

Hoo St Werburgh and Chattenden Parish Council

The Minutes of the Meeting of Hoo St Werburgh and Chattenden Parish Council

Held at Hoo Village Hall on Thursday 3rd April 2025 at 7.00pm.

Councillors present: Barton
Chester
Cutting
Dunkley
Francis
Fray
Gissing
Hopson
Koroma
Pearce
Sands
Styles
Williams

Also: Sherrie Babington - Parish Clerk, and members of the public.

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Sands.

1. Apologies.

Members who cannot attend a meeting shall tender their apologies to the Parish Clerk prior to the meetings, under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence shall be accepted.

Apologies were received, and reasons for absence accepted from Cllrs Mithell (personal reasons), Tildesley (personal reasons), Sparkes (work) and Wood (work).

2. Declaration of Interest.

To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers.

No interests were declared.

To consider any Dispensation requests received by the Parish Clerk and not previously considered.

No dispensations were considered.

3. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting.

To consider the minutes of the previous meeting and if in order sign as a true record.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were circulated to all present.

It was proposed by Cllr Cutting to accept these as a true record, subject to an agreed alteration, seconded by Cllr Chester and agreed by all present.

The approved Minutes were then signed and dated by the Chairman.

4. **Matters arising from the Minutes.**

Response from Medway Council regarding salt bin request

When assessing the location for a salt bin, a point scoring system/assessment is used based on the following criteria:

- *Gradient (score is based on the gradient measured with an inclinometer)*
- *Severe bends*
- *Close proximity to & falling towards a trafficked*
- *Traffic density at peak times*
- *Number of premises that require access.*
- *The population of either elderly or disabled people within the area*

I can confirm the development has now been assessed for the suitability of salt bins and the scores are as follows.

Dunnock Drive - 55 points

Goldfinch Grove - 0 points

Linnet close - 0 points

Sparrow Drive – 30 points

Songbird Crescent – 30 points

Unfortunately, following these assessments, the roads within the Four Elms development do not score enough points to meet the benchmark of 130 to warrant the placement of any salt bins. More information about the salt bin scoring criteria and assessment can be found on the Medway Council website at www.medway.gov.uk/winter

As an alternative, if residents within the Four Elms development contribute towards estate management fees, we sometimes find that management companies will provide and maintain salt bins as part of the management cost. The other alternative option which may be of interest is the Medway council Snow Warden volunteer service. Medway residents are able to sign up to become a snow warden which provides supplies to members of the public to clear the highway. With this service, volunteers are provided with a 25kg bag of salt, hand spreader, shovel, gloves and a high visibility vest. More information can be found on the snow warden webpage which you may also wish to share with residents.

Members noted the response received from Medway Council regarding the Parish Council's request for a new salt bin at the Four Elms Estate. The PC discussed the assessment process undertaken by

Medway and shared the outcome with a resident present, who was representing the Four Elms Estate. The Chairman reassured the resident that the Parish Council would continue to pursue the matter and explore ways to support the request further.

The Chairman introduced the new Village Hall Manager, Sam Dallas, to the meeting. Sam spoke briefly about her role and her experience and was welcomed by members.

5. Public Participation.

To discuss any questions received by members of the public.

A resident attended the meeting to raise concerns about the recent Medway Matters Live event hosted by Medway Council. He expressed disappointment with the format of the event. He noted the absence of a parish council stall and felt this was a missed opportunity for local representation.

The Chairman responded by explaining that the event was organised and managed solely by Medway Council, and that parish councils are not typically invited to host stalls. However, he acknowledged that having a parish presence would have been beneficial and agreed to explore future opportunities for involvement.

The resident also raised questions about the future development of Chattenden Barracks. He referred to the play area at the Four Elms development, stating it is a privately owned facility and should not be referenced in planning applications for Chattenden Barracks as public amenity space.

