

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD AT HORSMONDEN VILLAGE HALL

ON MONDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 7:30PM

Present:

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

In attendance:

Lucy Noakes (Clerk)

Anna Blyth (Deputy Clerk)

Cllr Lynne Darrah (TWBC)

Mr Andrew Winser (Chair of HDAG)

2 members of the public

1. Apologies for Absence and declarations of interest

Cllrs Mobbs, Jenkinson and Boon.

Cllr Sheppard proposed acceptance of the reasons for absence; seconded Cllr Russell.

Unanimous.

No declarations of interest were declared.

2. Public Session (no decisions)

A representative of the Village Road Safety Group addressed the Council regarding ongoing concerns about safety at the crossroads, highlighting the high frequency of accidents at this location.

The speaker noted that the scheduled white line refresh is due to be carried out shortly but requested that the Parish Council also consider the installation of a raised platform at the Lamberhurst Road junction, similar to the one implemented at the crossroads in Lamberhurst, which has proved effective in reducing incidents there. The speaker further suggested that refreshing the rumble strips and textured surface would also be beneficial. Concern was also raised regarding the STOP sign on the left-hand side of the junction, which is positioned too high and is believed to impact driver visibility.

3. Minutes of Parish Council Meetings

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 7 July 2025 had been circulated beforehand by the Clerk. They were agreed for accuracy and proposed for acceptance by Cllr Larkin, seconded Cllr Baylis and voted for unanimously by those present at that meeting and signed by the Chair.

The Minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 12 August 2025 had been circulated beforehand by the Clerk. They were agreed for accuracy and proposed for acceptance

by Cllr Davis, seconded Cllr Russell and voted for unanimously by those present at that meeting and signed by the Chair.

The Chair proposed that item 6b. HIPs be brought forward and discussed first. This proposal was unanimously agreed by all Cllrs.

b. HIPs (Highways Improvement Plan) HIPs – updates and feedback following meeting with MP Mike Martin. Agree on priorities for utilising the £25k Rural Parish Grant

Following the speaker's comments, Cllrs agreed that the PC should request that the rumble strips on Lamberhurst Road be refreshed. This can be reported on the KCC portal as a maintenance issue rather than as a HIP request.

The Clerk read out a recent email from the HIP team at KCC, which was sent in response to the Clerk's email following a meeting with MP Mike Martin, and which explained:

- Red surfacing on all approaches to the crossroads would only be installed if crash data supported it.
- The Maidstone Road and Lamberhurst Road approaches already have coloured surfacing to highlight the junction; this will be reviewed as part of the STOP junction scheme on Maidstone Road.
- Existing yellow-backed signage is in place on all approaches to improve junction visibility.
- Extending yellow lines on Lamberhurst Road would require an informal consultation by the PC and a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), a process that generally takes around six months. Pre-consultation is advised to reduce objections and potential costs.
- Changing the crossroads to a four-way stop is not permitted under the Traffic Signs Manual, as it would create confusion over vehicle priority.

Cllrs discussed the possibility of extending the yellow lines but felt this was not a significant issue, noting that parked vehicles often act as a natural traffic-calming measure and that enforcement of restrictions on yellow lines would be limited in the village.

Cllrs also discussed the suggestion of a raised table, similar to that already in place in Lamberhurst. Although it was thought that this had previously been considered and dismissed by KCC, it was agreed it would be worth raising again. In addition, Cllrs agreed to request a "REDUCE SPEED NOW" sign on Lamberhurst Road, as the existing warning signage was considered insufficient.

Cllr Darrah raised an issue regarding parked vehicles at Lamberts Place, which is causing concern for residents. Vehicles are being parked inconsiderately on the corners, affecting visibility and blocking the bus stop where many children get on in the mornings—particularly with the ongoing roadworks related to the Bassetts Farm development.

It was agreed that, as a first step, the Clerks would issue a message on the PCs website and Facebook pages asking people to park considerately in this location.

4. Parish Council Finance

- a. **Agree payments listing up to and including 31 August 2025 as attached (Appendix 1- See end of document)**

The Clerk showed a copy of the list of payments up to and including 31 August 2025 as a total of £23,901.61. Cllr Baxter-Smith proposed approval of the schedule of payments; seconded Cllr Larkin. Unanimous.

Cllrs Richards and Russell agreed to release and authorise payments from the bank this month.

- b. **Bank Reconciliations as at 31 August 2025**

The bank balance for the Council's Unity Trust Bank (current account) at 31 August 2025 was displayed with a total at £51,673.36.

