



**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING of Hadlow Down Parish Council
held in Hadlow Down Village Hall, Hadlow Down
at 7pm on Tuesday 6th May 2025**

Present: Councillors: Michael Lunn (ML) Chair (+WDC), Peter Weston (PW), Damon Wellman (DW), Ben Floyd (BF), David Munday (DM), Alan Hobbs (AH) and Stephen Lester (SL).

In attendance: Vicki Rutt (Clerk), Cllr Bob Standing (ESCC) and two members of public.

- 21. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN** – it was proposed and seconded that Cllr. Michael Lunn be elected as Chairman, this was supported unanimously. The Chair signed the Declaration of Office.
- 22. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN** – it was proposed and seconded that Cllr. Peter Weston be elected as Vice Chairman, this was supported unanimously.
- 23. ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE FORMS** – all Cllrs signed their Acceptance of Office forms which were also signed by the Clerk and will be stored securely.
- 24. CODE OF CONDUCT AND CIVILITY & RESPECT PLEDGE** – Cllrs. were reminded of the Code of Conduct and the Civility & Respect Pledge which they were signing agreement to as part of their acceptance of office.
- 25. REGISTER OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS** – Cllrs. completed and signed their Register of Interests forms if any changes to their circumstance since last year.
- 26. PUBLIC QUESTIONS** – A resident asked the Council to encourage ESH to repair the top of School Lane, the state of the road means that cars are veering onto the other side and there is considerable noise disturbance. Clerk will chase them. **Action 1.** There was a brief discussion on the upcoming SLR meeting being cancelled and the constant lack of response from ESH. Cllr Standley is going to chase. **Action 2.** A resident raised the recent cutting of the verges which was distressing to her due to the wildflowers and wildlife. Clerk confirmed that the email had been received but was too late for this meeting but will be on the June agenda to give the Clerk time to investigate this with County. **Action 3.**
- 27. APOLOGIES** – None.
- 28. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – ML declared a pecuniary interest under agenda item 53a.
- 29. COUNCILLOR'S ALLOWANCES AND EXPENSES** - the Chair updated that expenses could be claimed by Cllrs. All Cllrs agreed not to claim.
- 30. REVIEW OF REPRESENTATION ON OR WORK WITH EXTERNAL BODIES INCLUDING THE MAYFIELD CHARITIES** – It was agreed that all would remain the same.
- 31. COUNCILLOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES** - the following responsibilities remain the same with no changes:
 - ML – Community Plan, Public Transport, Wealden District Association of Local Councils, Police & Neighbourhood Watch, Community Projects
 - PW –Strengthening Local Relationships Meetings/Support, Speed Indicator Device
 - BF – Playing Field, Planning Applications, Parish Panel Meetings
 - DM – Planning Applications, Parish Panel Meetings, Emergency Co-ordination Plan
 - DW – Highways and Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign
 - SL – Rights of Way
 - AH - Burial Ground & Tree Warden
- 32. COUNCIL'S BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND SIGNATORIES OF BANK ACCOUNT** – it was agreed to continue with the current banking arrangements with Unity Trust.
- 33. SUMMONS** – The Cllrs agreed for the summons to meetings to continue to be sent electronically and they signed the declaration form.
- 34. ASSETS** – the Assets Register was reviewed, agreed and signed.
- 35. GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE** – it was resolved that the PC continue to meet the eligibility criteria as defined in the Localism Act 2011 and S1 965 The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 of having a CiLCA qualified Clerk and the requisite proportion of Councillors elected, the PC would continue to adopt the General Power of Competence until the next relevant Annual meeting.
- 36. MINUTES OF THE MEETING** held on the 1st April 2025 was recommended for approval and signed as a true record (previously circulated).
- 37. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:**
 - a. Action Log - Clerk reported from the action log which is available on the village website.
 - b. Clerks report - This was noted (previously circulated).

38. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

38.1 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

None

38.2 APPROVED APPLICATIONS

WD/2024/1776/F FOR LITTLE BROADREED FARM, DOG KENNEL LANE, HADLOW DOWN

Replacement of a storage building at the farm – This was noted.