Cllr Pearce spoke about play areas on new developments, noting that many of these have not been adopted by Medway Council and instead fall under the responsibility of private management companies. A general discussion followed on the implications of privately managed play areas, highlighting both their advantages and disadvantages.

The resident further emphasised the need for appropriate infrastructure to be in place on the Hoo Peninsula ahead of any large development.

The Chairman stated that the PC shared the residents' concerns and made representations on all large planning applications.

6. Police and PACT Report.

To receive a report regarding police matters and the PACT.

Cllr Cutting informed members that a PACT meeting had been arranged for the 29th of April at 7:00pm in the Village Hall. She advised that posters would be displayed throughout the parish to advertise the meeting and encourage public attendance.

7. Urgent Matters (if any with the Chairman's consent).

To consider any urgent matters raised by members.

No matters were raised.

8. Financial Matters.

a. To consider the monthly financial statement.

Financial Statement will be circulated in paperwork at PC meeting.

The bank balances and payments were considered by members, these were approved, proposed by Cllr Williams, seconded by Cllr Styles, and agreed by all present.

Bank Signatories

The Clerk reported that the update to bank signatories submitted in 2020 had not been actioned by the bank, resulting in several out-of-date signatures still being listed on the account.

It was agreed that new bank mandate forms would be completed by the current key signatories, and a formal letter would be sent to the bank requesting the necessary updates.

This was proposed by Cllr Cutting, seconded by Cllr Gissing, and agreed by all present.

Action: Clerk to progress.

9. Parish Council Policy Review.

To review and adopt Parish Council Policies detailed in circulated schedule.

The Clerk informed members that the annual review of the Parish Council's policies was now due. She circulated a table listing all current parish council policies, along with the updated Financial Regulations for members' consideration. She stated that no other policies were proposed for amendment at this time.

Community Award Policy
 Dignity at Work Policy
 Disciplinary Procedure Policy
 Financial Internal Control Policy
 Risk Register
 Flag Flying Policy
 Freedom of the Parish Policy
 Social Media Policy
 Bullying and Harassment Policy
 Complaints Policy
 Councillor and Staff Protocol Policy
 Data Protection and Information Security Policy
 Email Policy
 Equal Opportunities Policy
 Equality and Diversity Policy
 Grants Policy
 Health and Safety Policy
 High Consequence Infectious Disease Policy
 Illegal and Commitment Policy
 Meeting Attendance Policy

Metal Detecting Policy
 Model Financial Regulations
 Protocol and Guidance on Meetings with Developers Policy
 Public Participation Policy
 Publication Scheme Policy
 Reserves Policy
 Safeguarding Policy
 Section 101 Scheme of Delegation Policy
 Tree Management Policy
 Model Standing Orders
 Vexatious Complaints Policy

Members reviewed the above policies, and it was proposed by Cllr Francis to adopt the updated Financial Regulations and readopt all other circulated policies as listed, this was seconded by Cllr Chester and agreed by all present.

10. Clerks Report.

To receive the Clerks Report.

Members considered a request from wHoo Cares to hold a community event on the Recreation Ground on 27th July 2025. After discussion, the request was approved by all members present.

11. Chairman's Report.

To receive the Chairman's Report.

The Chairman gave a report on recent activities and updates.

He spoke about the Local Access Forum and the ongoing work of Tim Harrison on the Common Grounds Project, stating that three guided walks were being planned—two in Medway and one in Essex—primarily aimed at encouraging participation from women. This initiative was discussed by members.

He also reported on the launch of the National Nature Reserves presentation, which would take place at Shorne Country Park in May, with His Majesty King Charles expected to attend. The Chairman stated that there was potential for joint parish councils to become affiliates of this initiative and that he would liaise with other parishes on the Peninsula regarding the North Kent Marshes.

Medway Matters Live event; he confirmed that a number of parish councillors had attended the event.

He reported that he and Ward Councillors Pearce and Crozier were due to meet with local medical practices to discuss the future provision of health services on the Peninsula.

12. Ward Councillors Report.

To receive a report from the Ward Councillors Sands, Pearce and Crozer.