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

- c. **Agreement to go ahead with replacement of Clerks laptop / monitor and keyboard as budgeted**

The Clerk asked Councillors to retrospectively approve the expenditure for the replacement of the Clerk's laptop, monitor, and keyboard. This purchase had been agreed outside of the meeting due to lead times and the urgency of placing the order. The total cost was £1,020.95 plus VAT.

Cllr Baxter-Smith proposed acceptance of the cost as detailed; seconded Cllr Sheppard. Unanimous.

- d. **Renewal of contract for Clerks mobile phones – agree costs and contract terms**

The Clerk reported that the PC's mobile phone contracts (Clerk and Deputy Clerk) are due to expire on the 7th October. EE have offered a new deal at £27 per month per handset, including 100GB of data and an iPhone 16 (128GB). This cost is lower than the current contract price at £28.87 per month. The Clerk noted that the upgraded handsets would be beneficial, particularly with larger screens, which will assist once the CCTV is installed at the public toilets as monitoring will be carried out via mobile phones.

Cllr Baxter-Smith proposed acceptance of the mobile phone upgrade as detailed above; seconded Cllr Sheppard. Unanimous.

- e. **Quotation for annual membership of Chat GPT – correction of prices**

Cllrs had previously agreed to purchase Business Chat GPT at £25 per month however, the Clerk advised that it has since been established that the minimum subscription is for two users at £50 per month (payable annually).

After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Baxter-Smith that, as no budget provision has been made, the PC should continue to use the free version for Chat GPT for the time being and review at a later date; seconded Cllr Sheppard. Unanimous.

- f. **Discuss/agree funding for CCTV at public toilets**

The Clerk confirmed that KCC Cllr Mark Munday had sent an email saying that he would support a Members Grant application from the parish towards this CCTV. This would leave a balance of £1,145 to be met by the PC.

Cllr Russell, Chair of the Finance Committee, reminded Cllrs that the PC receive £600 annually from TWBC under the Community Toilet Scheme, which could be used towards this cost. He

further commented that the remaining £545 could be taken from the PC's general reserves, as this is considered a worthwhile initiative to try and stop future vandalism at the toilets.

Cllr Baxter-Smith proposed that the PC go ahead with purchasing CCTV equipment, assuming the KCC Members Grant of £500 is received towards this and allocating £600 from the Community Toilet Scheme and £545 from general reserves to meet the outstanding balance; seconded Cllr Russell. Unanimous.

Cllr Mark Munday asked the Clerk to formally apply for the grant prior to purchasing the equipment.

5. Planning

a. Planning applications

Planning Application:	25/01434/FULL
Proposal:	<u>Installation of driveway</u>
Location:	16 Gibbet Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8NA
Recommendation	Refusal
Proposal	Cllr Baxter-Smith; seconded Cllr Sheppard. Unanimous.
Comments	Recommend refusal. Reduces the availability of public parking spaces and creates an issue due to its proximity to a busy junction.

Planning Application:	25/01837/FULL
Proposal:	<u>(Self-Build) Demolition of the existing dwelling & erection of single-storey dwelling with associated landscaping & parking. Relocation of winter parking for fishing lakes.</u>
Location:	Bassetts Farm Fishery, Churn Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8HL
Recommendation	Approval
Proposal	Cllr Russell; seconded Cllr Baxter-Smith. Unanimous.
Comments	Recommend approval. Reasonable response to fire safety issues in original planning application. All works should be carried out in line with Horsmonden Parish Councils Sustainability policy.

Planning Application:	25/01753/FULL
Proposal:	<u>Construction of a garage with ancillary accommodation above</u>
Location:	High View, Grovehurst Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8BG
Recommendation	Refusal
Proposal	Cllr Baxter-Smith; seconded Cllr Russell. Unanimous.
Comments	Following the updated description of works on this application, it was proposed that the PC's original comment be re-submitted removing reference to an annexe.

	<p>Recommend refusal based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This is a large enough build to easily become a separate dwelling in its own right. - Five garages is excessive. - The increase in hard standing presents an increased flood risk if materials used are non-porous. - Outside Limits to Build Development. - Over development of the site with three large buildings. - Not in keeping with surrounding properties. - Ridge height impacts surrounding properties. <p>If TWBC are minded to grant permission for an annexe at this location the PC request that it remains ancillary to the main dwelling and that it be single storey only.</p>
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- b. **TW/24/00078/HYBRID Bassetts Farm – See draft of Condition 24 which refers to the landscape and management plans (LEMP) for Bassetts Farm. Would the PC like to discuss this at a HDAG meeting?**

The Clerk had circulated a draft of Condition 24 to Cllrs prior to the meeting for their review. It was agreed with the Chair of the Horsmonden Development Advisory Group (HDAG) that a meeting should be scheduled for October to discuss this in more detail.

