

HARBERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes for the ordinary meeting of Harberton Parish Council
at 7.30pm on Tuesday 10th June 2025 at Harbertonford Village Hall

In attendance

Harbertonford Councillors

Cllr Beamish: Present
Cllr Bowley: Apologies
Cllr Davies: Present
Cllr H Palmer: Present
Cllr J Palmer: Present
Cllr Stirrup: Present

Harberton Councillors

Cllr Butterworth: Apologies
Cllr Camp: Present
Cllr Hambly: Apologies
Cllr Paine: Present
Cllr Morris: Present
Cllr Williams: Apologies

Others

D.Cllr McKay: Present
C.Cllr Hodgson: Not present.
Clerk Ms Radford: Present
Members of the Public: 14

Public Session

- i) The Chair opened the meeting by first addressing an issue arising from participation in the Parish Council meeting the previous month and conversations held on the periphery of that meeting. The Chair commented that the public session of both the Parish Council and its committees provide opportunities for the public to raise questions and comments in a safe, fair and balanced forum and where comments will be noted. It was stated that a Member of the Public (MoP) who had made a comment within the public session had been approached by another MoP on leaving the meeting, which made them feel unsafe. The Chair reminded all present that, to follow best practice, all matters are raised in the safe public forum where those matters can be addressed openly and frankly. Car park conversations are strongly discouraged. It was noted that if matters are raised outside of Parish Council meetings (or meetings of its committees), communication should be made via the Clerk as per the Parish Council's Communication's Protocol and to ensure that best practice is adhered to.
- ii) Several members of the public (MoP) wished to comment on the planning application for discussion under item 6.1:
 - A MoP requested that support for the application be withdrawn, commenting on the number of objections on the Planning Portal. Comment was made that conditions placed on applications can easily be ignored.
 - A MoP wished to comment on dwelling density in comparison to the national average.
 - A MoP commented on the affordable housing quota of 30% of 10 dwellings developed. The observation was made that the Parish Council was under the impression that the site will bring forward affordable housing, but that the applicant could not commit to the quota. The application could deliver 4 affordable dwellings at best, and none at worst.
 - A MoP commented that the Parish Council recommendation was not unanimous.
 - A MoP wished to ensure that the Parish Council had done its research and was aware of all the facts before making its decision. Cllrs commented that they have been aware of all the issues on the lead up to consideration of the application.
 - A MoP wanted cllrs to understand the motion put to them from the Neighbourhood Plan Committee, commented that the Steering Group is still considering which sites to allocate. It has not yet decided to put forward the Ford Farm site for development, which is why the processes are out of sync. The Steering Group is asking to be able to carry on this work and follow the correct protocol, hence why the matter appears on the agenda again.
- iii) The District Councillor commented that several MoP's have written to him to 'call in' the application for consideration by the Development Management Committee. He wanted to make it clear that he would not be in a position to do this until a recommendation had been made by the Planning Officer. He commented that he has been on site with the Planning Officer. He is listening to all concerns and all the matters raised are being considered. He will not commit to calling the application in, until the recommendation is seen.
- iv) It was clarified that the Parish Council is one of several statutory consultees to the Local Planning Authority, South Hams District Council.
- v) A MoP asked about the process for establishing a bus stop at Langridge Cross. The Clerk indicated that the proposal has been raised with Devon County Highways.

Agenda

1. **Apologies** were noted as above.

RESOLVED: To sanction the reasons for apologies given.

2. **Declaration of Interests**

- 2.1. Register of Interests Cllrs were reminded of the need to update their register of interests if any had changed.
- 2.2. Declaration of interests No interests were declared on items on the agenda.

3. **Reports** for information from:

- 3.1. County Councillor (C.Cllr) The C.Cllr had circulated a written report to cllrs ahead of the meeting by email.

