

HERNE & BROOMFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Office, Herne Centre, St Martin's View, Herne CT6 7AP

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting of Herne & Broomfield Parish Council held at the Herne Centre on Thursday 15th May 2025 at 7.30pm, for the purpose of transacting the following business.

Present:

Cllr Davis (Chairman)

Cllr Wilson (Vice Chairman)

Cllr Austin

Cllr Binstead

Cllr Checksfield

Cllr Collins

Cllr Davison

Cllr Hill

Cllr Lambkin (after co-option)

Cllr Maslin

Cllr Strong

Cllr White

Michele Nicholson (Clerk/RFO)

Jo McCann (Admin Assistant)

80/24 Election of Chairman, signing of Acceptance of Office.

Cllr Davis was elected Chairman.

The Acceptance of Office was duly signed by Cllr Davis and the clerk.

81/24 Election of Vice Chairman.

Cllr Wilson was elected Vice Chairman.

82/24 To appoint Committees (As per amended sheets circulated):

Finance & Resources Committee

Environment & Leisure Committee

Planning & Highways Committee

Community Centre Committee

Staffing Committee

Two lists had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The clerk recommended that the Staffing Committee be abolished, and all staffing matters transferred under the remit of the Finance & Resources Committee (F&R). She explained that the Staffing Committee was created in 2019 and was originally intended to meet on an ad hoc basis. Prior to this, staffing matters had been dealt with by F&R. With the employment of more staff, it has become necessary to hold more regular meetings, making the scheduling meetings increasingly difficult. There has also been overlap between F&R and the Staffing Committee regarding setting pay rates and budgeting for staff. Any grievance or recruitment panel would be selected from the members of the new F&R, as per the committee Terms of Reference.

Members agreed to abolish the Staffing Committee and incorporate staffing matters under the Finance & Resources Committee.

The committees were appointed as per the circulated sheet.

83/24 To appoint representatives to:

KALC (Kent Association of Local Councils) Canterbury Area Committee

Friends of Broomfield & Herne Ponds

Herne & Broomfield Allotment Society

Wilder Blean Project

Herne Bay Parochial Charity

Cllr Wilson reported that he had resigned from the Herne Bay Parochial Charity. Cllr Austin offered to replace him.

To Appoint:

Newsletter Editor

Press & Social Media

Website management

Tree Warden & Pond Warden

The representatives were appointed as per the circulated sheet, with the amendment of Cllr Austin as the second representative on Herne Bay Parochial Charity.

84/24 To receive apologies for absence and accept reasons.

Cllr Blatherwick. Apologies and reasons for absence were accepted.

City Cllr Jones and City Cllr Paget.

85/24 To receive declarations of interest on items on the agenda and requests for dispensations.

None.

86/24 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 10th April 2025.

The minutes were agreed as a correct record.

87/24 To report on matters arising from the minutes, not on the agenda, for information only.

The clerk reported that the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) and Herne Centre maintenance and repair works had been scheduled in.

ADJOURNMENT FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Gill Lambkin attended regarding agenda item 89/25, as the applicant for co-option to the parish council.

88/25 Chairman's Announcements.

Cllr Davis thanked Cllr Wilson for organising the VE Day 80 event and everyone that contributed.

89/25 To discuss the co-option of a new councillor.

Cllr Davis reported that four members of the council had interviewed Gill Lambkin. The recommendation of the interview panel was that Gill Lambkin be co-opted to the parish council. Members agreed to co-opt Gill Lambkin to the parish council.

The Acceptance of Office was duly signed by Cllr Lambkin and the clerk.

90/25 To receive reports from County Councillor Mulvihill, and City Councillors Jones and Paget.

County Cllr Mulvihill

The clerk reported that no communication had been received from County Cllr Mulvihill.

City Cllrs Jones and Paget

The clerk read out the following report received from the City Councillors.

