

## **HARBERTON PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes for the ordinary meeting of Harberton Parish Council  
at 7.30pm on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at Harbertonford Village Hall

### **In attendance**

#### **Harbertonford Councillors**

Cllr Beamish: Present  
Cllr Bowley: Present  
Cllr Davies: Present  
Cllr Palmer: Present  
Cllr Stirrup: Present  
Vacancy

#### **Harberton Councillors**

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

#### **Others**

D.Cllr McKay: Present  
C.Cllr Hodgson: Present  
Clerk Ms Radford: Present  
Members of the Public: 1

### **Public Session**

The Chair of Totnes and District Traffic and Transport Forum addressed the meeting. The Forum has adopted a new way of working, whereby teams work together to take forward projects depending on interest. Some matters that may be interesting to Harberton Parish cllrs include 20s plenty schemes, activated speed signs, school travel plans and active travel routes (for walking and wheeling). Importantly, since Devon County Council (DCC) has been under a new administration it is trying to find ways of working more in partnership with Parish and Town councils rather than responding negatively to any/all requests. To bring this forward, DCC has proposed a Community Protocol for working with Town and Parish Councils. The Traffic and Transport Forum has fed back the view that the protocol needs to be written as part of a collaborative process, so that all the parties have a chance to discuss it and understand it before the protocol is formalised. It's extremely likely that volunteer activity will be encouraged, but DCC should provide public liability insurance for all those volunteers. There are models elsewhere where that happens.

All Town and Parish Councils are encouraged to contribute and participate to whatever level is possible/desired. Working together can benefit everyone, particularly in saving any duplicated effort in solving the same challenges. If different parishes would take the lead on different topics, perhaps more could be done. Having greater impact on driving projects forward may have the added effect of being able to recruit and retain more councillors.

### **Agenda**

1. **Apologies** were noted above 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 Cllrs Morris and Camp declared an interest in item 6.2.1. application 0035/26/TCA. Both left the meeting during consideration of the item.
3. **Reports** for information from:
  - 3.1. County Councillor (C.Cllr) A written report will be emailed following the meeting.
    - 3.1.1. Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Consultation is open until 25<sup>th</sup> March.
    - 3.1.2. Budget The Fair Funding review has been disastrous for the rural districts, but DCC has had more funding than expected. An additional grant of £106,000 has been given for domestic abuse support. DCC has benefited from the Government's decision to refund Local Authority overspend on children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This equates to a £200m refund to DCC, which was borrowed against reserves. There will be a further overspend of £75m expected in the current budget, which will also be repaid before Central Government takes on SEND funding directly.
    - 3.1.3. Extreme Weather DCC is trying to adopt the practice of fixing potholes near others that have been reported; however it is noted that 'safety potholes' are repaired using a different funding pot than others less severe. The flood defence scheme proposed for Harberton has been delayed until more funding can be secured. due to it being a much more complicated (and therefore expensive) scheme than initially predicted.
    - 3.1.4. Emergency Planning DCC has been looking at new ways to develop trained 'Emergency Teams' to replace less formal voluntary arrangements. An 'Emergency Planning' meeting is taking place in Totnes.
    - 3.1.5. Littlehempston Active Travel Route is shortly going to planning.
    - 3.1.6. Slapton Line Officers are looking at options. It is uncertain whether Government funding will be available as when the prior grant was awarded, it was given on the basis that it was a 'one time grant' and would not be repeated. The MP has been actively involved in meetings exploring what can be done.
    - 3.1.7. Lack of Cashpoints in Totnes The local MP is doing what she can to manage the issue, following the departure of Totnes' last high street bank, Lloyds.
  - 3.2. District Councillor
    - 3.2.1. LGR Cllrs are encouraged to respond. A decision from Central Government is expected in June/July 2026. It's uncertain what impact the outcome of the consultation will have on the Government's decision.
    - 3.2.2. Budget The District Council has managed to balance the budget, despite the outcome of the fair funding review, that has impacted the District Council's income significantly. It was commented that the Government doesn't understand rural issues and delivering services in a rural area. Next year the Local Authority is expecting a £2m gap in the budget, with a similar 'best case scenario' gap expected in the transition year.

- 3.2.3. Council Plan is being reviewed within the context of LGR looking at priorities and where the Council should concentrate efforts, particularly if some projects have a longer lead in time than the life of the Council. The D.Cllr is looking to make as much impact on climate and biodiversity projects as possible within the next 18 months, before the funding is potentially reallocated.
- 3.2.4. Jackmans Lane Encampment A court order is in place, and the encampment will be evicted. Alternative accommodation will be offered.
- 3.2.5. Mud on the Road at Luscombe Cross This was raised with Highways, with an unsatisfactory response.

