

# DRAFT

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HORSMONDEN DEVELOPMENT

### ADVISORY GROUP (ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF HPC)

HELD AT HORSMONDEN VILLAGE HALL

ON TUESDAY 21 APRIL 2026 AT 6.30 PM

#### Present:

Mr Winsor, Cllrs Boon, Davis, Russell, and Baylis.

In attendance:

Lucy Noakes (Clerk)

#### 1. Apologies for absence

Cllr Baxter- Smith. Cllr Russel proposed acceptance of the reason for absence and this was seconded by Cllr Davis. Unanimous.

Cllr Richards. No apologies provided.

#### 2. Public Session (no decisions):

No speakers.

#### 3. Agree minutes of the previous meeting [14.10.2025](#)

Mr Winsor recapped the minutes which had previously been circulated by the Clerk. Cllr Davis proposed acceptance of the minutes, seconded Cllr Russell. Unanimous

#### 4. Brief update and discussion on the timing of TWBC new Local Plan and how this will fit in with Local Government Review. Any foreseeable problems for Horsmonden?

The clerk had forwarded the following notes/reminders on the subject beforehand:

*The Local Plan 2020-2038 was adopted by Full Council on Wednesday 10 December 2025.*

*The adopted Tunbridge Wells [Local Plan 2020-2038](#) replaces the existing [2006 Local Plan](#), the [Core Strategy \(2010\)](#) and the [Site Allocations Local Plan \(2016\)](#).*

*The Local Development Scheme set out :The Council will begin the Local Plan review within six months of adoption of the new Local Plan ( December 2025). The Local Plan will be prepared in accordance with the new plan making regime (currently set out in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023) and, subject to guidance, will be submitted for examination at the end of 2027.*

*LGR: Although Kent was not selected for the Devolution Priority Programme, the process of Local Government Reorganisation continues. Council leaders across Kent were invited to submit a proposal for Local Government Reorganisation in Kent and setting out the criteria against which any such proposal will be assessed.*

*The proposal would see Kent County Council, the borough and district councils in Kent, and Medway Council, being replaced with unitary councils.*

*Different proposals were considered TWBC 17 November 2025 and Option 3a was selected as Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's preferred option. This would see Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells become one of three new unitary councils in Kent.*

#### Option 3a - Three unitary councils



*A final proposal was submitted to the Government on 28 November 2025.*

*The Government is currently carrying out a public consultation with all Kent residents on the preferred options and a decision by the Government on the final structure of unitary councils is expected in summer 2026.*

*Based on the Government's timetable, the new arrangements could be in place as early as April 2028.*

The Committee members discussed all of this and the possible implications with timings . The next version of the Local Plan will be a much speedier process than the last one and will undoubtedly include another round of 'Call for sites' . it was suggested that whilst some of the same sites will be put forward as last time but there could also be new ones. It was unclear as to how many new homes will be required in the next Local plan for this area. It was discussed how this could also affect depending on the timing as TWBC could be dissolved by then and the Local Authority could be a Unitary Council covering a much wider area.

Attention was drawn to the fact that the Parish Council's current Neighbourhood plan is now almost 3 years old and that as NH plans start to hold less weight once they are beyond 5 years old (because of new and emerging policies) it may be time to consider a revision of this. It was also mentioned that the current NH plan did not allocate any sites ( the current 3 were listed in the local plan so this was not considered necessary at the time ) however plans tend to hold more weight if allocating sites in their local area.

It was therefore recommended as a proposal from the Chair that the PC consider a review of their Neighbourhood plan before it reaches its fifth year, in 2028. To do so, it needs to consider an outline so that costings can be included in the November 2026 Budgeting for 2027-28. This was voted for unanimously .

## 5. Progress with the new village hall consultation. Potential assistance from HDAG members.

The Clerk informed the committee that the Parish Council had just ( Monday 13 April) agreed a scope of works which will now be sent on to consultants to provide estimates . These will then be brought back to the council for short listing and choosing a consultant to work with.

The Chair informed the committee that he and PN have agreed to work together on an inventory of village meeting places which should be available by the middle of May for the consultants to use to aid them with the process. It was agreed that this will provide useful back ground information for the consultations . This information can be collected whilst the PC are out to tender, saving time and potentially costs .

## 6. Updates on local large developments. Brenchley Road – housing mix; footway link; updates on the footpath progress. Bassets Farm - housing mix changes for social housing; on-going issues with footpath link to village; build progression; sales; land management. Matters for HPC?

