

HARBERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Harberton Parish Council
at 7.30pm on Tuesday 9th December 2025 at Harbertonford Village Hall

In attendance

Harbertonford Councillors

Cllr Beamish: Present
Cllr Bowley: Not Present
Cllr Davies: Present
Cllr H Palmer: Apologies
Cllr J Palmer: Apologies
Cllr Stirrup: Present

Harberton Councillors

Cllr Butterworth: Not Present
Cllr Camp: Apologies
Cllr Hambly: Present
Cllr Paine: Present
Cllr Morris: Present
Cllr Williams: Not Present

Others

D.Cllr McKay: Apologies
C.Cllr Hodgson: Present
Clerk Ms Radford: Present
Members of the Public: 11

Public Session

- i) A Member of the Public (MoP) addressed the Parish Council with comments on how the Parish Council should manage the process of the complaint under discussion under item 8, commenting the complaint should be passed to the District Council. It was noted that the details of the complaint had not been seen by the public. The Chair responded that the Parish Council has sought advice on management of the complaint and agenda order, and as such, the meeting would follow the order of the agenda as published.
- ii) A MoP addressed the council to comment on the correspondence under discussion at item 13.2.1. The MoP had sought advice from Devon County Council's Lead Ecologist, following comments made by Parish Councillors that Private Sewage Treatment Works could have a positive impact on local ecology. The Lead Ecologist had responded that he had not been aware that there were native European Eels in Harberton and that there was no possible way to mitigate harming them.

1. **Apologies** were received and sanctioned.

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. Cllr Morris declared that he has clients that have put forward sites in South Hams District Council's recent call for sites.

3. Reports for information from:

- 3.1. County Councillor (C.Cllr) The C.Cllr had emailed cllrs a monthly report.
 - 3.1.1. Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Proposals have now been submitted to the Secretary of State. The C.Cllr's report provides links to all the proposed options. It is expected that the Government will respond in March. The C.Cllr commented on the amount of time and investment that has been made in considering LGR options.
 - 3.1.2. Libraries Unlimited has an open consultation, inviting views on the service provided. The service is seeking opportunities to cut costs. Some libraries may reduce their hours to save on running costs.
 - 3.1.3. Highways works A list of current and planned works were included in the C.Cllrs report. It was commented that local roads have been improved. There is a proposal to put 40mph speed limits in place on route to Newton Abbot. Costs will need to be met locally.
 - 3.1.4. Bus announcements It was reported that Devon and Torbay transport services are being combined. Initiatives are in place to support more people to use bus services.
- 3.2. District Councillor No report.

4. **Minutes** Consider approval of the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Harberton Parish Council 11th November 2025

It was RESOLVED To sign the minutes as a correct record with one 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 It was reported that Cllr Hambly has undertaken online training. It was confirmed that the Parish does not have a current Snow Plan in place. The Clerk was asked to confirm that Parish Councillors are covered by the Parish Councils Public Liability Insurance. **ACTION: The Clerk** will check whether this also includes other non-councillor volunteers under the direction of the Parish Council. Cllr Beamish reported that one of the grit bins in Harbertonford was low in grit.
- 5.2. Brockhills Cross Footway (Clerk) Ongoing
- 5.3. Community Composting Scheme (Cllr Butterworth) Ongoing
- 5.4. Parish Parks Site Visits (Cllrs Beamish and Stirrup) Ongoing
- 5.5. Parish Councillor's Email Addresses Several cllrs have successfully created new Gmail addresses for Parish Council business. Some councillors requested some support to do this.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted

6. Planning

6.1. Consideration of new planning applications

- 6.1.1. [3258/25/PIP](#) Harbertonford Application for permission in principle for two residential dwellings at Land Adjacent to Harbourne Petrol Station

RESOLVED: To SUPPORT the application.

- 6.1.2. [3355/25/LBC](#) Listed Building Consent for conservation works to internal finishes at Harberton House The Square Harberton

RESOLVED: To SUPPORT the application.

- 6.1.3. [3314/25/FUL](#) Individual roofings over cattle loafing area, agricultural yard & cattle handling area at Daynes Farm, Harberton

RESOLVED: To SUPPORT the application.

- 6.2. Receive a report on planning or appeal decisions Cllrs received a verbal report from the clerk.

- 6.3. Receive a report on enforcement cases (for information only) It was reported that the Enforcement caseload currently stands at 17 unresolved cases of which the majority are under active investigation. One has a legal work request issued and two have had an enforcement notice issued, of which one is in appeal. Alleged matters under investigation include: unauthorised box vans residential caravans and paraphernalia, alleged untidy site, unauthorised rental of an ancillary building, unauthorised earthworks, unauthorised removal of hedgerow, unauthorised formation of track, unauthorised addition to agricultural barn, unauthorised extension to building, unauthorised wooden building, alleged unauthorised removal of chimney. Cllrs were informed that one matter has been removed from the caseload, having found that no breach of planning regulations has occurred.

