



MINUTES OF THE MEETING of Hadlow Down Parish Council
held in Hadlow Down Village Hall, Hadlow Down
at 7pm on Tuesday 7th October 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 7 members of the public.

134. CLERK TO GIVE A REMINDER OF THE ABOVE RULES AROUND PUBLIC QUESTION ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Clerk reminded attendees that the first ten minutes are available for the public to express a view or ask a question on relevant matters on the agenda, they are then welcome to stay and observe the rest of the meeting. If residents wish to add items to the agenda for discussion, they need to do so, 7 days prior to the meeting via the Clerk. Further comments from the public, will only occasionally be allowed, at the chair's discretion.

135. TO RECEIVE A 10 MINUTE DEER AWARENESS TALK FROM THE LOCAL DEER WARDEN ON THE INCREASE OF DEER ON THE A272

Mr Julian Butcher explained he is a volunteer deer warden and has been for 6 years. There are 25 deer wardens in total, and they cover around 15/20 miles each and are all managed by East Sussex County Council. Last year Mr Butcher was called out 120 times to deer vehicle collisions. The A272 is in the top 5 areas. The deer population has increased and due to the changes to the shotgun renewal process and price increase, there are less people available to cull deer. If a deer is injured but can still walk and gets away from the scene of the accident, deer wardens are not allowed to follow onto private land to humanely dispatch the animal, without landowner permission. The deer warden can be contacted through Sussex Police and there is a Facebook page called 'East Sussex Deer Warden Tips & Hints' with additional information.

136. PUBLIC QUESTIONS – A resident asked for an update on Wander Down as last he heard the Council were obtaining quotes to get the caravan removed. Clerk to find out from enforcement. **Action 1.**

Two residents thanked the Parish Council for holding the Parish Poll and thanked the Clerk for all her work and efforts to ensure it ran smoothly and legally.

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

138. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – DM declared a personal interest for agenda items 141 and 147b.

139. MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on the 2nd September 2025 were recommended for approval and signed as a true record (previously circulated).

140. 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).

141. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

WD/2025/7042/AD for FORD FARM VINEYARD, HASTINGFORD LANE, HADLOW DOWN, TN22 4DY

Hardcore Track

PC comments: The Parish Council would like to raise concerns regarding the impact this track will have on the ancient woodland.

APPROVED APPLICATIONS

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

WD/2024/1667/F for GATE HOUSE, STOCKLANDS LANE, HADLOW DOWN, TN22 4EA – Noted.

REFUSED APPLICATIONS

WD/2025/1411/FA for FIVE BADGERS, STONEHURST LANE, HADLOW DOWN, TN20 6LL – Noted.

ENFORCEMENT UPDATES

Drakes Head Den – The Clerk updated that both appeals have been dismissed and the enforcement notices are upheld. Clerk to case enforcement to find out what happens next and what is happening with the shipping container also on site, not included in the original enforcement. **Action 2.**

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

ESCC - Cllr Standley reported that a recent Panorama programme on BBC1 last night was very interesting about SEND. There is a £25m overspend on Adult social care and children services which will come out of reserves.

Cllr Standley reported that ESCC met last week to make a decision on their recommendation regarding unitary local government. They endorsed One East Sussex proposal. Wealden District Council decided not to support any proposal.

WDC - Cllr Lunn reported that he sat in a recent Full Council which consisted of a messy debate and no vote. The decision went to cabinet regarding the unitary local government and as Cllr Standley reported, WDC decided not to support anything. It is believed that as WDC didn't support anything, they may not be party to any conversations now. Cllr Lunn reported that Cllr Millward, the Deputy Leader for WDC has now announced she is the green party Mayoral candidate, but she did not declare that at the time of Full Council which has raised several complaints. Regarding the WDC Local Plan, they have already held a Reg 18 consultation on the previous housing numbers but as the housing numbers have been increased centrally by the Government, it is proposed that WDC are going to hold a further Reg 18 consultation later in 2025/early 2026, with a limited 6-week consultation for up to 1444 houses per annum. It is not believed that the number will be met as not enough housing sites have come forward to meet the number. WDC will then have to hold a Reg 19 consultation to allow developers to legally challenge, prior to submitting to the planning inspectorate. A further complication may occur as the Mayoral Elections of Sussex are due in May 2026 and if the Mayor of Sussex does not like the direction, then the Mayor could have the powers to stop Wealden with its process. Cllr Lunn explained that as the District Councillor, he does not know where these extra houses are going.

143. HIGHWAYS:

a. Note the minutes from the SLR meeting held on the 23rd September 2025 – The minutes were noted. Clerk is attending a ESH workshop on 20th October 2025.

144. TO DISCUSS THE PARISH POLL RESULTS AND AGREE NEXT STEPS – ML thanked the Clerk again for all her hard work and the management of the Parish Poll. ML explained that he has spoken with Mr Chris Bending, Director of Place at Wealden District Council and Mr Trevor Leggo from eSALC to check the Parish Poll results meet their criteria, both have confirmed that they meet and that the 42% turnout was very positive. ML explains that Mr Leggo feels that the Parish Council should apply for the loan application sooner rather than later, but the Clerk is going to look into this further. ML proposed that a motion is passed this evening to state that the Parish Council accept the results of the Parish Poll and we now proceed on both counts that we realise an economic value of the existing Village Hall (subject to a further consultation and parish poll once a new community centre is realised) and the Parish Council will apply for a loan of up to £250k so the PC can write to HDCC to show a financial commitment of £500k, on paper, so they are able to proceed with the application to WDC. This was proposed by ML, seconded by SL and all agreed. RESOLVED: PC agreed to proceed on both counts following the Parish Poll results and to write a letter to HDCC.