- c. **Feedback and updates on planning and enforcement matters**

The Clerk gave an update to Cllrs on all key outstanding enforcement matters:

Lockie Cottage, Gun Back Lane – New fence

At this stage there has been no update regarding this potential planning breach but TWBC are in contact with the landowners.

Land adjacent to 2 Spring Cottages

Investigations have been carried out by TWBCs Enforcement team and no issues were detected.

Land at Gafford's Bridge, Maidstone Road

TWBC have issued an Enforcement Notice which will become effective on 8 September and 21 September, provided they are not appealed.

Land at August Pitts, Churn Lane

The planning application relating to this land remains undecided; however, works are currently ongoing on site which raises potential compliance concerns. The matter has been referred to the Planning Enforcement Team for investigation.

6. Parish Council Decisions/Administration

a. **Parish Highways/footpath/street lighting/landscaping and tree works – consider pruning/thinning for young limes on Green**

- The Clerk shared a photo of two young lime trees on the village green that look top-heavy. Cllr Russell commented that the leaves will drop soon so they will not be as heavy but it was agreed that the Clerk would send the photos to Living Forest for advice on pruning.
- The Clerk confirmed the new memorial bench for Fromandez Drive has been ordered. Cllrs Larkin and Russell agreed that they would arrange a time to meet with the Deputy Clerk to decide on a suitable location.
- The unkept triangle of land on Fromandez Drive was raised, which is thought to be owned by KCC. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact KCC to confirm responsibility.

b. **HIPs (Highways Improvement Plan) HIPS – updates and feedback following meeting with MP Mike Martin. Agree on priorities for utilising the £25k Rural Parish Grant**

Discussed above.

c. **Discuss s106 funding relating to the new play area – Does the PC wish to request for the S106 provision under 18/01976 to be considered for use as play equipment instead of gym equipment?**

The Clerk advised that there are Section 106 funds available totalling £12,456.34 under application 18/01976, which were originally allocated for the provision of outdoor gym equipment. The Clerk noted that there is currently no suitable location to install gym equipment however, as the Parish Council are actively considering improvements to the play area, Cllrs were asked to consider whether they would wish to request that these funds be reallocated towards play equipment instead.

Cllr Larkin proposed that the PC approach TWBC to request that the allocation be changed from outdoor gym equipment to recreational play equipment, and that the developer be written to if necessary. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Russell. Unanimous.

It was also agreed that a date would be set for the Play Area Working Group to meet and review plans for the new play area.

d. **Discuss Play Area report from RoSPA and quarterly report from Capel Groundcare**

The Clerk had circulated the quarterly play area inspection report from Capel Groundcare together with the annual ROSPA inspection report to Cllrs prior to the meeting for their review.

The Clerk highlighted that one of the gate springs requires replacement; a spare spring is already in stock and the Clerk will arrange for this to be fitted. The rope climbing ladder on the main play unit is also showing signs of wear, and Cllrs agreed this will be monitored for the time being, with action taken if its condition deteriorates further.

It was noted that the ROSPA report once again raises several recurring issues: a potential head entrapment risk (which is inherent in the design and cannot be altered), the gate bollard (which ROSPA continue to highlight but remains essential to prevent the gate sticking open), and wear on the swing chains. However, the Capel Groundcare report confirmed the swing chains are in

good condition with only minimal wear, and Cllrs further noted that the chains were replaced at the end of last year. No further action was considered necessary on these recurring points.

e. Discuss content for meeting with Sports Club on 25 Sept about future Village Hall

The Clerk has confirmed that an initial meeting has been arranged with some members of the Sports Club on 25 September. It was made clear that the PC would not be in a position to make any decisions at this meeting however, the PC do need to have a clear idea of what they wish to achieve, and the Clerk suggested several points for consideration.

Points for discussion may include:

- Progress of the Sports Club's fundraising for the new clubhouse.
- Potential siting of the Village Hall if it were to be built on the Sports Club field.
- Any facilities that could potentially be shared between the two buildings (e.g., kitchen, toilets).
- Potential problems of co-locating both buildings on one site, such as parking or noise issues.
- Possible cost efficiencies of having both buildings on the same site.
- Update from the PC to the Sports Club on current VH progress, including refurbishment costings for the existing site.

