

Minutes of a **Meeting of the Parish Council** was held at The Pavilion, Station Road, Halstead TN14 7DH commencing at **7.30pm** on **Monday, 13 July 2026**

Present: Cllr Peel (chair), Cllr Meaton (Vice-Chair, Cllr Gardner, Cllr Marshall, Cllr Couchman, Cllr Wilkinson, D. Cllr John Grint, KCC Cllr Nigel Williams, Ms P. Nott (Clerk) and 20 members of the public (Member of Public).

1. To receive and accept apologies for absence - Cllr Sales sent apologies.

2. Declarations of interest. – there were none

3. Chair's remarks – the Chair thanked Cllrs and public for their hard work. Many planning issues outstanding and some new regarding Broke Hill and Clarks Lane. Opinions sought on Parish Priorities questionnaire, public encouraged to complete online or paper version.

4. The minutes of the Council meeting on 23 June 2026 were approved and signed by the chair as a true record.

5. The Clerk's report was noted and some key achievements were shared including civic.ly asset management system commencement, IT upgrade but recognised that there were many outstanding tasks.

6. Standing Orders were approved and adopted. The Clerk advised that NALC were undertaking a review of Model of Standing orders and a consultation with Councils is in progress for this with the aim to make this document less clunky and more user friendly.

7. Policies and procedures for approval

- a) The Complaints Procedure and publication scheme was approved.
- b) The Policy for dealing with the press/media was approved with one change to management to add 'Deputy Clerk' to manage Facebook account in addition to the Clerk.
- c) The Policy and procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018 was approved.
- d) The Vexatious Complainant Policy was approved.
- e) The Data Protection & GDPR Policy was approved.
- f) The Website Accessibility Policy approval was deferred to the September Council meeting.

8. Communication and Events Working Group

- a) Cllr Couchman provided an update from the Communication and Events Working Group.
 - i. She requested of those present to submit photos to enrich the newsletter which is currently being drafted and would be published in Autumn.

- ii. The family fun day provided by SDC at the Halstead Recreation Ground is on 14 August from 10:30 to 13:30.
- iii. A Hallowe'en pumpkin competition will be held in the Village Hall on 31st December from 6:15pm-8:15pm
- iv. On 4 December there is a plan for Santa's sleigh to visit the village when the Christmas tree is lit on Southdene, followed by food & refreshments in the Village Hall from 6pm.

9. Highways and Amenities Committee

- a) Cllr Wilkinson provided an update from the Highways and Amenities Committee outlining that HPC were focussing on compliance and priority repairs of facilities and amenities, with the playground re-surfacing as an immediate requirement. Expenditure was needed to upkeep the Council's assets.

10. Finance Committee

- a) Expenditure on playground resurfacing was approved.
- b) Wicksteed was appointed as the contractor.
- c) In the absence of the Chair of the Finance Committee, the Clerk provided a brief update from the Finance Committee noting that the precept had been corrected on Scribe Accounting software as per 6 July Finance Committee actions.
- d) Payments to be made approved, payments and receipts noted was undertaken at Finance Committee on 6 July 2026.

11. Staffing Committee

- a) The Chair signed the temporary contract for Rebecca Norburn as Assistant Clerk.
- b) The employment of a temporary caretaker to support the Clerk to upkeep facilities and property for 5-7 hours per week was approved.
- c) The job description for a temporary caretaker was approved.
- d) The Clerk was approved to recruit to the temporary caretaker role.

12. Planning Committee

- a) An update from the planning committee was provided by Cllr Gardner.

13. District Councillor updates

- a) Cllr Williams advised that the LGR and Unitary Council plan results were due out on 16 July and he would share the outcome on 16 July with HPC. He advised that this was not part of a democratic process.
- b) SDC Broke Hill, DIAC (Development and Infrastructure Advisory Committee) meeting on 30th June. Cllr Williams advised that there was a misconception about the vote at that meeting, the vote agreed 7-6 that the SDC Local Plan
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Reg 19 should go forward to the Cabinet meeting on 7th July. In turn Cabinet voted to forward the SDC local Plan Reg. 19 to open consultation to the District from 23rd July to 17th September. If the Regulation 19 Local Plan was not passed, then he advised that there would then be no local control. He recognised that both options were unpalatable. London Borough of Bromley are noted to be actively opposed to Broke Hill development. Several MOP voiced anger with the DIAC and D. Councillors voting in favour of the Local Plan. MOPs expressed dismay and distrust in the process. HPC response will include Green Belt and concerns about lack of water supply for new homes.

- c) D.Cllr Grint advised that he will not support the local plan if Broke Hill is in it.
- d) D.Cllr Grint advised that 'Merridene' planning application will not be referred to the Development Management Committee (DMC).
- e) D.Cllr Grint advised that the National Delegation scheme revision is underway for how planning decisions are made, more decisions to be made by case officers, less by committees. This is coming from the Government for housing plans less than 150 houses.
- f) Planning for Broke Hill fighting on 2 fronts: 1. Local Plan and 2. Live planning application by Quinn for Broke Hill. Arguments must be strong with a good narrative.

14. Meeting dates for the year to December were noted.

15. Public participation forum

- a) MOP expressed dismay at voting by D.Cllr Marshall at DIAC and concern about local plan. MOP asked regarding Shoreham Lane 'Robbie's Field' Development for up to 52 houses. MOP expressed concern about dangerous traffic that is present now on Shoreham Lane, grave concern from MOP about Shoreham Lane being able to sustain increase in housing and plans to reduce the width of the road, which is single track in places to accommodate access; this would limit turning circles for vehicles further, which is already challenging. MOP expressed to Halstead environment and village life via multiple planning applications as although Local Plan assesses it as 2% of green belt, it is 15% of Halstead Parish's green belt. D.Cllr Grint advised that this development would likely be considered by the DMC in September 2026.
- b) MOP requested follow up to action in April HPC minutes regarding cutting back of copse on verge on Sevenoaks Road as unable to get support from SDC or LBB as it appears to be in 'no- man's land'. MOP requested HPC's help for a tractor with cutting equipment to access as it has not been cut since lockdown. Action HPC to investigate ownership and a solution.

16. The Planning log was noted.

Future HPC Meeting dates:

Monday 14th September 2026 7.30pm, The Pavilion

DRAFT