**RESOLVED:** That the information be noted

- 4. **Minutes** Consider approval of the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Harberton Parish Council 13<sup>th</sup> January 2026

**RESOLVED:** To sign the minutes as a correct record without amendments.

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

- 5.1. Snow Warden registration and training Cllr Hambly is stuck in a loop with DCC. The last email was asking for the snow plan. The Parish doesn't have one. **ACTION: Cllr Hambly** will research requirements for a snow plan and report back. **ACTION: Cllr Camp** to enquire on storage of grit. Cllr Palmer also volunteered to store grit if required.
- 5.2. Brockhills Cross Footway (Clerk) No update
- 5.3. Community Composting Scheme No update.
- 5.4. Parish Parks Site Visits (Cllrs Beamish and Stirrup) It was suggested that this coincide with Harberton's volunteer a volunteer day planned for February 21.
- 5.5. Parish Councillor's Email Addresses Cllrs Hambly and Beamish asked for technical help from fellow cllrs in setting up the email addresses.
- 5.6. Parish Lengthsman Update (Clerk) The Clerk has sought out available Chapter 8 courses for the potential Parish Lengthsham to take. There is considerable variation between them in terms of cost and content.

- RESOLVED:**
- i) **ACTION: The Clerk** seek advice from Devon County Highways as to the course available that best suits their needs.
  - ii) The Parish Council delegates financial approval to the Clerk, in liaison with the Chair and Chair of the Finance Committee, once hearing back from the contractor on available dates.
  - iii) To include a clause with the contractor that if fewer than 10 days are worked for the Parish Council, then the cost of the course should be refunded.
- 5.7. Defibrillator Update (Clerk) Community Heartbeat Trust have been chased to respond to the Parish Council's request for replacement pads for the Harberton defibrillator, and to investigate the fault in the Harbertonford defibrillator.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed that no quotation from other suppliers would be required and to go ahead with ordering the relevant parts once a reply has been received.

- 5.8. Harbertonford Bus Stop maintenance update (Clerk) No update. **ACTION: Cllr Bowley** agreed to make contact the potential volunteer to discuss the level of support they're willing to give in sprucing up the bus stop.

## 6. **Planning**

- 6.1. Consideration of new planning applications
  - 6.1.1. 0061/26/TCA Works to a Tree in a Conservation Area T7,T8,T9,T12: Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) - coppice to ground level due to extensive dieback at Brooklyn Bow Road Harbertonford **It was RESOLVED** to SUPPORT to the application.
  - 6.1.2. 0035/26/TCA Works to a Tree in a Conservation Area T1: Sycamore – fell. T2: Eucalyptus - crown reduction of up to 3m on all sides. T3: Weeping Willow - crown reduction of up to 2.5m on all sides. T4: Field Maple – crown reduction of up to 2.5m on all sides. T5: Aspen - reduce height to height of adjacent house gutter at 1 Victoria Cottages, Harberton. Cllrs Camp and Morris declared an interest and left the meeting. Cllr Davies took the chair. **It was RESOLVED** to SUPPORT the application.
- 6.2. Receive planning applications for information only
  - 6.2.1. 0171/26/PDM Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed change of use of two agricultural building to 2no dwellinghouses (Class C3) & for associated development (Class Q (a+b)) Barns At Sx 764 561, Diptford The application was noted with no comment.
- 6.3. Receive a report on planning or appeal decisions The clerk gave a verbal report on decisions of the local planning authority.
- 6.4. Receive a report on enforcement cases (for information only) It was reported that there have been no changes to the caseload since the last meeting. 16 cases remain listed.

## 7. **Monthly reports**

- 7.1. Finance Committee update No update
- 7.2. Sustainable Harbourne Valley update A subgroup meeting look at rivers and streams will be held at Daynes Farm on 21<sup>st</sup> February. New trustees have come on board following the recent AGM.
- 7.3. Neighbourhood Plan update It was reported that the Strategic Environment Assessment report had been received and reviewed by the Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (HNPSG). The

appraisal concludes that the Neighbourhood Plan performs favourably in sustainability terms, identifying 'broadly neutral' or 'minor positive' effects across all SEA themes. Having now been approved by HNPSG, the Environmental Report has been published on the Parish Council's website alongside the Regulation 14 version of the Neighbourhood Plan. This now being published sets the clock on the Regulation 14 consultation process, which will run for a period of 6 weeks, closing on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026. During this time parish residents, stakeholders and other interested parties can make comments on the draft plan, submitting comments either via an online form, by email, or by post. Cllrs were encouraged to respond to the consultation and help spread the word in the community. The HNPSG is putting up posters and fliers in the local area, social media and village circulars will be used to make residents aware. A community meeting is in planning, that will likely take place at Harbertonford CE Primary School on March 7 2026. All comments will then be reviewed by the HNPSG, who will make updates to a final version of the plan before submitting that to the Parish Council for review, ahead the final plan being submitted to South Hams District Council as the Local Planning Authority. The earliest this would happen would be in May. A query has arisen as to whether A Habitat Regulations Assessment is now required.

