



MINUTES OF THE MEETING of Hadlow Down Parish Council
held in Hadlow Down Village Hall, Hadlow Down
at 7pm on Tuesday 5th August 2025

Present: Councillors: Michael Lunn (ML) Chair (+WDC), Peter Weston (PW) Vice-Chair, Ben Floyd (BF), David Munday (DM) and Stephen Lester (SL).

In attendance: Vicki Rutt (Clerk), Cllr Bob Standley (ESCC) and 4 members of public.

98. PUBLIC QUESTIONS – A resident raised her thanks to the Parish Council on all their hard work for the Parish Meeting held on the 22nd July. It was extremely well attended, and the information was presented well to residents which was a credit to the PC.

99. APOLOGIES – Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Alan Hobbs.

100. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – BF and DM declared a personal interest in agenda item 110e.

101. MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on the 1st July 2025 was recommended for approval and signed as a true record (previously circulated).

102. 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).

103. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a. WD/2025/1708/F for HUGGETTS FARM, STONEHURST LANE, HADLOW DOWN, TN20 6LL

Cart lodge style private residential garage

*PC commented – 1 Cllr was in favour but 4 objected due to EN27 regarding mass, size and scale of the building. The pitch of the roof is excessive for the size of the building and its impact on the AONB. The PC are not opposed to a garage, just the size of this application. **Not supported.***

b. WD/2025/1711/F for CRISPHAMS COTTAGE, ROSERS COMMON, BUXTED, TN22 4QA

Erection of extensions, alterations, demolition and replacement of a garage and associated development
Standing orders dropped so applicants could answer questions. Standing orders reinstated.

*PC commented – This application received unanimous support with one condition regarding the roof light, that it does not breach the dark skies policy. **Supported.***

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

ESCC - Cllr Standley's full report can be found on the Parish Council website. He stated it is worrying times with funding being affected, especially in adult social care. A SEND white paper is due out in September that will change things radically. Around 10% of children have not been immunised for measles and there were 500 cases in England this year. ML asked about the illuminated sign on the A267, the vegetation really needs cut back further. Cllr Standley will raise it with the steward. **Action 1.** ML asked when will the painting of white lines and roundels be completed in the village. Cllr Standley will have a look at this. **Action 2.** During the A272 works by UKPN they also flagged the blocked drains on the A272 which had been raised previously by a resident. Cllr Standley said he would investigate along with the other actions. ML emphasised this needed addressing before autumn. The installation of plastic bollards were raised as a waste of money. ML said this was probably a result of safety issues being raised by the footpath that crosses towards Smile Meadow.

Standing Orders dropped.

A resident raised his frustration with road closures around the village and the signage remaining up for long periods, even once work is completed.

Standing Orders reinstated.

WDC - Cllr Lunn reported that all Ward Cllrs have been given £10k to give to groups within their ward, £5k will go to Hadlow Down and £5k for Rotherfield. Applications are to be sent to WDC and if they meet the criteria, it gets passed to Cllr Lunn for decision. More information can be found here:

<https://www.wealden.gov.uk/councillors-and-committees/councillor-ward-budgets-scheme/>

Cllr Lunn has asked questions on the local plan and the housing numbers; the new target is 1444 home per annum. WDC have gone out with a call for sites, in theory another regulation 18 may be needed. Unlikely to receive the housing numbers required so may need to move to a regulation 19 which the planning inspectorate is likely to reject. The whole process is being mismanaged. Full Council was held 3 weeks ago, nothing to update from it. The Audit and Finance Committee have 2 lay people sitting on the committee now. BF asked if there is any news on saving the track bed through the Owlsbury site. Cllr Lunn explained that WDC are proposing to put in a green way from Uckfield to Lewes, a feasibility study is taking place. However, Mims Davies MP is investigating ways to protect

the track bed. BF also asked about a recent call for public landowners to develop traveller and gypsy sites and whether this will affect Hadlow Down. Cllr Lunn said this is a concern but will have to see what happens, there should be a public consultation once sites have been called.

105. HIGHWAYS – A SLR meeting with Highways is due to be held end of September.

106. COMMUNITY CENTRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE – There is nothing to update. Next meeting will be after the Parish Poll so likely end of September.

107. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

- a. Statutory Consultation - Proposed 40mph and 50mph speed limits on A272 at Hadlow Down – PW has drafted a response to this consultation, all Cllrs have had sight, and all approved with one addition about the area near Dog Kennel Lane. PW to update document and send to Clerk for submitting. **Action 3.**
- b. Draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) Consultation – ML will look at this and review, if he feels it is worth responding, he will draft a response and circulate to Cllrs. Once finalised he will send to Clerk for submitting, deadline is 29th August. **Action 4.**
- c. A267 Road Safety Group's response to ESCC comments on our Vision and Strategy Document – The response was noted.

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

SL is attending the village hall committee meeting in September 2025 as a representative of the PC and user of the hall. BF reported that the playing field had a recent meeting which was productive, and another one is being held on the 11th August. ML reported there was another recent theft in the village, he expressed his concern that rural crime is increasing and residents need to remain vigilant and report any concerns to the Police.

109. BURIAL GROUND:

- a. Acknowledge burial for Mr Thompson – This was noted.