7. Monthly reports

- 7.1. Finance Committee update A meeting is due in early January at which a proposed budget will be drafted.

- 7.2. Sustainable Harbourne Valley update It was reported that bat detectors have been bought for use in the spring. A bat box erected in Cllr Palmer's barn with sites identified for another four. There will be a focus on water quality and water improvement in the new year.

- 7.3. Neighbourhood Plan update It was noted that some cllrs had submitted comments on the draft Neighbourhood Plan late which had been challenging for the members of the Steering Group to respond. The Clerk took responsibility for this, having not given a deadline on invitation to comment circulated. The Chair commented that it would be helpful to have a public statement in support of the committee, and others who participate in working groups.

- 7.4. Harberton Playing Field update It was reported that the Playing Field Association is hoping to hold another volunteer day in the new year. Members are hoping to meet with the D.Cllr and members of the Harbertonford Play Area on potential uses of funding.

- 7.5. Harbertonford Play Area update It was reported that the condition of the play equipment is good, and matters raised in monthly reports are being attended to. The same comments about the condition of the rubber matting continues to be raised. Moss needs to be cleared with support of a volunteer day. Works to the trees in the park that arose following the Parish Councils annual tree inspections will take place on 22 – 23 December.

- 7.6. Harberton ARK update It was reported that a suggestion has been made that the WhatsApp group reported when voluntary efforts to clear the gullies have been undertaken, which could lead to the agreement of a rota. It was commented that the work to clear the grip at Dundridge has been very effective.

- 7.7. Tree Warden Update No update.

- 7.8. Clerk's update No update.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted

8. Complaint to Parish Council Consideration of action following receipt of complaint

RESOLVED: Pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press are excluded from the meeting during the consideration of item 8 'Complaint to Parish Council' because it is considered that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.

Following closure of the meeting, cllrs reviewed the details of the complaint, information that had been gathered by the Clerk, including advice received.

RESOLVED: Not to uphold the complaint. **ACTION: The Clerk** to draft a formal letter informing the complainant of the outcome of the complaint.

9. **Neighbourhood Plan** To receive the draft plan for comment and consider approving its progression to Regulation 14 consultation from January 2026.

During discussion cllrs praised members of the steering group for all the work that had gone into the draft to make the document so much easier to read and digest. It was commented that it is likely that the redraft will stimulate more residents to read through the full plan during upcoming consultation. No further comments were made on the most recent draft of the plan that need to be taken into account. Any prior comments made by councillors to the invitation to respond as individuals have been taken care of either through the redraft or in councillors having a better understanding of the Regulation 14 process.

RESOLVED: That the Neighbourhood Plan progress to Regulation 14 in January.

10. **Revisit recommendation on application 0828/25/OPA**

- 10.1. Consider suspending standing orders to enable consideration of this matter
10.2. To consider whether the Parish Council revises its recommendation to the planning authority on this 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 Land At Sx780 585 Meadow Close Harberton in light of the outcome of the Neighbourhood Plan Housing Re-consultation.

RESOLVED:

- i) To suspend standing orders to enable consideration of this matter
- ii) To OBJECT to the application given:
 - the large number of objections from residents that the application has received on the planning portal, and
 - the outcome of a consultation undertaken as part of the Neighbourhood Planning process; the numbers of respondents that were not in support of allocation of this site for development.

11. **2026/27 Contribution to TRAYE** Receive grant request for consideration.

RESOLVED: To make a contribution of £4000 to TRAYE from the 2026/7 budget.

12. **Parish Lengthsman** To consider next steps for recruitment.

Cllrs were informed that the Clerk had received an expression of interest and a quote from a local resident in response to the call for a Parish Lengthsman. The quote proposed a total cost of £650 for 13 hours work to: locate 45 buddle holes across the parish of Harberton and Harbertonford using map provided, prioritising the top ten; Inspect and photograph each buddle hole and clear out debris using hand tools; Produce a short report about findings and highlight specific issues that may help prevent flooding in the parish.

RESOLVED:

- i) **ACTION: The Clerk** to investigate available local Chapter 8 training.
- ii) The Parish Council fund Chapter 8 training.
- iii) To accept the quotation to undertake the works.
- iv) For works to commence on receipt of Chapter 8 training.