Cllr Pearce reported on the following:

- An update on Natural England Heritage Sites
- Feedback and reflections on the Medway Matters Live event
- The current status of the Homes England planning application
- Timetable and progress on the emerging Local Plan
- Developments related to the Lower Thames Crossing and associated traffic impact in the area
- Updates on the Chattenden Barracks planning application
- Nightingale Walks

A general discussion followed the report.

13. Parish Council Committees.

To receive reports and recommendations from PC Committees.

a. Events Committee.

To receive and note a report from the Events Committee.

Cllr Cutting provided members with a detailed update on the Events Committee's activities:

VE Day Celebrations:

- A donation of £400 had been received from Ward Councillor Sands to support the event.
- Cllr Cutting had attended a meeting with Medway Council to discuss plans for five searchlights to be installed across Medway to commemorate VE Day.
One of the sites being considered was Kingshill Recreation Ground, and she confirmed she was liaising directly with Medway Council to progress this.
- The Silent Soldiers had recently been repaired. Cllr Cutting expressed thanks to Cllr Fray and her husband for their help with the repairs.
- A new Union Flag was being purchased in preparation for the VE Day event.
- A further donation of £100 had been received from Homely Gardens. The Parish Council wished to formally thank the owners of Homely Gardens, for their generous support.

Action: Clerk to send a letter of thanks.

Advertising:

Cllr Cutting asked for members' approval to place a half-page advert in *Village Voices* to help promote the VE Day event.

This was proposed by Cllr Francis, seconded by Cllr Cutting, and agreed by all present.

Action: Cllr Cutting to progress the advert with Village Voices.

Other Events Planned for the Year:

- The pantomime had now been booked for the new year. This will be a chargeable event.
- Amazon had offered volunteer support for parish events.
- LNG had offered assistance with promotional materials, including printing posters and flyers.

b. Environment Committee.

Members were circulated with a report from the recent Environment Committee meeting, outlining the discussions held, actions agreed, and recommendations brought forward for full Council consideration.

Kings Hill Recreation Ground

The Chair of the Committee spoke on the key recommendations and asked members to approve the following actions:

1. Seek quotations for the installation of a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) to be financed from Section 106 funds.
2. Seek quotations for the provision of a new security gate at the Webb Close entrance to the Recreation Ground, to be financed from Section 106 funds.
3. Purchase new goalposts for the Recreation Ground, to be financed from Section 106 funds.
4. Seek quotations for the construction of a new footpath at Kings Hill Recreation Ground, to be financed from Section 106 funds.

These recommendations were proposed for approval by Cllr Pearce, seconded by Cllr Williams, and agreed by all present.

Pottery Road Recreation Ground

Members were asked to consider a quotation for the relocation of the problematic benches currently located at Pottery Road Recreation Ground, which needed to be moved to a more central and suitable position. The quotation received was £225 per bench.

It was agreed to proceed with the relocation, subject to clarification regarding the new proposed locations for the benches. This was proposed by Cllr Styles, seconded by Cllr Hopson, and agreed by all present.

Action: Clerk and Cllr Fray to hold a site meeting to agree the final bench locations.

Other Matters

Cllr Fray reported that concerns had been received regarding the accessibility of the Village Square. She advised that this matter had been briefly discussed by the Environment Committee, and it was agreed that the issue should be formally raised with Medway Council.

Cllr Pearce, as Ward Councillor, stated that he was currently preparing a plan for the improvement of the village centre.

A general discussion then took place regarding the Village Green and the question of its ownership.

c. Finance, Audit and General Purposes Committee.

To consider the report and recommendations from the FA&GP Committee:

The Chairman gave an update on the parish van, informing members that the MOT had recently been completed, and the van had passed, with only an advisory notice for the replacement of brake pads.

He asked Cllr Hopson and his team to provide an update on the potential purchase of a new van.