**RESOLVED:** i) If the HNP timeline requires the Parish Council to review the updated draft and associated papers in May, to hold an EGM for this purpose.

ii) **ACTION: The Clerk** was asked to make an enquiry with the District Council as to whether A Habitat Regulations Assessment is required.

7.4. Harberton Playing Field update A volunteer day will take place on 21<sup>st</sup> February. It was reported that fruit and nut trees have been planted in the playing field. A residential van had been on site in the car park. The owner had been challenged for depositing human waste in the hedgerows.

7.5. Harbertonford Play Area update Tree works took place in the park just before Christmas, and logs have all been taken. The rubber matting is being treated and pressure washed. The handrail has been re-instated.

7.6. Harberton ARK update The WhatsApp group is very active during periods of heavy rain. Residents have been very active in checking drains. There have been comments that the equipment in the emergency shed is not heavy enough. **ACTION: Cllr Bowley** volunteered to share a map of areas that would benefit from road sweeping with staff at the District Council.

7.7. Tree Warden Update **ACTION: Cllr Bowley** will share information re tree giveaway.

7.8. Clerk's update

7.8.1. Mud on Road The Clerk had been copied into correspondence between the D.Cllr and the County Neighbourhood Highways Officer concerning mud on the road at Luscombe Cross. The Clerk was informed that a Highways officer had visited the location and had commented that it is not of a level that meets DCC's deficit threshold. It had also been commented that the Environment Agency was in the area on an unrelated matter and raised no concerns about how the land is being managed.

**RESOLVED:** The Parish Council respond to the Highways Officer to check that DCC and the Environment Agency is in touch with the right farmers.

7.8.2. Flooding meeting The Clerk has been liaising with Devon Communities Together and Harbertonford residents in order to confirm a date for a flooding resilience meeting in Harbertonford.

8. **Potential shared gritting arrangements** It was reported that Cllr Morris had attended a meeting with representatives of Ashprington & Cornworthy, Blackawton and Dittisham Parish Councils to discuss a potential shared scheme in which a paid contractor would take the role of lead Snow Warden, allowing key routes in all five parishes to be gritted efficiently and in line with the broader Snow Warden policy. DCC has been asked to comment on whether it would be in support of the project as outlined, to confirm what qualifications any contractor and operatives would be required to have, and insurance arrangements. There would be a considerable cost of the grit, if not covered through the snow warden scheme. More information is required on the technical matter of how much, and what type, of grit would be required under different conditions.

## 9. Correspondence

9.1. E-Circulars for information Cllrs were informed that the Clerk receives the following regular e-circulars, that can be forwarded on request: Citizens Advice South Hams, Climate Change and Biodiversity Emergency, Devon Communities Together, Devon County Council Community News Round-up, Devon Home Choice, Emergency Planning newsletter, Friends of the Dart, Green Lanes Environmental Action Movement (GLEAM), Harberton Village Email, Healthwatch Devon, Information Commissioners Office, National Association of Local Councils Events newsletter, One Devon NHS Integrated Care Board, Parish Online, Rural Services Network, SLCC Membership, South Hams Society.

9.2. Items of correspondence for information

9.2.1. SLCC News Bulletin Cllrs were informed via the Society of Local Council Clerk's news bulletin that the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has confirmed the appropriate sum for the purposes of section 137(4)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 for parish and town councils in England for the financial year 2026/27. The new limit will be £11.60 per elector.

9.2.2. #06 2026 DALC E-bulletin Cllrs were informed that this e-bulletin provides information on where people who have been affected by recent flooding events can go for information. Devon County Council has [created a leaflet](#) that can be shared with affected residents.

9.2.3. Notification of Road Closure – Work Ref: SV001KR-CDF091 Moreleigh Road, Harbertonford Cllrs were informed that the Environment Agency have requested a road closure on the Moreleigh Road 24/02/2026

and 26/02/2026 to undertake ground investigation works in relation to the upcoming flood mitigation works in the village.