- 3.1.1. New administration at Devon County Council (DCC) The C.Cllr commented on the positive atmosphere at DCC following a change of administration. The C.Cllr is now the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Biodiversity, which includes transportation, such as improvements to the bus network, delivery of electric vehicle chargers and active travel routes.
- 3.1.2. Support for 20's Plenty The C.Cllr proposed a motion to that DCC supports a new policy to permit the implementation of 20mph zones where the Parish Council has passed the 20's plenty motion, without there being a need for 3 fatalities to provide a score to support it. The Notice of Motion was referred to the Cabinet for consideration.
- 3.1.3. Parking Priority for First Responders This initiative would provide First Responders with a vehicle disk enabling them to park as close as possible to their home to enable them to carry heavy equipment to their vehicle as quickly as possible when responding to emergency calls. Totnes Town Council will be discussing support for the initiative, and Parish Councils are asked to support this too.
- 3.1.4. Rushbrook Youth Centre The C.Cllr that following the closure of the Youth Centre, local level services such as TRAYE are becoming more important.
- 3.1.5. Parking in the Bus Stop in Harberton The Clerk had forwarded correspondence for consideration under item 11.3.3, and had asked the new Neighbourhood Highways Officer to come and have a look.
- 3.2. District Councillor (D.Cllr)
 - 3.2.1. Local Cycling, Walking and Infrastructure Project The Project has now been approved.
 - 3.2.2. South Hams Festival A meeting will be held this week to decide if the festival will go ahead.
 - 3.2.3. Zed Pod Modular Housing Development visit The D.Cllr is visiting a site in Bristol that has installed modular energy efficient social housing, commenting on the value of such initiatives for environmentally sustainable housing development and the provision of affordable housing.
 - 3.2.4. Water Quality The Council is working on a project alongside Plymouth University and other stakeholders that will provide information on the water quality of the River Dart via a website. The target audience would be those who participate in river sports.
 - 3.2.5. Catbikes A 'Cycles about town' (Cat) e-bike trial will begin in Totnes shortly, where 40 e-bikes will be available for self-hire from 8 sites in the town.
 - 3.2.6. Solar Panels on Leisure Centre Roofs The investment is being made to reduce energy bills and help to make Leisure Centres in the District to be more financially sustainable.
 - 3.2.7. Generate interest to support the play parks in Harberton and Harbertonford The D.Cllr has commented on the potential for funding to support the parks, but a project plan needs to be devised.
 - 3.2.8. Bin on the green It was noted that either a bigger waste bin will be provided at 'the green' opposite the community shop in Harbertonford, or more frequent collections will be scheduled.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

4. **Minutes** Consider approval of the following minutes:

- 4.1. Notes of the Annual Meeting of Harberton Parish on Thursday 8th May 2025
- 4.2. Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Harberton Parish Council 13th May 2025
- 4.3. Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council 13th May 2025

RESOLVED: To sign the minutes/notes 4.1, 4.2 as a correct record without amendments. To sign the minutes 4.3 with a minor amendment.

5. **Report Matters Arising from the Minutes** *Not otherwise on the agenda and for information only*

- 5.1. Snow Warden registration and training (Cllrs Bowley and Hambly) No report.
- 5.2. Parish Lengthsman (Clerk) Ongoing
- 5.3. Emergency Directory (Cllr Paine/Clerk) Ongoing.
- 5.4. New Parish Council bank account (Clerk) Ongoing.
- 5.5. Brockhills Cross Footway (Clerk) Ongoing.
- 5.6. Community Composting Scheme (Cllr Butterworth) No report.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

6. **Planning**

- 6.1. Special motion to revisit decision of the Parish Council on planning application 0828/25/OPA Application for Outline Planning Permission for residential development of up to 17 dwellings with access, landscape, drainage and associated infrastructure. All matters to be reserved with the exception of access at Land At Sx780 585, Meadow Close, Harberton

It was noted that clause 7a of the Parish Council's Standing Orders enable a committee of the Parish Council to recommend that a Parish Council revisit a previous resolution.

Cllrs considered the following special motion from Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group:
"[The Committee] asks the Parish Council to revisit their decision based on the concerns of the Steering Group that the decision making process of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee has been put out of sync as a result of the decision on the OPA. The Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group would like to

recommend that they revise their decision to neither to support nor object to the application but give their comments.”

