

**Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council was held at The Parish Room,
Church Road, Halstead TN14 7HF at 10.00am on Tuesday, 23 June 2026.**

Present: Cllr Peel (Chair), Cllr Marshall, Cllr Sales, Cllr Meaton, Cllr Couchman, Cllr Wilkinson, Cllr Gardner, Ms P. Nott (Clerk). There were no members of the public present.

1. To receive and accept apologies for absence – there were none.

2. Declarations of interest – there were none.

3. Minutes of previous meetings to be approved.

The minutes of the Halstead Parish Council meeting held on Monday 08th June 2026 were approved and signed by the Chair.

4. Staffing & recruitment

- a. The Job description and payscale of SCP 28 at £20.29 per hour on 2025-2025 scale for a temporary Assistant Clerk were approved.
- b. The draft 3-month contract for temporary Assistant Clerk for 5 hours per week was approved and this was extended to 6 months. Cllrs Meaton and Couchman advised that they had undertaken an in-person discussion with a local candidate who is already in an assistant clerk role, would be suitable in the role and was available for this work. The CV of this person was reviewed by councillors who approved the Clerk to offer the role.

Action: Clerk to offer role to candidate and proceed with payroll set up. It was also identified that HPC should supply a laptop for use by the employee and requested the Clerk to proceed to research and purchase one laptop.

Action: Clerk to research and purchase one laptop.

HPC further discussed Cllrs use of personal laptops.

Action: Clerk to research what is best practice in England with respect to IT equipment for Councillors and if this should be supplied by HPC.

- c. The business case for a Deputy Clerk was approved.
- d. The job description for Deputy Clerk was approved.
- e. It was decided that the Draft contract for Deputy Clerk required refinement.
Action: Clerk, Cllrs Meaton and Couchman to review and represent for approval.
- f. The Clerk was approved to proceed with advertising and recruitment to the temporary Assistant Clerk role, action Clerk to contact the candidate to offer temporary contract.
- g. It was approved for the Clerk to proceed with advertising and recruitment to the Deputy Clerk role, advertise in July, applications by 15th September and interviews on 23rd September. Interview panel to be Cllr Meaton, Cllr Couchman, Cllr Wilkinson and the Clerk.

5. Finance & expenditure

- a. To note confirmation of closure of Natwest bank accounts and transfer of funds to Lloyd's bank account – this was noted.
- b. Expenditure of £300 to with Heliocentrix IT to set up and transition Clerk and Councillors to Microsoft 365 Business HPC with for email accounts, files and compliance with back up and storage requirements was approved.

Action: Clerk to contact Heliocentrix to proceed.

- c. Expenditure on a monthly Microsoft 365 Business licencing fee for Clerk and Councillors of £50.19 with Heliocentrix IT was approved.
Action: Clerk to set this contract up with Heliocentrix IT.
- d. A Pay-As-You-Go IT Support package with Heliocentrix IT at a cost if needed at £93.50/hour for this service billed in 15-minute increments was approved.
- e. Expenditure for Civic.ly asset management system at £39 plus VAT per month was approved.
Action: Clerk to contact Civic.ly to set up service.

Next meeting: Monday 13th July 2026 7.30pm, The Pavilion