- 9.2.4. Community Action Group Lane TQ9 6EW Cllrs were informed of a letter jointly written to Highways from a group of residents that live along a common access lane to 11 properties in Tigley, Harberton TQ9 6EW, to which the Parish Council has been copied for information. The letter requests an immediate meeting with relevant authorities and the community group to discuss issues of the compromised road surfaces Tigley, following years of deterioration, leading to increased risk to people and property, an immediate survey of the works needed, and an authority funded 'community agreed' remediation plan.
- 9.2.5. Grill clearance in Harberton Cllrs were informed of correspondence from DCC Flood and Coastal Risk Management Environmental Sustainability Group, asking for information on current arrangements for management and clearance of the grills in Harberton. This is to support an assessment into what benefit might be gained from upgrading the various grills on the watercourse inlets around the village. The Clerk replied to confirm that there is not yet a Parish Lengthsman in place, and, having canvassed the view of Cllr Morris and members of Harberton Ark, it isn't clear who manages St Clements Terrace, but it is DCC in partnership with SHDC manage the Old Forge area of Harberton. A reply was received to comment that the local flood risk officer is not aware of current arrangements for grill clearance, and that a query has been raised with SHDC for further information. It was commented that from DCC's Flood and Coastal Risk Management team's experience, contracting a lengthsman for routine clearance is a wise move. Clearance in response to knowing a storm is on its way/clearing during a storm is best suited to be sat within the community volunteer network/flood group.
- 9.3. Items of correspondence for consideration
- 9.3.1. Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service Community Risk Management Plan engagement survey Cllrs are informed that the Fire and Rescue Service is beginning to develop a new 5 year plan and keen to collect as many views as possible through its [online survey](#). All recipients of the email are asked to display a poster and encourage participation.
- 9.3.2. Request for local insight on mobile phone coverage in Devon Parishes Cllrs were informed that Parish Councils across Devon are being asked by South West wifi business working on rural connectivity projects across Wales and the South West to help build a clearer, ground-level picture of mobile phone coverage in rural areas via an [online form](#) (html). This is not a sales message and there is no obligation or commitment at any stage.
- 9.3.3. Storm Chandra Flooding 26th - 27th January Devon County Council's Flood and Coastal Risk Management Team have asked for information about any areas affected by flooding due to Storm Chandra. The Council is asked for any information about the date/time and location that flooding occurred; If any properties were flooded internally (and the addresses of these properties, if known); Any key roads which were affected Photographs (if possible); Any other information deemed relevant. No councillors were aware of any properties or roads that had been flooded.
- 9.3.4. Totnes Clerk's Cluster Meeting Cllrs were reminded of the upcoming opportunity to network with other local Parish and Town councillors in the Totnes area on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March, 5 for 5.30pm start in the Guildhall, Totnes.

## 10. Finance

- 10.1. To note receipts and payments made between meetings
- Income 14/01/26 from Harberton Parish Hall for annual ground rent = £10 no VAT
- 10.2. To consider payments as per the February payment schedule
- Payment 2602\_1 to Cat Radford, payslip dated 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2026 includes Clerk salary £557.44, Neighbourhood Plan Salary at £64.32, overtime payment 2 of 3 at £227.06 = £849.02 no VAT
  - Payment 2602\_2 to Cat Radford, Clerk February expenses claim for mileage at £5.49 and broadband for February at £7.50 = £12.99 no VAT
  - Payment 2602\_3 HMRC Shipley for NI Payment incurred on February Salary ESTIMATED = £64.80 no VAT
  - Payment 2602\_4 to Harberton Parish Hall for Room hire for the meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan 3<sup>rd</sup> February 19.00 – 21.00 total of 2 hrs @ 7.00 per hour = £14 no VAT
  - Payment 2602\_5 to Citizens Advice South Hams for 2025/2026 Grant approved at the meeting of December 9 2026. = £300 no VAT
  - Payment 2602\_6 to Harbertonford CE Primary School and Nursery PTFA for Community Benefit Fund Grant approved at meeting of January 13 2026 = £437.98 no VAT
  - Payment 2602\_7 EXPECTED Direct Debit to Lloyds bank for February banking charge = £4.25 no VAT
  - Payment 2602\_8 to Jan Finch for annual Harbertonford Allotment Rent. = £500 no VAT

- RESOLVED**
- The information at 11.1 be noted
  - To make payments as per the January payment schedule.

## 11. Date and location of next meeting 7:30pm Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2026, Harberton Parish Hall