- *We enjoyed attending the VE Day event at the Herne Centre last week and would like to thank all involved in the day.*
- *In an effort to tackle issues with litter and dog mess throughout the ward, our bin audit continues by trying to ensure we have the right type of bin in the right place. Please continue to send any thoughts and suggestions to Grace Paget so that she can incorporate these into her request to Canterbury City Council (CCC).*
- *Community Speedwatch has been registered for Herne & Broomfield following reports of speeding in particular areas of the ward. Grace has undertaken the online training, and we can soon start recruitment for volunteers.*

- *We are exploring ways to tackle parking issues relating to school traffic, so any reports of this made to the Parish Council, please do make us aware as we are keen to have this feedback.*
- *We are now in the 'No Mow May'. CCC has advised that areas of Curtis Wood Park will be included in this initiative to support wildlife.*

91/25 Clerk's Report/Correspondence. Circulated prior to meeting.

The clerk collated all the applications received for the positions of Herne Centre Cleaning Assistant and Herne Centre Weekend Supervisor and arranged the shortlisting, interviews and reference requests.

The clerk and admin assistant have written various articles for the newsletter, including items regarding Local Government Reorganisation, Community Assets, and various events.

The admin assistant has completed and submitted to Canterbury City Council (CCC) the applications to record School Lane Car Park, Curtis Wood, Cherry Orchard Playing Field and Broomfield Community Park as Assets of Community Value. She has also been busy organising various events.

The clerk has been working on completing the Annual Governance & Audit Return (AGAR).

The VE Day 80 event on 8th May 2025 was a great success, with lots of people attending. Lots of positive feedback has been received. Thank you to Cllr Jeremy Wilson for organising the event and to everyone that helped in some way.

The Annual Parish Meeting (APM) was held on 17th April 2025. Thank you to everyone that attended and helped.

The parish council credit cards now appear to be working properly. Thank you to Cllr Carol Davis for dealing with this with the bank.

Issues with construction vehicles using School Lane, Broomfield Road and Lower Herne Road continue to be reported to CCC and Vistry (Strode Farm developer). Two lorries have regularly been seen transporting waste along School Lane and Broomfield. Due to the short turnaround, the sites that the lorries are taking the waste to and from must be local.

The admin assistant has now started the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) course. The clerk reported that two letters had been received.

One from Sir Roger Gale MP thanking the parish council for the VE Day 80 event.

The other was from Marion Freeman thanking the parish council for her Parish Council Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Community.

92/25 Finance.

To ratify payments made since last meeting.

Super Maids (tablecloth laundering): £54.60

Arkas (fire shutters servicing): £129.60

COR Works (BMX track repairs): £3,024.00

Total: £3,208.20

To approve payments presented at this meeting; schedule and bank reconciliation supplied.

Payments were approved.

To report on income received.

Booking fees: £5,417.85

Sum Up (card sales): £2,141.61

Craft Fair stalls: £170.00

Quiz Night tickets: £70.00

Bank interest: £3,286.78

Total: £11,086.24

93/25 To receive the Internal Auditor's report.

94/25 To agree and approve the Statement of Internal Control 2024/25.

95/25 To agree and approve the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25.

96/25 To agree and approve the Accounting Statements 2024/25.

Agenda items 93/25 to 96/25 were not discussed.

The clerk reported that due to issues with reconciling the earmarked reserves she had been unable to produce the audit documents. This will be carried over to the next council meeting for consideration.

97/25 To receive the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 17th April 2025.

The draft minutes were received.

98/25 To receive the minutes of the Environment & Leisure Committee meeting held on 24th April 2025.

The draft minutes were received.

Cllr Davis reported that only 43 people responded to the poll regarding replacing the outdoor gym equipment in the Cherry Orchard Playing Field. Although there were 26 votes in favour of keeping the equipment and 17 in favour of removing it, the committee unanimously agreed to recommend the gym equipment's removal. This was due to the costs involved in replacing and maintaining it, and the lack of use. It was suggested that the equipment be replaced by benches.