13. **Correspondence**

- 13.1. E-Circulars for information Cllrs were provided with a list of regular e-newsletters that can be forwarded on request.
- 13.2. Items of correspondence for information
- 13.2.1. Snow Warden Update - November 2025 Cllrs were informed that this update provides information about Devon Highways 'winter service'. Snow Wardens are asked to update their details, check salt levels and if grit bins are winter ready, links to free online training on topics including 'creating your snow plan', 'risk assessments and staying safe' and 'grit bins and salt bags'. Once signed up for training, the Parish Council can request additional salt and/or grit bins if required. Safety messages for the community on preparing for and travelling in winter conditions are provided.
 - 13.2.2. TTRO2666724 On Site Notice ROAD FROM FORK CROSS TO ASHRIDGE FORK, Harberton Cllrs were informed of the temporary traffic notice include from 2nd – 6th March 2026 to enable Wales and West Utilities to maintain apparatus remove and replace gas valve lids and surrounding concrete base.
 - 13.2.3. Zero Tolerance: South Hams Cracks Down on Fly Tipping The Parish Council has been informed by press release that South Hams District Council is intensifying its efforts to tackle anti-social and illegal fly tipping across the district, focusing on stronger enforcement, streamlined processes, and community education. The Council is working closely with its Legal team to pursue prosecutions where possible and is installing cameras in known hotspots.

- 13.2.4. New £18m funding for Play Areas – How We Can Help Harberton Parish Council Cllrs were informed of a message received by a commercial playground installation company offering Parish Councils support in developing initial ideas, preparing quotations and advice on equipment options, safety standards and budgets to support grant applications to government funding pots.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

13.3. Items of correspondence for consideration

- 13.3.1. URGENT: Request for Policy Review – Private Sewage Treatment Works (PSTW) Unacceptable due to Critically Endangered European Eels (0828/25/OPA) A local resident has written to challenge the Parish Council's previous position on the acceptability of Private Sewage Treatment Works (PSTW) within Harberton, particularly concerning Outline Planning Application 0828/25/OPA (Ford Farm Development), providing a summary of ecological finds and requesting a formal policy change. Specifically, the resident asks the Parish Council to consider supporting the following resolution: *"For all future planning applications in the Parish of Harberton, the Parish Council holds that NO private sewage treatment works (PSTW) or similar effluent discharge into local watercourses are acceptable. All developments must connect to the public sewage mains"*.

RESOLVED: Not to support the motion.

- 13.3.2. Defib Cllrs are informed that the lights in the Harbertonford defibrillator are flashing, now for the third time. It has been suggested that it would be prudent to pursue this with the electrician that works with Community Heartbeat Trust.

RESOLVED: To pursue the matter with the Community Heartbeat Trust's electrician.

- 13.3.3. Free Landmark Tree for your Parish Council or Town from Saving Devon's Treescapes Cllrs were informed that the Devon Wildlife Trust has 50 trees to give away on a first come first served basis as part of their free tree offers to give one Landmark Tree to every parish in Devon. The Parish Council has considered this offer before, but did not agree on whether there was a suitable community space to plant a 1.2 – 2m tree that can act as a focal point and be enjoyed by everyone. The matter is raised on the agenda should further thoughts on a location be considered appropriate.

RESOLVED: To demonstrate interest for a tree for north-east boundary of Harberton Playing field.

- 13.3.4. Citizens Advice funding request letter 2025 Cllrs were informed that Citizens Advice South Hams is contacting all Parish Councils in the area to make a donation of around £300 to £500 to support the charity. The letter comments that there has been a marked increase in the number of residents seeking support with issues driven by ongoing economic pressures. During 2024/25 Citizens Advice South Hams helped 6,833 people with 22,625 issues, and enabled clients to secure £2.7 million in financial gains through benefits, debt solutions and other interventions.

RESOLVED: To make a grant of £300 to Citizens Advice South Hams, as budgeted.

14. Finance

- 14.1. To receive the 2025/26 Budget Report and Forecast A budget report was circulated to all cllrs with meeting papers, showing actual spending to date and expected expenditure at the end of the financial year. No comments were made.

- 14.2. To note receipts and payments made between meetings No receipts or payments had been made between meetings.

14.3. To consider payments as per the December payment schedule

- Payment 2512_1 to Cat Radford, payslip dated 22nd December 2025 includes Clerk salary £557.44, Neighbourhood Plan Salary at £64.32, overtime payment 3 of 3 at £61.10 = £682.86 no VAT
- Payment 2512_2 to Cat Radford, Clerk December expenses claim for mileage at £6.30 and broadband for December at £7.50 = £13.80 no VAT
- Payment 2512_3 HMRC Shipley for NI Payment incurred on December Salary ESTIMATED = £39.88 no VAT
- Payment 2512_4 to Harberton Parish Hall for Committee Room hire for the meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan on 2nd December 19.00 – 21.00 total of 2 hrs @ 7.00 per hour = £14 no VAT
- Payment 2512_5 to Society of Local Council Clerks for 50% of the Clerk's Annual Subscription = £120 no VAT
- Payment 2512_6 EXPECTED Direct Debit to Lloyds bank for December banking charge = £4.25 no VAT

RESOLVED: The information at 14.1 be noted
To make payments as per the December payment schedule.

15. **Date and location of next meeting** Tuesday 13th January 2026, Harberton Parish Hall.