39. REPORTS FROM CLLR.BOB STANDLEY, ESCC & CLLR MICHAEL LUNN, WDC

ESCC - Cllr Standley reported that ESCC are one of the first in the country to have signed up to the new line rental scheme which should mean utilities doing more work out of hours on peak routes. There has been an increase in the number of people signing up to the Multiply Skill Training which has seen 3000+ residents given training to improve their confidence with maths. Cabinet agreed to move Bus Improvement funding from Bus Lane schemes to revert to the original plan to replace the single lane Exceat Bridge with 2-way (one lane each way) bridge on A259. The scheme has planning permission from the South Downs National Park but is subject to a public enquiry on certain issues. This enquiry will take place at County Hall next week.

WDC - Cllr Lunn reported that the Wealden alliance has formed a constitution group to have more accountability and transparency. This has been fast tracked due to the combined authority. The new constitution is going to full council next week although discussions have taken place why this is needed when it will be void in 2 years. Rachel Millward has resigned as leader. The Maidens Head in Uckfield will not be sorted for a long time.

40. HIGHWAYS:

a. Update on the UKPN A272 project – Clerk reported that they have confirmed that they will give 15 days' notice for any planned power cuts and they are sweeping the road when needed. It was raised that UKPN need to bear in mind vulnerable residents with the planned power cuts. ML reported that the workers have informed him that they are struggling to work in the area they have been given and there are delays but they are working as quick as they can as they are being fined £8,000 a day.

41. RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE PLAY AREA MOVE PROJECT – Clerk reported that the survey received 18 responses, however, despite both Clerk and Cllrs checking the wording, there has been confusion about the plans for the play area so it was discussed that the survey would be re-written and re published in due course. **Action 4.**

42. RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE TELEPHONE BOX – A discussion took place regarding the telephone box as it has been identified that it needs more than some TLC. It was discussed whether it should be scrapped, restored or left alone. BF is going to look to see if restorable and what is needed. When more is known, Councillors will discuss further.

Action 5.

43. COMMUNITY CENTRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE - ML updated that a meeting is being held next week.

44. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

a. School Lane and speed signs – PW reported that he had received emails from a resident, which Councillors have had sight of, regarding the speed of vehicles leaving and entering the village on school lane. The resident has suggested that one of the SIDs could be relocated, however advice from a Community Speedwatch Officer is a SID should be at least 150m back from the change of speed limit. PW is going to liaise further with the resident but feels this area could be looked at further, especially with the pending Community Centre development. **Action 6.**

b. High Weald Nature and Community Fund – The High Weald Nature and Community Fund is now open for new applications, offering support for work that benefits nature and people across the High Weald National Landscape, including the villages and towns in and around it. Whether you're a community group, CIC, school, charity, church, Parish Council or other non-profit body, this is your chance to make a real positive change in your corner of the High Weald – both for today and for future generations. Grants range from £500 up to £20,000, with larger amounts available for large-scale, multi-year projects. Learn more at highweald.org/grants/high-weald-fund/

What can I apply for? The High Weald Nature and Community Fund aims to:

- Create wildlife-friendly spaces like community gardens, pocket parks, allotments, orchards, and school growing areas, especially in towns and villages.
- Enhance habitats through pond creation, wetlands, tree and hedge planting, wildflower meadows, and wildlife boxes.
- Support habitat restoration, including hedge-laying, coppicing, and removing invasive species.
- Engage communities in managing green spaces, volunteering, and provide training for conservation projects.
- Improve access for underrepresented groups, including young people, those with physical or mental health challenges, and people living with disabilities.

It was raised that, if possible, an application could be submitted, prior to the July deadline, for improvements to the burial ground. Clerk will look at this **Action 7.**

c. Overhanging Trees at 13 St Marks Field – This was discussed, and a site visit needs to be arranged but it is believed to be trees on Church Land and not Parish Council. Clerk to arrange. **Action 8.**

45. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS (COUNCIL MATTERS AND OUTSIDE BODIES):

DW reported that an articulated petrol tanker got stuck down Dog Kennel Lane due to the roadworks, ESH need to think about where they divert traffic. BF asked whether UKPN contractors have caused a leak at the bottom of Five Chimneys Lane as there has been no rain, but it is very wet. ML did not believe so. ML reported that PCSO Choppin

will be out of action for a few months due to leave and a planned surgery. The PC wish her a speedy recovery.

