goudhurst Road and the priority arrangement at the crossroads. Whilst this matter had previously been raised with KCC, it was agreed that it should be discussed again to clarify the reasons why any changes may not be feasible.

c. Consider amendment to Village Green booking form

The Clerk had circulated an amended draft Village Green Booking Form to Cllrs prior to the meeting for their review. She explained that the amendments had been made following the recent incident on the village green, where the underground electricity cable was accidentally struck while erecting a marquee. To help prevent a similar incident in the future, the booking form has been updated to clearly identify the presence of the buried electricity cable. A plan showing the cable's location has also been included with the booking form for future hirers.

Cllrs reviewed the amended booking form and agreed one further amendment, namely to include a reference to road pins alongside the existing wording relating to ground fixings.

Subject to this amendment, Cllr Larkin proposed acceptance of the draft booking form; seconded by Cllr Russell. Unanimous.

d. Consider/agree Horse Fair 2026 13th September 2026

Cllr Sheppard proposed acceptance of the 2026 Horse Fair subject to receiving the necessary documentation from the organiser including risk assessments, deposit cheque and proof of PL insurance; seconded Cllr Baxter-Smith. Unanimous.

e. Update regarding wild flower garden at Fromandez Drive

Cllr Boon advised that she had recently carried out some maintenance at the site, including clearing weeds and tidying the area.

It was noted that Cllrs Boon and Russell are due to meet with a representative from the High Weald Partnership on the 7th July to seek advice on opportunities to further enhance and improve the wildflower garden at Fromandez Drive.

Cllr Russell also reported that he had recently visited Hole Park, where he sought guidance and received helpful feedback from staff after discussing the PCs wildflower area and sharing photographs of the site. Cllrs noted that this advice would be considered as part of the ongoing management of the area.

A further update will be brought back to the Council at the September meeting.

f. Updates on parish office lease and move

The Clerk advised that there are no further updates at this stage regarding the parish office move.

g. Update following meeting with Renvolt regarding information boards on public footpath WT327 / WT328

Cllr Russell gave an update following a recent meeting with Renvolt regarding the proposed information boards on Public Footpaths WT327 and WT328. It was noted that Renvolt are supportive of the proposal, and discussions took place regarding the provision and installation of the boards. An estimate obtained by the Deputy Clerk for three information boards was shared to provide an indication of potential costs, and options to reduce these costs, including mounting the boards directly onto the solar farm fencing rather than installing separate posts, were discussed.

Renvolt agreed to take the proposal and associated cost information back to their client for consideration and to confirm what funding may be available. A further update will be provided once a response has been received.

h. Consider policy review – HPC Travel & Subsistence Policy

The Clerk had circulated a newly drafted Travel and Subsistence Policy to Cllrs prior to the meeting. Minor amendments had been made to reflect the updated mileage allowance issued by HMRC and NALC.

Cllr Jenkinson proposed acceptance of the Travel and Subsistence Policy as drafted; seconded Cllr Sheppard. Unanimous.

8. Consultations

- a. Kent Downs National Landscape Management Plan 2027-32- [https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/kent-downs closes 19 July 2026](https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/kent-downs-closes-19-July-2026)

Cllr Russell agreed to complete this consultation on behalf of the PC.

- b. Consider supporting Cllr Mobbs petition [NO WATER. NO HOUSE BUILDING. | Halt The Houses](#)
It was agreed that Cllrs would support this petition individually.

9. Feedback Training / Meetings / Events Attended

Parish Chairmans meetings/Clerks meeting – The Clerk advised that she has recently attended the NALC Annual Conference.

Training / information sessions – no updates.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.20pm

APPENDIX 1

Date: 06/07/2026

Horsmonden Parish Council Current Year

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Time: 11:28

Current A/c- Unity Trust Bank

List of Payments made between 01/06/2026 and 05/07/2026

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Authorized Ref</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
01/06/2026	Lloyds Bank PLC	DD	71.96		Credit card May
03/06/2026	EJP Fire Protection Ltd	BACS	306.00		Fire alarm & safety Institute
03/06/2026	Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd	BACS	1,126.20		Purchase software& training
03/06/2026	Capel Groundcare	BACS	777.94		Plya area, SIDs,Grounds
03/06/2026	Capel Groundcare	BACS	204.00		Play area maintenance
09/06/2026	Business Stream	DD	11.29		Waste water Feb-May 26
12/06/2026	EJP Fire Protection Ltd	BACS	150.00		Fire alarm
12/06/2026	HMRC	BACS	860.55		Tax & NI
12/06/2026	PJ Electrical Ltd	BACS	198.00		Testing VG boxes
12/06/2026	P&F Cleaning services LTD	BACS	50.00		Extra clean toilets
12/06/2026	Horsmonden Village Events comm	BACS	325.00		Youth provision for HOVEC
12/06/2026	St Margaret's PCC Horsmonden	BACS	20.00		Hire of church hall
16/06/2026	British Telecom	DD	149.46		Broad band & phone line
16/06/2026	EDF Energy	DD	19.53		May energy VG boxes
16/06/2026	EDF Energy	DD	41.62		May energy Public Toilets
17/06/2026	EE - BT	DD	93.48		June mobiles & CCTV
19/06/2026	Peoples partnership	DD	287.89		Staff pensions June
19/06/2026	Drax	DD	165.86		May Street lights energy
22/06/2026	Castle Water	DD	26.89		Water supply May
25/06/2026	Mrs L Noakes	BACS	1,798.42		June Salary
25/06/2026	Anna Blyth	BACS	1,316.85		June Salary
25/06/2026	Microshade VSM/Flotek	DD	259.96		June emails and Data
25/06/2026	P&F Cleaning services LTD	SO	550.00		Cleaning June
30/06/2026	PJ Electrical Ltd	BACS	582.00		excavate and repair cable VG
30/06/2026	Mrs A Boon	BACS	10.45		Refund of Cllr travel costs
30/06/2026	Mrs L Noakes	BACS	59.50		Refund for travel costs clerk
30/06/2026	Horsmonden Village Hall	BACS	225.00		Rent for 1st Quarter
30/06/2026	PJ Electrical Ltd	BACS	834.54		call out & make safe VG
30/06/2026	Mulberry & Co	BACS	144.00		Quarterly payroll
30/06/2026	Unity Trust Bank	BACS	10.75		Monthly bank charges May
01/07/2026	Lloyds Bank PLC	DD	34.02		June credit card payments
Total Payments			10,711.16		