The clerk had circulated an update prior to the meeting:

***Brenchley Road** updated application was currently being considered by TWBC ( deadline for comments now closed.) The PC queried the mix of housing as it doesn't fit with 6.1 of the Horsmonden NH plan. The PC asked for smaller homes for downsizing as well as first time buyers. However, most of the smaller homes are social housing not market homes.*

*On going problems with the pavement link to the village. Lambert and Foster dealing with local residents to purchase frontages to create pavements. Fernham Homes application is dependent upon on a successful pavement link. The National trust have sent a letter to TWBC to confirm their willingness in principal to work towards securing a footpath from the development into Sprivers . Following an online meeting with Southern water the PC have written to ask SW to check capacity for foul sewerage at this end of the village (as there have been some problems in Fromandez Drive which parishioners reported on, saying that engineers at the time mentioned the capacity was already overstretched following the development of Furnace Mere etc.) No response as yet . PC has also queried the Emergency access .Fire brigade have queried turning points etc*

***Bassetts Farm** – various enforcement issues being looked into : tree root protection not being adhered to , too many containers, pile of soil not being moved as expected.*

*On going issues with spring emanating on to new pavement link . Pavement is now open but the issue is not resolved as far as the PC are concerned .*

*SW have come back and confirmed capacity following the meeting with PC but the PC have queried if this takes into account the surface water from the homes already connected.*

*No S106 monies provided for VH with the larger 120 home application. Various emails about this to Carlos Hone - response is negative so far to changing this or resolving the issue .*

*Uncertainty about the doctors surgery wanting to go ahead with a new medical centre on the 120 site .*

Mr Winser drew the committee's attention to a letter which he had sent to TWBC planning officer as well as the Landscape and Biodiversity officer regarding a new proposal for street lighting which had been submitted under the application for 20 homes TW/02027/FULL. The recent proposal revisited the lighting scheme which had already been considered several times under this application . The Landscape and Biodiversity officer had asked for the original lighting

plan to be reduced in line with policies for darker skies and this had been adhered to in the following proposals . However, the most recent proposal appeared to back track on this and proposed 15 street lights in the internal area .This was contrary to the Horsmonden PC Dark Skies Policy as well as planning legislation protecting against light pollution.

Mr Winser also pointed out that recent plans under TW/24/00078/HYBRID, which is the application for 120 homes on the same site, show a different version of the access road , with an additional footpath alongside. These plans differed from those which had already been decided under TW/02027/FULL.

It was proposed by the Chair that members of the PC may wish to highlight this during their following meeting under 'Planning' to see if the PC wanted to raise this with the case officer and ask if they may be allowed some time to comment on the recent lighting proposals, as well as potentially highlighting the contradictions in the site entrance plans for the two applications . Unanimous.

It was suggested that as the PC had not heard any more about the management of the open space at Bassetts Farm for some time , the Clerk would chase up on this matter again to see if any progress could be made.

It was noted that there were now two areas where a spring emerges on to the new pavement link from Bassetts Farm towards the village. These were not flowing as rapidly at present because of the recent dry conditions , but as far as all present were aware nothing had been done to divert the flow as yet. Clerk to chase with the appropriate officer at KCC.

The Clerk agreed to continue to chase Southern Water about capacity checks for the Brenchley Road development site, and that she would copy everyone in when she received a response from Carlos Hone , Head of TWBC Planning, about the lack of S106 contributions on TW/24/00078/HYBRID .

## **7. Key infrastructure matters - Cross roads, Parking, footpaths, water and sewage . Matters for HPC ?**

The clerk had made report prior to the meeting :

*Water provision –Water companies have to comply and connect new developments – but do they have capacity ? May be the PC should contact them direct as with drainage? Recent water outages in the area – MP is working to find out what happened and resolve for future . Clerk and SD attended an online meeting with KCC about resolving future water outage issues (mainly through emergency plan procedures ).*

*Cross roads- PC have made a successful bid for £25 through the Rural Grant Scheme. This will be used to enhance the Maidstone Road side of the cross roads.*

*Pavement links to new developments already mentioned. PC recently scraped back soil from Goudhurst Rod pavement to keep it full width . Keeping an eye on narrowing of pavements through soil creep and hedge rows.*

The Committee had nothing to add to this information or for discussion at present .

**8. Shops and amenities – Gun & Spit Roast; Change of use for the old hairdressers to residential; new veterinary practice; school Bus stops. Matters for HPC?**

The clerk had reported prior to the meeting :

*The Old hairdressers has applied for planning permission to be converted back to residential – this application awaits a decision still. Gun & Spit Roast : There have been reports that it is reopening as a pub with restaurant. Some refurbishment is taking place currently . Advertising at old chemist shop shows a new veterinary practice will be moving into the village there. Mark Munday is having ongoing talks with KCC officers about the school bus stop at the Bassetts Farm end of the village . The concern is that If this STOP is removed , the current centre village STOP will become too busy possibly causing danger to children and road users ? There may be the need for an additional/ larger school stop at this end once the larger development is built. ( The BF site has been considered but not enough turning room /stopping space ?)*

It was reported to the meeting that new management were to reopen the Gun and Spit Roast in May, as a refurbishment was underway . The new Veterinary surgery is to open on the site of the old Chemists located on the Maidstone road in July .

**MEETING CLOSED AT 7.27PM**