

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF HORSMONDEN
PARISH COUNCIL**

HELD AT HORSMONDEN VILLAGE HALL

TUESDAY 17 JUNE 2025 AT 7.30 PM

Copyright Notice - Plans, drawing and material submitted to the Council are protected by the Copyright Acts (Section 47, 1988 Act). You may only use material that is downloaded or printed for consultation purposes, to compare current applications with previous schemes and to check whether developments have been completed in accordance with approved plans. Further copies must not be made without the prior permission of the copyright owner

Present:

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

In attendance:

Lucy Noakes (Clerk)

Anna Blyth (Assistant Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Jenkinson, Cllr Darah (TWBC) and Cllr Mobbs (TWBC). The reasons for absence were proposed or acceptance by Cllr Larkin, seconded Cllr Baxter -Smith and voted for unanimously

Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct were invited. None were declared.

2. PUBLIC SESSION

Members of the public have the right to speak for up to three minutes at the Chair's discretion on issues concerning the Parish providing the Clerk has prior notification. No members of the public had requested to speak.

3. DISCUSS/AGREE POTENTIAL PARISH OFFICE RELOCATION, RENT AND SERVICE CHARGES

The Deputy Clerk had put together a brief summary sheet on the proposal from Mr Sani to lease unit 5 of the Horsmonden Business Centre to the Parish Council as a Parish office .

The proposed rent was £7500 per annum which included rent of £400 PCM and service charges of £225 PCM. The clerks and member of the Council had viewed the unit to assess its suitability as a Parish Office .

It was noted that the service charge includes:

- Building repairs
- Electricity and water (excluding phone line/broadband)
- Cleaning of shared communal areas and (cleaning of unit can be arranged for a separate fee)

- Lighting, heating and air conditioning
- Cleaning and maintaining furniture, fittings and equipment in the toilets, kitchen and utility areas on the common parts.
- Paying cost of utilities incurred to providing the services.
- Paying existing and future duties and charges charged on common parts or building as a whole.
- Security, firefighting and fire detection equipment.
- Storing, recycling and disposing of refuse from the building

It was commented that if the move was to go ahead some new items of furniture would be helpful consisting of a larger desk for the Deputy Clerk and two lockable filing cupboards for files and folders which would need relocating from the current store room at the Village Hall . The Deputy Clerk's current small desk would be used as stand for the printer allowing this to be removed from the Clerk's desk space.

Councillors considered that the proposal was a good opportunity at a price within budget , which could provide a safer working environment for the Clerks and more appropriate parish office for the public to visit, located within the centre of the village. The location would resolve issues around background noise which at present is disruptive to the Clerks' working environment, as well as the issue of lone working which the current location often presents. There appeared to be no issues with damp or mould and the unit provided air conditioning for a comfortable working environment.

Taking all of this into account Cllr Boon proposed acceptance of the proposal subject to the terms of the lease being considered suitable for the PC's requirements. (The terms should allow for reasonable notice on either side to end the contract if no longer appropriate and should only include what are considered reasonable inflationary increases in the costs each year) . This was seconded by Cllr Larkin and voted for unanimously .

The meeting ended at 7.45pm