110. RISK ASSESSMENTS:

- a. Receive tree assessment report – This is still outstanding. Deferred to the next meeting.
- b. Receive village risk assessment – Regarding the drainage in Hut Lane, BF is going to look at this. **Action 5.** The benches at the playing field were discussed, BF is going to look at them and review. **Action 6.**
- c. Receive fingerpost survey – SL completed the fingerpost and 4 were identified as needing maintenance, Clerk to action. **Action 7.**
- d. Acknowledge receipt of Play Safety annual play area report – The annual report has been received by all Cllrs and content has been noted. Following receipt, ML and PW did a site visit and found the climbing structure with slide not fit for purpose as it was rotten and the platform is unsafe. Signs were put up and barriers put around to prevent use until it could be discussed. BF is going to review to see if something he could repair and work out material costs. **Action 8.**
- e. To discuss the current weekly play area inspection process – It was raised that the weekly July safety inspections undertaken by a resident did not flag any of the safety concerns and one of the weeks, it was completed the same day that the ROSPA inspection was done, thus causing concern how this was missed. The Parish Council get the play area inspected for H&S reasons, and it is a serious responsibility. It was agreed to withhold the July payment until an explanation was received. Moving forward, it was agreed the play area could be moved to monthly inspections, but it would be a more thorough and detailed inspection, and the Clerk could work with the resident to make any changes to the process and reporting sheet. Clerk to liaise. **Action 9.**

111. CLERKS MATTERS:

- a. Clerks hours July 2025 – These were agreed. It was noted that there was a lot of overtime in July but ML acknowledged the increase in workload recently and thanked the Clerk for everything.
- b. Acknowledge resignation from Cllr Wellman – The resignation from Cllr Wellman on the 2nd July has been processed and all Cllrs have acknowledged. Cllr Lunn reported that he was saddened by the decision but respects his reasons and wishes him well. Cllr Wellman was a critical friend and greatly contributed to the PC over many years.
- c. Discuss WDC email re next steps with Notice of Vacancy – The Clerk confirmed that no election has been called so the Council will be able to co-opt a new Cllr. Due to it being holiday season, it was agreed to advertise the vacancy in September with a possible co-option on the October or November agenda.

112. OTHER FINANCE MATTERS:

- a. Agree Finance Report for August 2025 – The finance report was noted and approved by PW and DM. The detail can be found in [Appendix A](#).
- b. Agree and sign Bank Reconciliation for July 2025 – Approved and signed by PW and DM.
- c. Note and approve Local government services pay agreement 2025/26 – Noted and approved.
- d. Approval for Clerk to start the 2-year grass contract tender process for verges, playing field and burial ground – All agreed and Clerk to go out to tender early September. **Action 10.**

113. DEFIBRILLATOR BATTERY – this was checked on the 5th August 2025.

114. ITEMS TO GO ON NEXT AGENDA: None.

115. TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC ATTENDANCE FOR AGENDA ITEM 116, 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 116 as legal 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 DM and seconded by BF. All agreed. RESOLVED

The meeting closed at 20:29

****CONFIDENTIAL SESSION****

97. TO DISCUSS AND FINALISE THE LOGISTICS FOR THE UPCOMING PARISH POLL AND AGREE QUESTIONS

The logistics and final questions for the Parish Poll being held on Tuesday 9th September, between 15:00 – 21:00 were discussed and agreed.

The meeting closed at 20:45

The next PC meeting date is Tuesday 2nd September 2025 at 19:00

Appendix A

Finance report for 5th August 2025 PC meeting

<u>Payments by Bank Transfer paid pending authorisation</u>			
Payment Date	Payee	Payment Details	Amount
02.07.25	Hadlow Down Village Hall	Hall hire for July 2025	£88.00
<u>Payments by Bank Transfer pending authorisation</u>			
Payment Date	Payee	Payment Details	Amount
28.08.25	Vicki Rutt	Standing Order August 2025	£1,216.02
05.08.25	Vicki Rutt	Salary underpay + OT - July 2025	£198.92
05.08.25	HMRC	Tax + NI July 2025	£322.86
05.08.25	East Sussex Pension Fund	Pension July 2025	£413.77
05.08.25	Lucy McConnachie	Play area inspection July 2025	40 **On hold
05.08.25	Mrs L Browning	Ben Blackford C/O account for mole work	£120.00
05.08.25	Ben Floyd	Reimbursement for materials for Play field	£134.40
05.08.25	Signs of Style	Parish Meeting roadside signage	£100.00
05.08.25	Barcombe Landscapes	Grass cutting June and July 2025	£266 + VAT £53.20
05.08.25	Hadlow Down Village Hall	Hall hire for August 2025	£50.00
<u>Payments by direct debit for authorisation</u>			
Date	Payee	Payment Details	Amount
15.07.25	Wealden District Council	Q1 bins	£429 + VAT £85.80
31.07.25	Unity Trust	Monthly charge	£6.00
<u>Acknowledge receipt of monies</u>			
11.07.25	Mrs Thompson	Purchase of grave	£325.00
21.07.25	Co-Op Funeral home	Interment of Mr Thompson	£335.00