Cllr Hopson reported that he had explored several options, including leasing and purchasing a replacement van. However, he advised that leasing was found to be too expensive and that purchasing a new van would require a larger budget than currently available. He therefore proposed that the Parish Council retain the existing van and ensure it was maintained by giving it a run each month to help clear the DPF filter.

This proposal was put forward by Cllr Hopson, seconded by Cllr Cutting and agreed by all present. It was therefore resolved that the current van would be kept and maintained for the foreseeable future.

14. Planning Matters.

a. Planning Applications Received.

MC/25/0461 - Berrill , 247 Bells Lane, Hoo St Werburgh, Rochester, Medway

Construction of a part single/part two storey side extension, and part single/part two storey rear extension, (and internal alterations.)

PC action: No Objections.

MC/25/0468 - Stonebridge , 212 Main Road, Hoo St Werburgh, Rochester, Medway

Raising of roof height to create a first floor: construction of a 2-storey front extension and porch to front -Demolition of existing garage.

PC action: No Objections.

MC/25/0444 - Plot 1C And 1D, London Medway Commercial Park, James Swallow Way, Hoo St Werburgh, Rochester

Variation of conditions 1 (Ecology measures), 2 (Landscaping), 4 (Drainage), 5 (Cycles stands), 6 (Showers/changing) and 7 (Drawings) to allow for a minor material amendment to planning permission MC/18/1979 to reconfigure plot 1C into two separate plots comprising of plot 1C and plot 1D) with associated design and layout changes.

PC action: No Objections.

MC/25/0584 - Chattenden Barracks, Chattenden Lane, Chattenden, Rochester

Town and Country Planning Act (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales)

Regulations 2017 (as amended) - Request for a scoping opinion for up to 500 dwellings (C3); small scale retail floor space (E) (size to be confirmed); one vehicular access point from Kitchener Road; one vehicular access point from Chattenden Lane; pedestrian and cycle access; public open space (including sustainable drainage and landscaping); and associated infrastructure.

PC action: No action at this stage.

MC/25/0603 - 64 Rochester Crescent, Hoo St Werburgh, Rochester, Medway

Change of use of existing dwellinghouse (Class C3) to a children's home (Class C2)

PC action: No Objections.

MC/25/0595 - 53 Chattenden Lane, Chattenden, Rochester, Medway, ME3 8LE

Retrospective change of use of amenity land to residential garden land.

Members agreed that the Parish Council would raise objections on the grounds of the loss of valuable amenity land.

Action: Parish Council to submit an objection.

MC/25/0650 - 7 Guelder Rose Drive, Hoo St Werburgh, Rochester, Medway
Loft conversion with rear dormer and 3x roof light windows to the front elevation.

Members considered this application and agreed that it would result in a loss of privacy for neighbouring properties, and overdevelopment of the site, and out of character with the surrounding area. It was therefore agreed that an objection should be submitted.

Action: Clerk to write and submit a letter of objection.

b. Planning Applications Decisions by Medway Council.

MC/25/0156

16 Armytage Close Hoo St Werburgh Rochester Medway ME3 9AP

Conversion of garage to a habitable space along with internal and external works to facilitate disabled access. Construction of a first-floor side extension and change roof to existing rear extension to join new extension

Approval with Conditions

MC/25/0122

5 Webb Close Hoo St Werburgh Rochester Medway ME3 9HW

Construction of a two-storey side extension and a single storey front extension and off-road parking to the front of the dwelling.

Approval with Conditions

MC/25/0016

23 Headstock Rise Hoo St Werburgh Rochester Medway ME3 9LZ

Construction of a single storey rear extension

Approval with Conditions

c. Appeals.

Appeal Ref: APP/A2280/W/24/3353713

35 Braeburn Drive, Hoo St Werburgh, Rochester, Medway ME3 9US

The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a grant of planning permission subject to conditions.

The application Ref MC/24/0699 was approved on 24 May 2024 and planning permission was granted subject to conditions.

The development permitted is Installation of air source heat pump.