The admin assistant explained that the annual inspection of the gym equipment had raised various issues that need to be addressed. The parish council has been advised that it would cost more to repair than it would be to replace. The clerk said the costs are likely to be between £15,000.00 to £20,000.00.

Members agreed to remove the gym equipment. **Action: clerk.**

99/25 To receive the draft minutes of the Planning & Highways Committee meeting held on 1st May 2025 and discuss any matters arising, and other and highways issues.

The clerk reported that a neighbour of 10 Ridgeway Road had contacted the parish council regarding further issues in relation to this development. The neighbour had been contacted by a fencing company regarding the height of the proposed new fence. The neighbour was told that the patio works were due to start soon, with amendments, although CCC has yet to decide this planning application. The previous issues reported have still not been addressed.

The clerk said that the issues regarding the new road signs at the Eddington Interchange had been reported again. The signs have been partially covered, but the covers keep coming off.

Cllr Davis reported that she had been contacted regarding the building works being undertaken adjacent to the Huntsman & Horn Public House. The builders are still working outside the hours permitted in the planning approval.

Action: clerk.

100/25 Environmental Issues including Tree & Pond Warden's Report.

Cllr Checksfield requested that a letter be sent to the Chairman of the Friends of Broomfield & Herne Ponds, with a reminder that it is the bird nesting season from May until September.

This is due to the removal of vegetation that could be used by nesting birds. **Action: clerk.**

Cllr Davis reported on the four applications submitted to record School Lane Car Park, Curtis Wood, Cherry Orchard Playing Field and Broomfield Community Park as Assets of Community Value.

Cllr Davis raised concerns regarding a dead London Plane tree on Home Farm, Canterbury Road. The tree has large dead branches overhanging the footpath and carriageway. **Action: clerk.**

Cllr Davis thanked everyone that helped at Broomfield Community Park with watering, and the clearing of some of the hemlock. This included Cllr Davison, Cllr White and her husband Lance, Andy Harvey and Elizabeth Lathwell. Cllr Davis will be organising another working party for 1st June 2025. Elizabeth Lathwell has been watering the new trees in Cherry Orchard Playing Field. Herne & Broomfield Allotment Society (HBAS) has asked whether the parish council still needs the tree nursery. Cllr Checksfield said that there are currently between 15 to 20 hawthorns there.

Members agreed to hand the plot back to HBAS for renting out.

101/25 Reports from council representatives on outside bodies and other organisations.

There were no reports.

102/25 To approve the Financial Regulations.

Members approved the updated Financial Regulations.

103/25 To approve the Standing Orders.

Members approved the updated Standing Orders.

104/25 To report on the interviews for the Herne Centre Cleaning Assistant and Weekend Supervisor (Closed session) This item will be preceded by a resolution Under Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, to exclude the public and press due to the confidential nature of the business being discussed.

The clerk reported that of the applications received for the position of Cleaning Assistant, three candidates were shortlisted and invited for interview. The recommendation of the interview panel was to offer Debbie Wright the position, subject to satisfactory references being received. Regarding the position of Weekend Supervisor, two candidates were shortlisted and invited for interview. The recommendation of the interview panel was to offer Julii Elliott the position, subject to satisfactory references being received.

Members agreed to accept the recommendations of the interview panel.

105/25 Members Reports.

Cllr Wilson reported that he had begun undertaking the Garden Safari risk assessments. They should be completed by 3rd June 2025. **Action: Cllr Wilson.**

Cllr White reported that she had begun compiling the next Herne & Broomfield Community News newsletter. **Action: Cllr White.**

Cllr Strong reported that he was now a member of a NHS group at Herne & Broomfield Surgery. He had some posters for the noticeboards regarding bereavement and mental health support initiatives in the area. **Action: Cllr Strong.**

Cllr Austin reported that he would update the parish council regarding the ongoing issues on the Redrow estate at a future council meeting. **Action: Cllr Austin.**

106/25 The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on 12th June 2025.

Meeting closed at 8.25pm.