



**DRAFT**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Community Centre Advisory Committee  
held in **Hadlow Down Village Hall** on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2025 at 19:00

**Present:** Cllr Michael Lunn (ML) Chair, Cllr Peter Weston (PW), Cllr Stephen Lester, Bob Lake (BL), Brian Mills (BM), Fiona Shafer (FS) and Sandra Richards (SR).

**In attendance:** Vicki Rutt (Clerk).

*BL proposed that a member of the Hadlow Down Community Centre Committee (HDCC) join the meeting this evening. This was seconded by PW. All Committee members agreed. Sarah Prall (SP) joined the meeting.*

**1. Public Questions**

None.

**2. Apologies**

None.

**3. Declarations of interest**

ML declared a personal interest as he owns lands adjacent to the site.

**4. Approve the minutes of meeting held on the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2025 and review action log**

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record. The action log was reviewed and updated.

**5. Receive an update on the new leases**

The Clerk updated that the draft leases are with the solicitor, and this is the update:

- The existing leases for PFC will be brought to an end by way of a deed of surrender. The parties would have to agree the terms, but it is suspected it would be on the basis of no consideration and to release both parties from their liabilities under the lease. This is a relatively straight forward document to draft and can become effective simultaneously with the grant of a new lease.
- The deed once completed will need to be sent to the Land Registry so that the Land Registry note the lease has been terminated and formally close the title.
- Any contracts will be with the CIO as it has its own legal entity so the Council cannot be pursued in respect of unpaid contractor's invoices, for example.
- Merging land registry parcels ESX368541 and ESX366082 into one land holding is taking place and an AP1 form has been submitted requesting this.

SP updated that as soon as the lease has been received, Hadlow Down Community Centre Committee [HDCCC] will have the lease checked to ensure it meets the criteria for fundraising. It was raised that the lease is needed sooner rather than later so Clerk will chase the solicitor again for an updated timeline. **Action 1.**

SR raised a concern about the St Mark's condition on the lower playing field. ML reassured SR that the solicitor is aware, as is the Parish Council, and this has been taken into consideration.

**6. Discuss the Parish Poll results held in September 2025 and the Parish Council's next steps**

ML reported that the Parish Council met recently and resolved to agree the Parish Poll results. The Parish Council have written a letter to the HDCC Chairman stating their support and financial commitment to the project.

SR explained that she did not understand question 1 on the Parish Poll and others have shared with her their same thoughts. ML explained the process, as previously stated at the Parish Meeting, that the question was asking whether the village agree to an economic value of the current village hall land to be realised towards the build of the new Community Centre. Any future discussions on what will happen to the land, once the Community Centre has been built, will be subject to a further Parish meeting, workshops and a further Parish Poll. It was explained fully that no decision has been made by the Parish Council in regard to the land.

SP explained that during the pop-up surgeries hosted by HDCC, there was a lot of misconceptions and incorrect information being spread around and put on Facebook which showed residents did not read the literature that was published. SP explained that a few people reported to HDCC that they felt threatened and intimidated on their doorstep, by individuals (not Parish Councillors or HDCC members). Whilst the PC do not have the power to do anything about this and there was none of that in the hall whilst the Parish Poll took place, this information was noted.

FS said that during the pop-up surgeries, a lot of feedback was received that should have been sent to the Parish Council and not HDCC i.e. potholes. It may be that a regular communication be sent out to ensure residents are aware of who is doing what and what the Parish Council actually do and how much. This will be discussed between Chair and Clerk. **Action 2.**

BM stated that he felt the Parish Meeting went incredibly well and now is the time to keep the journey moving and update regularly to interested residents.

#### **7. Discussion on a future exercise to analyse the costings of the build**

ML explained that this will be a future committee agenda item but there will be a need to look at the costings of the build to see if any changes can be made as the costings appear to be high, but this may be lack of understanding and material inflation. The committee need to keep oversight so they can understand and validate the figures and endorse with confidence to the Parish Council and the community.

