



**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING of Hadlow Down Parish Council
held in Hadlow Down Village Hall, Hadlow Down
at 7pm on Tuesday 11th November 2025**

Present: Councillors: Peter Weston (PW) Vice-Chair, Ben Floyd (BF), Alan Hobbs (AH), David Munday (DM) and Stephen Lester (SL).

In attendance: Vicki Rutt (Clerk), Cllr Bob Standley (ESCC) and 3 members of the public.

158. PUBLIC QUESTIONS – None.

159. APOLOGIES – Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Michael Lunn.

160. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – BF declared an interest on agenda item 163a.

161. MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on the 7th October 2025 were recommended for approval and signed as a true record (previously circulated).

162. 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).

163. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

WD/2025/2089/FR for WILDERNESS WOOD, MAIN ROAD, HADLOW DOWN, TN22 4HJ

Retrospective application for additional use of the meeting house and one mobile shepherd's hut, together with proposed additional shepherd's hut, for day-time wellbeing activities (therapy, counselling and massage).

Two statements from residents were read out after Cllr Munday presented the application. Councillors discussed and agreed PC comments were: '2 Cllrs voted in favour, 2 voted against and 1 was unable to vote due to declaring a personal interest, the Chair had the casting vote and therefore the application was objected to due to the application being too vague, the relationship with a previous application in 2022 and how the conditions on that application have been met are unclear to the PC.'

APPROVED APPLICATIONS

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

ENFORCEMENT UPDATES

Wander Down and Drakes Head Den – The Clerk stated that she received the following update from WDC enforcement team, 'In respect of Drakes Head Den, the appeals were dismissed and so the deadline for compliance is the 14th November. I am aware that the touring caravan has already been removed from site, and so this notice has been complied with. As there have been other subsequent breaches on site, whilst the appeal was in progress, the landowner has now agreed to progress with making a retrospective application for the site to address the breaches. Wander Down hasn't progressed very far at the moment, as we have had to put in place a new procurement process for securing direct action. I hope to be able to start putting the wheels in motion for going out to tender on this later this month'. Councillors expressed their frustration over the delay in enforcement.

164. 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 reported that several public meetings had been held recently about the Crowborough army camp, this is Home Office led but WDC approved and WDC will receive around £600k. *Standing Orders dropped*. A resident asked why Nus Ghani MP was not told until recently? Cllr Standley responded that questions have been asked about how well the Home Office and WDC dealt with this issue. The resident asked why no other objections are being put in? Cllr Standley did not know. *Standing Orders reinstated*. Regarding devolution, just waiting now for the New Year to receive more of an update, Mayor elections will be in May 2026. Recent CQC inspection rated ESCC as 'Good' and a focused Ofsted inspection of Children's Services also rated the Council as 'good'.

WDC - Cllr Lunn sent his apologies so therefore no report.

165. HIGHWAYS:

The Clerk reported that following the recent SLR meeting, the following responses have been received from ESH:

- **Sunken cover on A272 near Five Chimneys Cottage** – A job has been raised to address this issue, which we aim to complete within 28 days.
- **Carriageway condition outside Wilderness Wood** – The Highway Steward has inspected the site and confirmed there are no immediate safety concerns. The location will continue to be monitored during routine checks.
- **Vegetation obscuring speed signs entering Hadlow Down from Buxted end** – The Highway Steward attended the site and cleared the vegetation, ensuring the signs were visible at the time of inspection.

- **30 / 40 mph signs on approach to Hadlow Down when heading west into the village** – The Highway Steward confirmed the signs are clear and there are no immediate safety concerns. These will continue to be monitored during routine checks.
- **Partially obscured VAS sign on A267** – A job is already on our system, however, due to the nature of the works required, which fall outside general maintenance, this was sent out for quotation. The works are currently awaiting approval, and once approved, they will be scheduled. Unfortunately, we do not have a timeframe at present, but please be assured this matter will be addressed.

The Clerk expressed her frustration at some of these responses and will liaise back. BF asked why the new 30mph markings were done one end of the village but not the one near Tinkers Park. Clerk to enquire. **Action 1.**

166. COMMUNITY CENTRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE – The minutes from the meeting held on the 14th October were noted. The next meeting is being held on the 18th November.

167. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON DEVOLUTION – Nothing further to Cllr Standley's report.

168. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

a. Urban Grass Cutting Options 2026/27 – The Clerk explained that the Parish Council usually opted for Option 1 which is 'Standard': Two cuts over the course of a year to be carried out by ESCC at no cost to the Parish Council. Urban grass will be managed for safety purposes only. PW proposed to continue with option 1, this was seconded by BF. All Cllrs agreed. RESOLVED: All agreed to proceed with Option 1 for Urban grass cutting in 2026/27.

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

BF reported that bonfire night went really well. PW reported that there have been many issues with SID 1 but maintenance from SWARCO are coming out to assist.

170. RISK ASSESSMENTS:

a. Receive tree assessment report – It was agreed to postpone until April 2026.

b. Assign village risk assessment – The quarterly village risk assessment was assigned to PW. **Action 2.**

171. CLERKS MATTERS:

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

172. OTHER FINANCE MATTERS:

a. Agree Finance Report for November 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 October 2025 – Approved and signed by PW and DM.

c. Budget and precept for 2026/27 for final approval and signature ready to submit to WDC – The Clerk updated that the draft budget was reviewed line by line by Cllrs present at the Finance meeting in October 2025. The only change since then, is to the cost of emptying bins as the Clerk managed to get 3 bins returned to WDC, for them to cover the cost, PW thanked the Clerk for this. The Clerk explained that WDC has not yet sent out the precept paperwork but asked for Cllrs to approve the budget so she can pull together a financial report for residents to show why the increase. SL proposed to approve the budget and precept for 2026/27, this was seconded by AH. RESOLVED: The budget for 2026/27 and precept were approved. The paperwork and financial report will come to the December meeting. **Action 3.**

d. Approve EMR movements – The proposed EMR movements by the Clerk were all agreed. **Action 4.**

e. Consider proposal from Clerk re CCLA investment account – The Clerk sent out a recommendation to Cllrs to set up an investment account with CCLA to ensure that we are receiving maximum interest but not locking money away. CCLA is an account used by many Parish Councils as money is accessible on the same day and helps PCs abide by the rules regarding holding specific amount of money with one bank. All agreed this was a good idea, but PW did ask the Clerk to ensure there are no personal liabilities for any of the 'directors'. The Clerk will action and do the relevant paperwork for December meeting. **Action 5.**

173. DEFIBRILLATOR BATTERY – this was checked on the 11th November 2025.

174. ITEMS TO GO ON NEXT AGENDA: Co-option of new Cllr and precept form.

The meeting closed at 19:38

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

Appendix A

Finance report for 11th November 2025 PC meeting
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<u>Payments by Bank Transfer <i>paid</i> pending authorisation</u>			
Date	Payee	Payment Details	Amount
21.10.25	Boswell Associates	Playing field drawings	£459.00
<u>Payments by Bank Transfer pending authorisation</u>			
Date	Payee	Payment Details	Amount
28.11.25	Vicki Rutt	Standing Order November 2025	£1,216.02
11.11.25	Vicki Rutt	Oct 2025 underpay + OT	£619.93
11.11.25	HMRC	Tax + NI Oct 2025	£589.85
11.11.25	East Sussex Pension Fund	Pension Oct 2025	£599.77
11.11.25	R A Waters	Verge cutting	£120.00
11.11.25	Lucy McConachie	Play area inspection Sept	£40.00
11.11.25	Lucy McConachie	Play area inspection Oct	£40.00
11.11.25	WDALC	Annual subscription	£21.02
11.11.25	Hadlow Down Village Hall	Hall hire Nov 2025	£64.00
11.11.25	Balcombe Landscapes	Grass cutting - burial and play area	£710.40
<u>Payments by direct debit for authorisation</u>			
Date	Payee	Payment Details	Amount
15.10.25	Wealden District Council	Q2 bins	£540.00
31.10.25	Unity Trust	Monthly service fee	£6.00
<u>Acknowledge receipt of monies</u>			
17.10.25	Catsfield Parish Council	Reimbursement of half of Clerk SLCC sub	£119.00