RESOLVED:

To follow the recommendation of the Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Committee and neither support nor object to the application, but to make the following comments/conditions:

- The site is big enough to allow for a significant flood mitigation zone to capture all run off from the site and potentially improve existing flooding issues in the east of the village.
- A full drain survey should be carried out to ensure that the SWW sewage system can cope, and the development does not cause any more issues in any other section of the village.
- Any development on the site needs to address the 2023 Harberton Parish Housing Needs Assessment and Harberton Parish Design Code.
- All the flood risk assessments carried out by the developer thoroughly scrutinised by Devon County Council's flood engineer.
- Construction works plan is fully implemented before any development commences.
- Ongoing maintenance of the flood defence scheme is conditioned to the properties.
- There should be at least 30% affordable dwellings.

6.2. Consideration of planning applications *None received*

6.3. Receive a report on planning or appeal decisions The Clerk gave a verbal update on recent decisions by the Local Planning Authority

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

6.4. Receive a report on enforcement cases (for information only) A hard copy of the enforcement caseload was circulated amongst cllrs for information. Cllrs were given details of one case that has now been closed, as the breach of planning control has ceased.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

7. Monthly reports

7.1. Finance Committee update There was no update. The next meeting will be on the 1st July.

7.2. Sustainable Harbourne Valley update The upcoming Barn Owl talk at Harbertonford was noted.

7.3. Neighbourhood Plan update It was reported that an Extraordinary Meeting had been held in order to discuss allocation of the Ford Farm site and to put forward the motion for consideration under item 6.1. It was noted that the Steering Group has agreed to re-run the consultation because of the change in the evidence base. It was noted that there had been conversations about changing the Terms of Reference for the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee, and whether it is a requirement that it be a committee of the Parish Council. More research is required before a formal proposal is made to make any changes.

7.4. Harberton Playing Field update It was noted that the Fair is taking place on the playing field this Sunday. It was commented that the new grass cutting contractor had indicated that the grass is growing quickly at the moment which may require more cuts than originally tendered. To save costs, an HPFA volunteer has cut the grass ahead of this weekend's event. A chain has been purchased to install at the entrance of the field. More cars have been dumped in the car park, and the police have been involved. It has been noticed that there has been greater amount of dog waste on the playing field recently.

7.5. Harbertonford Play Area update There was discussion about how to move forward with the District Councillor's offer of funding to support the parks in both villages, and challenges of getting local people involved in the conversation. It was agreed that this be discussed in more depth under a specific agenda item at the next meeting.

7.6. Harberton ARK update No update.

7.7. Clerk's update No update.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

8. Receipt of nominations and appointment of members to existing committees *Carried forward from the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council*

8.1. Finance Committee Cllrs Beamish, Camp, Davies and Morris were appointed. Cllr Camp agreed to chair meetings. It was agreed to invite Cllr Butterworth to join this committee.

8.2. Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Cllr Stirrup agreed to be the Parish Council representative.

9. Tristford/Vicarage Ball Junction Signage (Cllr Williams) *to consider writing to Devon County Highways and request warning signage or road marking on Vicarage Ball because of the blind junction; to reduce the risks of accident.* It was reported that of the 10 people that responded to Cllr William's post on the Harberton Village Circular, all were in favour of something being done to make the junction safer. It was reported that someone

had been knocked off their bike at the junction, but had unfortunately not reported this to the Police. Several commented on the possibility of installing a mirror, and others commented on the impact of parking outside Globe House.

RESOLVED: The Clerk to forward the information to Highways, copying in the C.Cllr.

- 10. Webhosting renewal and email security** *To consider cost of renewal options for 1-3 years webhosting and email security options* It was noted that webhosting renewal was due. The Clerk also described the new security measures required by Microsoft as a result of the high proportion of email hacks and the impact this was having on logging into Parish Council's webmail. There was a discussion of cost options.

RESOLVED:

- i) To only renew webhosting for 12 months at a cost of £122.16 plus VAT. This would enable the Parish Council to move hosting at a future date.
- ii) To pay for Advanced Email Security, at a cost of approximately £120 for the year.

11. Correspondence

- 11.1. E-Circulars for information** Cllrs were informed of the regular e-circulars received that can be forwarded on request.