- 46. ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE VILLAGE EMERGENCY PLAN** - this was reviewed and approved.
- 47. POLICY FOR DEALING WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA** - this was reviewed and approved.
- 48. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY** - this was reviewed and approved.
- 49. SAFEGUARDING POLICY** - this was reviewed and approved.
- 50. BURIAL GROUND:**
- a. Approve memorial headstone for M. Luck – this was reviewed and approved. Clerk to do the paperwork. **Action 9.**
- 51. RISK ASSESSMENTS**
- a. Receive tree assessment report – AH reported he has not finished it yet and would like a boundary map. PW has one so will send to Clerk and AH. **Action 10.**
- 52. CLERKS MATTERS:**
- a. Clerks hours April 2025 – These were agreed. Discussion was held regarding the increase of workload.
- 53. OTHER FINANCE MATTERS:**
- a. Agree Finance Report for May 2025 - The finance report was noted and approved. The detail can be found in [Appendix A](#). PW and DM will authorise.
 - b. Agree and sign Bank Reconciliation for April 2025 - The bank rec for April 2025 was approved and signed by PW and DM.
 - c. To receive and note Q4 2024/25 figures and report – This is received and noted. The recommendations from the Clerk regarding EMR movements were agreed. Clerk to action. **Action 11.**
 - d. To note VAT return submission for 2024/25- This was noted.
 - e. To discuss and agree insurance renewal for 2025/26- This was looked into and queried as thought they were in a contract rate. Clerk believes it has expired. Payment will be put on hold so Clerk can investigate further. **Action 12.**
- 54. CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 Section 17** – nothing raised.
- 55. DEFIBRILLATOR BATTERY** – this had been checked on 6th May 2025.
- 56. ITEMS TO GO ON NEXT AGENDA:** None.

The meeting closed at 19:56

****CONFIDENTIAL SESSION****

- 57. To exclude the public attendance for agenda item 58, the following resolution must be passed.**
That in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, that the public including the press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of agenda item 58 as individual contractual land matters are to be discussed, and this would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

This was proposed by ML and seconded by BF. All agreed. RESOLVED.

- 58. TO DISCUSS THE LEASE TERM AND RENT DETAILS FOR BOTH THE PLAYING FIELD COMMITTEE AND HADLOW DOWN COMMUNITY CENTRE**

This was discussed in a confidential session. Lease terms and rents were agreed.

The meeting closed at 20:11

The next PC meeting date is Tuesday 10th June 2025 at 19:00
(Please note this is one week later than usual)

Appendix A

Finance report for 6th May 2025 PC meeting

<u>Payments by Bank Transfer <i>paid</i> pending authorisation</u>			
Payment Date	Payee	Payment Details	Amount
None			
<u>Payments by Bank Transfer pending authorisation</u>			
Payment Date	Payee	Payment Details	Amount
28.05.25	Vicki Rutt	Standing Order May 2025	£1,216.02
06.05.25	Vicki Rutt	Salary underpay April 2025	£169.03
06.05.25	HMRC	Tax + NI April 2025	£304.27
06.05.25	East Sussex Pension Fund	Pension April 2025	£402.43
06.05.25	Lucy McConnachie	Play area inspection April 2025	£40.00
06.05.25	R A Waters	Verge cutting	£120.00
06.05.25	Clear Insurance Mgmt Ltd	Insurance renewal 2025/26	£667.79
06.05.25	Signs of Style	Parish Assembly poster signs	£100.00
06.05.25	esALC Limited	eSALC and NALC subs 2025/26	£237.28
06.05.25	Hadlow Down Village Hall	April 2025 hire	£62.50
06.05.25	Rialtas	Finance software for 2025/26	£243.60
06.05.25	Michael Lunn	Reimbursement for wine for PA	£22.90
06.05.25	Christine Sullivan	Reimbursement for food for PA	£48.25
06.05.25	Hadlow Down Village Hall	Hall hire May 2025	£75.20
<u>Payments by direct debit for authorisation</u>			
Date	Payee	Payment Details	Amount
15.04.25	Wealden District Council	Q4 bins	£514.80
30.04.25	Unity Trust	April 2025 service charge	£6.00
<u>Acknowledge receipt of monies</u>			
22.04.25	Vicki Rutt	PA food take home	£8.55
28.04.25	Wealden District Council	Precept part 1	£22,700.00