Action 3.

145. COMMUNITY CENTRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE – There is nothing to update. Next meeting is 14th October and it was agreed that Cllr Lester will now sit on the Committee. Clerk to email him details. **Action 4.**

146. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON DEVOLUTION – The report was noted.

147. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

a. Response on the consultation regarding proposed 40 and 50mph Speed Limits on the A272 at Hadlow Down – The response from ESCC was noted.

b. Email from resident regarding fireworks – This was noted and passed to playing field committee.

c. Letter from resident regarding Drakes Head Den – This was noted and will be included in earlier action 2.

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

PW reported an issue with the SID but he has now fixed this. DM reported that drainage works are about to commence at Hastingford Lane. BF reported that preparation is being done at the playing field for bonfire night. ML reported that PCSO Choppin is back on duty but light duties at present, so office bound. He has been informed there has been an increase in anti-social behaviour in Uckfield and a concern that rural crime is escalating in the area so all residents to please keep vigilant.

149. BURIAL GROUND: No update.

150. RISK ASSESSMENTS:

a. Receive tree assessment report – Report is pending.

151. CLERKS MATTERS:

a. Clerks hours for September 2025 – These were approved.

b. Agree meeting dates for 2026 – Meeting dates for 2026 were agreed and noted. Clerk to book. **Action 5.**

c. Note and approve the amendments to the Financial Regulations – The minor amendments were noted and approved.

d. Note and approve the amendments to the Standing Orders - The minor amendments were noted and approved.

e. To acknowledge Parish Councillor vacancy advert and agree 11th November 2025 as co-option date – This was approved.

152. OTHER FINANCE MATTERS:

a. Agree Finance Report for October 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 September 2025 - Approved and signed by PW and DM.

c. Discuss and appoint grass contractors for verges, burial ground and play area – The Clerk reported that she went out to 8 companies and received 4 quotes for each area. Contractor A was awarded the contract for the burial

ground and play area. Contractor B was awarded the contract for verges. The companies will be informed and contract C and D thanked for submitting a quote. It was noted that there is an increase in price but hopefully this will also relate to the quality of work. The new figures can now be included in the draft budget for 2026/27. **Action 6.**
d. To note Q2 figures for 2025/26 – The figures were noted. A finance meeting is being held on 21st October 2025.

153. DEFIBRILLATOR BATTERY – this was checked on the 7th October 2025.

154. ITEMS TO GO ON NEXT AGENDA: Co-option and draft budget.

155. TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC ATTENDANCE FOR AGENDA ITEMS 156 & 157, 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 156 and 157 as personnel matters are to be discussed, and this would be prejudicial to the public because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.*

ML proposed that the following agenda items should be held in a confidential session, this was seconded by PW and agreed by all. Members of the public left the meeting. As the subject is the Clerks' appraisal and salary, the Clerk also left the meeting.

CONFIDENTIAL SESSION

156. TO AGREE THE NOTES FROM THE RECENT 2 YEAR APPRAISAL MEETING WITH THE CLERK

ML and PW presented the document to Cllrs. It was noted and agreed.

157. TO DISCUSS AND AGREE WHETHER THE CLERK RECEIVES HER ANNUAL PAY POINT INCREMENT

ML and PW discussed the Clerks salary with Cllrs.

The meeting closed at 20:13

The next PC meeting date is Tuesday 11th November 2025 at 19:00
(Please note this is one week later than usual)

Appendix A

Finance report for 2nd October 2025 PC meeting

<u>Payments by Bank Transfer <i>paid</i> pending authorisation</u>			
Date	Payee	Payment Details	Amount
None			
<u>Payments by Bank Transfer pending authorisation</u>			
Date	Payee	Payment Details	Amount
28.10.25	Vicki Rutt	Standing Order October 2025	£1,216.02
07.10.25	Vicki Rutt	Sept 2025 underpay	£110.24
07.10.25	HMRC	Tax + NI Sept 2025	£268.14
07.10.25	East Sussex Pension Fund	Pension Sept 2025	£380.24
07.10.25	SLCC	Annual Clerk membership	£238 (CPC will pay £119)
07.10.25	Vicki Rutt	Q2 2025/26 mileage	£38.70
07.10.25	Hadlow Down Village Hall	Hall hire Oct 2025	£64.00
07.10.25	The Computer Studio	Annual subscription to Microsoft 365	£122.40
<u>Payments by direct debit for authorisation</u>			
Date	Payee	Payment Details	Amount
08.09.25	BT	Broadband Q2	£401.39
30.09.25	Unity Trust	Service charge September 2025	£6.00
<u>Acknowledge receipt of monies</u>			
30.09.25	Wealden District Council	Precept part 2	£22,700.00
30.09.25	Unity Trust	Interest on savings account	£320.19