Next steps:

- PC to obtain costings for a new VH on Brenchley road site and sports club site

It was noted that the Mr Andrew Winsor, Chair of the Horsmonden Development Advisory Group (HDAG) had also kindly agreed to attend the meeting, upon invitation from the PC.

f. Discuss final plans for the 2025 Horse Fair

The Clerk confirmed that all paperwork has now been received from the organiser. The only outstanding item is the £500 deposit cheque, which has been posted but not yet received. Following the recent SAG meeting, it was agreed that the organiser would purchase road signs to warn drivers of the fair and the possibility of horses trotting on the road. The organiser has been provided with a map indicating the exact positions for the signs on all main approaches to the village.

The Clerk asked Cllrs if they could monitor the fair throughout the day, if able, and advised that any issues should be reported to the police by calling 999.

g. The Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 – new/refresh policies in accordance with this new legislation:

The Clerk had drafted new/refreshed existing policies in accordance with The Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 and had circulated to Cllrs for their review prior to the meeting.

Draft Data Protection Policy

Cllr Davis proposed acceptance of the PCs Data Protection policy with amendments as drafted; seconded Cllr Russell. Unanimous.

Draft Privacy Policy

Cllr Baxter-Smith proposed acceptance of the PCs Privacy policy with amendments as drafted; seconded Cllr Sheppard. Unanimous.

Draft Employees Privacy Policy

Cllr Baxter-Smith proposed acceptance of the Employees Privacy policy agreement notice as drafted with no changes; seconded Cllr Sheppard. Unanimous.

Draft Councillors Privacy Policy

Cllr Sheppard proposed acceptance of the Councillors Privacy policy agreement notice as drafted with no changes; seconded Cllr Baxter-Smith. Unanimous.

Draft Website Privacy Notice

Cllr Sheppard proposed acceptance of the PCs Website Privacy Notice with amendments as drafted; seconded Cllr Russell. Unanimous.

Draft Subject Access Request Policy

Cllr Davis proposed acceptance of the newly drafted Subject Access Request policy as drafted; seconded Cllr Russell. Unanimous.

Draft Data Map and Assessment of Personal Data held by HPC

Cllr Davis proposed acceptance of the new Data Map and Assessment of Personal Data tool as drafted; seconded Cllr Sheppard. Unanimous.

h. Consider policy review:

The Clerk had reviewed and updated the following policies and shared with Cllrs prior to the meeting for their review:

Draft Investment Strategy

Cllr Russell proposed acceptance of the PCs Investment Strategy with minor amendments as drafted; seconded Cllr Sheppard. Unanimous.

Draft Reserves Policy

Cllr Davis proposed acceptance of the PCs Reserves Policy with minor amendments as drafted; seconded Cllr Baxter-Smith. Unanimous.

Draft Business Continuity Plan

Cllr Russell proposed acceptance of the PCs Business Continuity Plan with minor amendments as drafted; seconded Cllr Larkin. Unanimous.

Draft Legionella Control and Management Policy

Cllr Sheppard proposed acceptance of the PCs Legionella Control and Management policy with no changes; seconded Cllr Davis. Unanimous.

i. Do we wish to consider Bus Stop shelter grant funding 25-26 (location?)

The Clerk shared details of the TWBC Bus Stop Shelter Grant 25-26 with Cllrs for their consideration. It was agreed that a bus stop shelter outside the village shop would be beneficial for parishioners.

Cllrs discussed the proposal; however, in view of the application deadline and the need to consult the landowner, it was agreed that the landowner be approached in the first instance. The matter may be reconsidered should a further grant opportunity become available in the future.

j. Discuss/agree date for first aid training

Councillors considered possible dates for first aid training. It was noted that the session should not be held during the half term period. Availability of the Village Hall was reviewed, with Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays generally suitable.

7. Consultations

- a. KCC Budget Consultation <https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/budget-consultation-2026-27> by 29 September.