11.2. Items of correspondence for information

- 11.2.1. 20250604 Temporary Traffic Notice - BLAKEMOOR CROSS TO BLAKEMORE, Harberton (TTRO2563798) Cllrs were informed of the road closure in place from 2nd – 4th July to enable drainage works.
- 11.2.2. 20250603 Trust Impact of Conditions on Planning Approvals Cllrs were informed of correspondence directing them to a BBC article highlighting the gap between plans for new housing and the capacity of the existing sewage infrastructure, commenting that it would seem that a developer can go ahead and build regardless of whether or not they have met any or all of the conditions put on the permission by either the Local Planning Authority or requested by the Parish Council regarding waste water. Cllrs are asked to have this at the forefront of their minds when considering any development anywhere in the Parish and in particular with regard to current proposals on Ford Farm.

RESOLVED: That the information under 11.1 – 11.2 be noted

11.3. Items of correspondence for consideration

- 11.3.1. 20250428 Your legal duties workplace pensions re-enrolment Cllrs are informed that the deadline for re-enrolment in the Pension Scheme is on 23rd February 2026. Every three years an employer must put certain staff back into a pension scheme and tell the Pensions Regulator that they've done so. The Parish Council therefore needs to undertake a review and take action to set up a pension scheme if one is required. Having sought advice from Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) on the Parish Councils particular circumstances, it was commented that a referral for free advice could be made through the National Association's partnership with Worknest, and that Tozers offer member councils 20 minutes of free legal advice, if needed.

RESOLVED:

- i) The Finance Committee review the Parish Council's pension duties at the meeting in July in order to bring a recommendation back to the Parish Council.
- ii) **ACTION: The Clerk** to seek free advice and information from Worknest and/or Tozers.

- 11.3.2. 20250428 Spring 2025 Training & Events Cllrs are informed that training courses offered by Devon Association of Local Councils this spring include Being a Good Councillor; Being a Good Employer; Code of Conduct and Introduction to Planning, if any cllrs are interested. It was noted that Cllr Morris has booked on the Planning Course on 25th June.

- 11.3.3. 20250509 Parking in the bus stop Cllrs are informed that a Harberton resident is using the bus stop as a parking place, meaning the school bus is dropping off and picking up children in the middle of the road. Parents concerned about the safety of their children have made attempts to ask the neighbour to stop parking in the bus stop to no effect. The matter has also been raised to Highway and the Council. The Parish Council is asked if there is anything it can do.

RESOLVED:

- i) **ACTION: Cllr Stirrup** agreed to speak with the neighbour and with the parents.
- ii) **ACTION: The Clerk** to raise with Devon County Highways.

- 11.3.4. 20250517 email concerning land representatives Cllrs are informed that a Member of the Public who addressed the public session at the April meeting of the Parish Council was approached on leaving the meeting and asked questions about comments they made during the public session. The member of the public felt intimidated and asks the Parish Council how it intends to deal with the matter to prevent happening

again. It was noted that the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had raised the issue at the committee's June meeting. Comments had been taken on board by those involved. The Chair had reiterated comments about expected behaviour at the beginning of the meeting.

RESOLVED: To send the correspondent a summary of the outcomes following receipt of their email; included the minuted statement as made by the Chair on opening the meeting.

12. Finance

12.1. Notice of income and expenditure since last meeting.

12.1.1. Payment 2505_7 to Lloyds Bank for banking service charge = £4.24 no VAT

12.2. To consider payments as per the June payment schedule

12.2.1. Payment 2506_1 to Cat Radford, payslip dated 22nd June 2025 includes Clerk May salary £540.11, Neighbourhood Plan May Salary at £62.32, overtime payment 3 of 3 at £292.91 = £895.34 no VAT

12.2.2. Payment 2506_2 to Cat Radford, Clerk June expenses claim for mileage at £11.34, reimbursement for purchase of harbertonparishcouncil.org domain name for 3 year at £71.89 and broadband for May at £7.50 = £90.73 no VAT

12.2.3. Payment 2506_3 to HMRC Shipley for NI Payment incurred on June Salary ESTIMATED = £71.75 no VAT

12.2.4. Payment 2505_4 to Harberton Parish Hall for hall hire of the meeting of 17th June 19.00 – 21.00 2hrs @ £7 per hour= £14.00 no VAT

RESOLVED:

- i) That the income and expenditure under item 12.1 be noted.
- ii) That the payments be approved.

13. Date and location of next ordinary meeting 7:30pm Tuesday 8th July 2025, Harberton Parish Hall