BL explained that HDCC are working with a reputable successful company with regard to the costings and he stated that as of July 2025, phase 1 was showing as excluding VAT, £2.2m. In Feb 2023, it was at £1.9m. Prices are always increasing but HDCC are always reviewing where they can make minor changes to reduce the price, whilst being aware that they can't change it significantly as then it will need to go back through planning.

SP explained that as part of the 5-year plan, they are going to review the technical spec for the building as at the time it is was very broad and written by a wish list from the community. This will be an opportunity to review to see uses are needed and can be done. This will be shared with the committee, and the community, once finalised for oversight and comments.

#### **8. Future funding update**

SP shared some documents with the committee the day of the meeting. ML stated that they will be deferred to the following meeting to give members time to read and review. SR had read and raised the following comments for SP to look into:

- On the risk management document, there need to be a process on how you will return monies if required, if you can't meet the target. What procedure will be followed?
- There needs to be a strong procedure in place for authorising payments, double signatories etc.
- A person should be allocated to grant writing applications.

SP explained that there are roles and responsibilities being drawn up with a personnel structure within the HDCC trustee. There is someone who will be overseeing the funds coming in and there is an IT system in place which will show when the money come in, when need to be spent by and on what. The trustee allocated to this has a wealth of experience. Another trustee will be the project lead, this could be SP, Mandy Chapman, or maybe a new trustee. A new finance officer will be recruited and hired ASAP, advert is going out. Their role will be to scrutinise the funds, get the bank accounts in place and ensure accounts are drawn up which can be published widely and share with Charity Commission annually which is a requirement.

It was agreed that there will be an agenda item at the next meeting titled 'Governance for money'. **Action 3.**

PW asked when does the PC become a custodian trustee. PC to consider this at their next meeting. **Rec 1.**

BL explained that both SP and Mandy Chapman have been drilling down on all of the paperwork as they understand there is a sense of urgency but also to show the community that HDCC are regularly reviewing and updating their key documents. BL thanked SP and Mandy Chapman for all their work on this.

ML confirmed that he has spoken with Chris Bending at WDC and Trevor Leggo, eSALC re PWLB following the Parish Poll to ensure the results meet the criteria, to which they confirmed they do. SP explained that she wrote to Chris Bending the day of the Parish Poll results and asked to be put into contact with the CLIF lead. She has received re-assurance from Chris bending that despite the ongoing discussions about a combined authority, there is no risk to HDCC not getting the funds, but they have been advised to apply ASAP. SP went through the CLIF criteria, and a lot of documents are in place, and most are nearly ready, the lease is key and as action 1 stated, the Clerk will chase the solicitor for an updated timeline. SP is going to speak to Chris Bending to see if a letter from the Parish Council stating that the lease is in hand, would suffice, pending receipt of the lease, as to not delay time. **Action 4.**

### **9. Risk management update**

ML went through a risk register template he has drawn up in order to regularly review key risks of concern. This will be reviewed at each meeting and updated accordingly. ML asked members to review and feedback to him if anything needs to be added. Items raised at the meeting were people, governance, 5yr project, staff change, fundraising, the build, marketing, lease, experiences disappear, finance and communication. ML is going to look at the headline risks, alongside HDCC's 5-year risk chart and have something ready for the next Advisory Committee.

SR stated, that when the lease has been signed, HDCC need to confirm a fixed 'go/no go' date which will be helpful for the current village hall to know how long the village hall needs to run. It is not fair on them that the date keeps changing. Both SP and BL agreed and understood. A date will be set with frequent milestones in place to discuss progress with stakeholders. **Action 5.**

### **10. Recommendations to Parish Council**

**Rec 1 – PC to consider when the Council should become a custodian trustee.**

**The meeting closed at 20:23**

**The next meeting is Tuesday 18th November 2025 at 19:00**

**In case needed, a further meeting has been pencilled in for Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025 at 19:00**