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

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.50pm

APPENDIX 1

Date: 01/09/2025	Horsmonden Parish Council Current Year	Page 1			
Time: 10:32	Current A/c- Unity Trust Bank				
List of Payments made between 07/07/2025 and 31/08/2025					
Date Paid	Payee Name	Reference	Amount Paid	Authorized Ref	Transaction Detail
10/07/2025	HMRC	BACS	634.85		Tax & NI July
10/07/2025	Capel Groundcare	BACS	732.92		Grounds, SIDs , play area June
10/07/2025	Mulberry & Co	BACS	204.00		Payroll 1st quarter
10/07/2025	Defib World	BACS	243.79		Defib battery
10/07/2025	Training at work group	BACS	838.80		First aid trainig day
11/07/2025	British Gas Lite	DD	60.92		Public Toilets energy June
11/07/2025	British Gas Lite	DD	40.28		Electricity VG boxes
17/07/2025	EE - BT	DD	69.29		Mobile phones July
17/07/2025	Lucy Noakes	BACS	57.20		Refund of travel expenses
18/07/2025	Castle Water	DD	26.60		Water supply Toilets June
22/07/2025	Microshade VSM	BACS	209.62		Email and Data hosting July
22/07/2025	Gordons Home Improvements	BACS	980.00		Painting at Public Toilets
23/07/2025	P&F Cleaning services LTD	SO	500.00		Cleaning Toilets & Shelter June
23/07/2025	Horsmonden Vh Committee	BACS	1,500.00		Grant to Hor VH Committee
24/07/2025	HorsmondenVH committee	BACS	1,500.00		Grant to VH committee
24/07/2025	Horsmodnen VH Committee	BACS	-1,500.00		Grant to Hors VH committee
25/07/2025	Mrs L D Noakes	BACS	1,585.82		July Salary
25/07/2025	Anna Blyth	BACS	1,143.76		July Salary
28/07/2025	Peoples partnership	DD	227.30		Staff pensions July
30/07/2025	SSE	DD	243.19		June electricity SL
31/07/2025	Lloyds Bank PLC	DD	42.60		Credit card July
31/07/2025	Mr C J Couchman	BACS	160.00		July clock and play area
31/07/2025	Unity Trust Bank	DD	9.75		Bank Charges June
05/08/2025	Capel Groundcare	BACS	804.92		Grounds, SIDs, Play area JULY
05/08/2025	Viking	BACS	106.50		Stationery
05/08/2025	Vision ICT Ltd	BACS	240.00		Web hosting and support 25-26
05/08/2025	Clearview Windows	BACS	60.00		Washing play equipment
05/08/2025	Clearview Windows	BACS	50.00		Washig noticeboards/benches
05/08/2025	RoSPA Play Safety	BACS	96.00		Annual Play area inspection
05/08/2025	PSR Lighting & Signs Ltd	BACS	380.40		Repairs to street light FD
12/08/2025	British Gas Lite	DD	14.11		Electricity VG boxes July
12/08/2025	Peoples partnership	DD	281.72		Stafff pensions August
12/08/2025	HMRC	BACS	847.64		Tax & NI August
12/08/2025	Arron Services Ltd	BACS	1,225.14		Clerks laptop/ monitor/keyboar
12/08/2025	British Gas Lite	DD	30.03		Electricity Toilets July
18/08/2025	EE - BT	DD	69.29		Staff moblie phones August
20/08/2025	Castle Water	DD	26.81		Water supply Toilets July
21/08/2025	Solway Direct	BACS	536.40		Payment for donor bench
21/08/2025	Arron Services Ltd	BACS	4,644.00		Replacment CLLR Laptops
21/08/2025	Microshade VSM	BACS	209.62		August emails & Data provision
21/08/2025	SSE	DD	158.08		Street lights July supply
22/08/2025	Anna Blyth	BACS	1,277.32		August salary plus back pay
22/08/2025	Mrs L Noakes	BACS	1,877.57		August salary plus Back pay
22/08/2025	Mrs L D Noakes	BACS	-1,877.57		Staff salary plus back pay
22/08/2025	Mrs L Noakes	BACS	1,788.57		August salary plus back pay
26/08/2025	P&F Cleaning services LTD	SO	500.00		CleaningToilets & Shelter Aug
29/08/2025	Mr J Couchman	BACS	200.00		clock & Play area Aug

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Date: 01/09/2025

Horsmonden Parish Council Current Year

Page 2

Time: 10:32

Current A/c- Unity Trust Bank

List of Payments made between 07/07/2025 and 31/08/2025

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Authorized Ref</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
29/08/2025	Capel Groundcare	BACS	732.92		Aug groundwork, SIDs, Play area
29/08/2025	Kent Association of Local Coun	BACS	84.00		Training Finance meeting CR
29/08/2025	Mulberry Local Authority Servi	BACS	18.00		Training on Assertion 10
31/08/2025	Unity Trust Bank	DD	9.45		Bank charges
Total Payments			<u>23,901.61</u>		