The condition in dispute is No 4 which states that: "Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, an acoustic assessment shall be undertaken to determine the impact of noise arising from the air source heat pump. The noise rating level (L_{Ar},Tr) of the air source hear pump shall be at least 10dB below the background noise level (L_{A90,T}) at the nearest residential facade. All

measurements shall be defined and derived in accordance with BS4142: 2014. The results of the assessment and details of any mitigation measures shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved measures shall be implemented before the development is brought into use and thereafter be maintained in accordance with the approved details”.

The reasons given for the condition is: “Required prior to commencement of development to ensure that harm is not caused to conditions of amenity in accordance with Policies BNE2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003”.

d. Other Planning Matters.

To consider other planning matters.

15. Memorial Garden.

To receive and note an update on the Memorial Ground.

The Chairman gave an update on the Memorial Garden project and circulated options for a Memorial Stone to all members for their consideration. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Window Stone option was the preferred choice.

This proposal was put forward by Cllr Sands, seconded by Cllr Fray, and agreed by all present.

The Chairman confirmed that the cost of the Memorial Stone would fall within the allocated budget of £2,000, which was covered by an existing grant.

He reported that the Clerk was in contact with Medway Council regarding the use of Heritage Section 106 funds to support further enhancements to the Memorial Garden.

It was agreed that a site meeting would be arranged to agree the final layout of the Memorial Garden, enabling a formal proposal to be submitted for Section 106 funding.

16. New Community Centre.

To receive and note an update for the new Community Centre.

Cllr Williams updated members on the progress of the New Community Centre project and circulated a report outlining the preferred consultants for members' approval.

The appointment of the consultants was proposed by Cllr Fray, seconded by Cllr Styles, and agreed by all present.

Cllr Williams spoke further on the project's progress and confirmed that draft timescales indicated the planning application would be submitted in the near future, with construction anticipated to commence around January 2026.

He also reported on discussions regarding the Section 106 funding allocation for the Community Centre and explained the legal work required to enable the staged transfer of S106 funds to the Parish Council. It was agreed that a solicitor would be needed to represent the Parish Council in these legal matters.

Members agreed to appoint Wellers Law Group, who were already acting for the Parish Council on matters related to the Village Hall. This appointment was proposed by Cllr Williams, seconded by Cllr Styles, and agreed by all present.

Action: Clerk to liaise with Solicitor.

17. Village Hall.

A report concerning the Village Hall was circulated to all members for their consideration. The report was divided into three parts.

Part 1 – Legal and Governance

1. Approve legal documents.
2. Approve administrative amendments.
3. Decide on adopting a consultation process for leasehold sales.
4. Choose a course of action for dissolution provisions.

Members discussed the legal and governance arrangements, and approval of this section was proposed by Cllr Williams, seconded by Cllr Fray, and agreed by all present.

Part 2 – Operational Matters

5. Ratify the laptop purchase.
6. Approve proposed hire charges.
7. Note staffing and equipment updates.
8. Approve £120 per annum for the hall booking system.

Members considered the proposed operational matters. Approval was proposed by Cllr Pearce, seconded by Cllr Fray, and agreed by all present.

Part 3 – Governance and Transition

9. Note interim trustee arrangements.
10. Approve formation of the oversight committee.
11. Agree appointment process by Chairman and Vice Chairman.

Members discussed transfer arrangements and future governance, including the establishment of an Oversight Committee to support the management of the Village Hall.

Approval for this was proposed by Cllr Fray, seconded by Cllr Pearce, and agreed by all present.

Cllrs Styles, Dunkley, Francis, and Pearce volunteered to serve on the new Oversight Committee.

18. Annual Meeting of the Parish – 1st May 2025.

Action: Clerk to send out invitations to the Annual Meeting of the Parish to village representatives and organisations.

19. Date of the next meeting – Annual Statutory Meeting, Thursday 1st May 2025 – Chattenden Community Centre.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman closed the meeting to the press and public at 9.30pm.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____