



MINUTES OF THE FINANCE MEETING of Hadlow Down Parish Council
held in Hadlow Down Village Hall, Hadlow Down
at 7pm on 21st 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).

1. PUBLIC QUESTIONS – None.

2. APOLOGIES – Apologies received and accepted from Cllr Alan Hobbs.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – DM declared a pecuniary interest in discussions about the Playing Field Committee grant application as he is a trustee.

4. TO DISCUSS AND COMMENT ON THE FOLLOWING PLANNING APPLICATION

WD/2025/1996/MAJ for SAXON COURT, POUND GREEN, BUXTED, TN22 4DT

Demolition of the vacant building and ancillary outbuildings/structures, and the construction of 30 no. residential dwellings with associated landscaping, on-site car parking, associated infrastructure and access to/from the A272.

PC comments: 1 in favour and 4 Cllrs against, therefore the PC cannot support this application. The reasons are:

- The visual impact on the High Weald National landscape and the visual impact from the eastern boundary across the valley, and on top of the ridge.*
- Light pollution breaching the dark skies policy.*
- Over intensification of a rural site and it is outside of the development boundary.*
- Intensification of traffic to/from the site where there is a known accident black spot.*
- Concerns regarding the local infrastructure not being in place to support an application of this size.*
- It is an unsustainable site, historically an application for 2 properties opposite was refused due to it not being sustainable.*
- Concerns regarding drainage.*
- Powerful impact on the environment.*
- Realistically the only school within safe walking distance is Buxted, walking to St Mark's school and the church is not sustainable.*

5. TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC ATTENDANCE FOR AGENDA ITEMS 6 ONLY, 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 6 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.*

It was agreed this agenda item was no longer needed.

6. CLLRS TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM THE CLERK REGARDING HOURS

Following discussions between the Clerk and Cllr Weston, the Clerk has withdrawn the request to change her hours due to the impact it would have on the precept. The Clerk will continue on her current hours and will do overtime when projects require, however the Clerk explained that both Cllrs and residents expectations on workload turnaround will need to be managed in order to keep the hours within budget. Cllr Weston thanked the Clerk for all her work on this issue and all Cllrs agreed that this subject will be re-visited if workloads continue to increase. All agreed.

7. FINANCE MATTERS

a. To discuss proposed expenditure and precept for 2026/27

A discussion took place around the actual spend to end of Quarter 2 for 2025/26 and each line of the proposed

precept and budget for 2026/27. It was identified that there was not much room to decrease any figures and therefore, there will be an increase in precept. The Clerk will do a full report to go alongside this decision at the next Parish Council meeting when the budget will be finalised and precept submitted to WDC. **Action.**

b. To discuss the 5-year plan figures and ear marked reserves

A discussion was held regarding the figures for the 5-year plans in order to increase some of the ear marked reserves for upcoming projects in the next 3-5 years.

c. Consider grant applications for 2026/27

A discussion was held on each grant application and Councillors agreed some figures. These will be reviewed and finalised at the November 2025 Parish Council meeting.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 20:17.