

## **HARBERTON PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Harberton Parish Council  
at 7.30pm on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at Harberton Parish 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: Present  
Cllr Morris: Present  
Cllr Williams: Present

#### **Others**

D.Cllr McKay: Present  
C.Cllr Hodgson: Present  
Clerk Ms Radford: Present  
Members of the Public: 5

### **Public Session**

- A member of the public (MoP) who attended the Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 consultation meeting at Harbertonford Primary School thanked the team for all the work they are doing to prepare the plan.
- The Parish Council was asked if it could do anything to discourage 4x4 drivers from deliberately off-roading up the steep banks in the Dorsley area instead of following the roadway. Doing so is drawing mud down the lane, preventing access for smaller vehicles, preventing water from running off the road and blocking buddle holes. The Police have been informed. **ACTION: Cllr Morris** to clarify ownership through a land registry search, and if the land belongs to Devon County Council as suspected, for **The Clerk** to contact Devon County Highways suggest tree planting and/or installation of concrete blocks on the bank and verges to discourage use.
- Two residents attended to refer to the letter written to Devon County Council (DCC) as noted in the previous meeting, concerned with the poor road condition of the lane serving Tigley. See item 10.3.6. Cllrs confirmed they saw the full correspondence at the previous meeting. The residents have not had any response from DCC and asked for support from the Parish Council to progress the query. It was noted that the Clerk had raised the matter to the County Councillor (C.Cllr). Residents have requested that the 18 qualifying potholes are fixed, with an additional 34 areas that will require attention at some time. Cllrs advised that the residents keep putting pressure on the County Council through letter writing and the 'Report It' function of the Devon County Council website. Cllrs expressed concern about the impact of value to properties served by the lane, maintenance of the railway, and access for emergency services. Residents have asked Highways to undertake a site visit.

### **Agenda**

1. **Apologies** were received as 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 No interests were declared on items on the agenda.
3. **Reports** for information from:
  - 3.1. County Councillor (C.Cllr)
    - 3.1.1. Budget DCC is looking to make £39m of budget savings, despite the increase in funds from the Government for spending on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) as reported in the previous meeting. The C.Cllr commented that the Government does not recognise the amount of poverty in some areas of Devon. Devon also has more miles of roads than other counties; there are too many potholes and not the money to spend on them. Complaints have been received about the quality of works, and repairs are not lasting. It was commented that utility companies do not always repair roads to an adequate standard when finishing works. The C.Cllr confirmed that DCC always follow these issues up and they are not repaired at the cost to the taxpayer. Having listened to concerns the C.Cllr agreed that the quality of road repairs is not good enough. Some additional funding has been secured, which has been allocated to highways maintenance and to county library services.
    - 3.1.2. Pot Holes at Tigley The Highways Dashboard shows that there are repairs due in Tigley, but not to the levels raised by the residents.
    - 3.1.3. TRAYE Conference C.Cllr encouraged cllrs to attend.
    - 3.1.4. Emergency Meeting C.Cllr encouraged cllrs to look at Staverton's emergency plan as a model document.
  - 3.2. District Councillor (D.Cllr)
    - 3.2.1. Council Plan South Hams District Council (SHDC) is realigning its Council Plan in light of Local Government Organisation, and looking ahead to an expected deficit in next year's budget.
    - 3.2.2. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Changes to the NPPF will affect neighbourhood Plans, particularly in relation to housing allocation. Neighbourhood Plans will not longer be able to limit housing through boundary allocations. The housing allocation number is not something that a Neighbourhood Plan can limit. All the other policies as part of a Neighbourhood Plan stand firm.
    - 3.2.3. Local Government Organisation The D.Cllr hopes that the Parish Council responds to the consultation. The Council is seeking to devolve as many assets as possible. It was not thought that there were any assets in Harberton Parish to transfer.

3.2.4. Encampment enforcement The D.Cllr has been managing public responses to the evictions. The Council has generally been in support of caravan dwellers and has done what it could to support residents. This is a particular case that has been in process for 5 years and was a cause of concern in the community. Cllrs noted that the site is in process of being tidied up.

4. **Minutes** Consider approval of the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Harberton Parish Council 10<sup>th</sup> February 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 (Cllrs Hambly) It was noted that there would be a place to store grit at a farm in the Parish.
- 5.2. Brockhills Cross Footway (Clerk) No update.
- 5.3. Community Composting Scheme It was noted that a community composting workshop is being advertised in the Parish in March, organised by Sustainable Harbourne Valley.
- 5.4. Parish Parks Site Visits (Cllrs Beamish and Stirrup) It was reported that site visits had been undertaken and some discussion underway as to what financial support could be offered to the parks by SHDC.
- 5.5. Parish Councillor's Email Addresses Cllr Paine offered to give support to those cllrs finding difficulty in setting up Parish Council gmail accounts. The Clerk noted that it is very likely that it will be a requirement for Parish Councils to have .gov emails in coming years.
- 5.6. Parish Lengthsman Update (Clerk) DCC Highways has advised the Clerk that the Chapter 8 courses at Notter Bridge would best meet DCC guidelines: *if work is carried out on the live carriageway (open to traffic) then those carrying out the works must have undertaken their SWQR Q1 Signing, Lighting and Guarding qualification (or equivalent) at a ratio of 1:2 (one qualified worker to 2 unqualified)*. The Clerk has had no replies to emails to the potential lengthsman, but will seek to book training as soon as possible.
- 5.7. Defibrillator Update (Clerk) It was reported that replacement pads for the Harberton defibrillator have been ordered. No further responses to queries about the status of the Parish Council's Service Level Agreement have been received. It was noted that new defibrillators have been installed in Harbertonford, not by the Parish Council.
- 5.8. Harbertonford Bus Stop maintenance update (Cllr Bowley) Ongoing.

6. **Planning**

6.1. Consideration of new planning applications

6.1.1. 0412/26/HHO Householder application for proposed construction of a porch at Dairy Barn, Harberton

**RESOLVED:** To SUPPORT the application without comments.

6.1.2. 0342/26/CLE Certificate of lawfulness to confirm lawful commencement of planning permission 23/1552/12/F Development Site At Mill Meadow Harbertonford

**RESOLVED:** No comment.

6.2. Receive a report on planning or appeal decisions The clerk gave a verbal report on decisions of the local planning authority.

6.3. Receive a report on enforcement cases (for information only) It was reported that there are 17 open enforcement cases in the Parish. One additional case relating to an alleged unauthorised storage container was added in February 2026.

7. **Monthly reports**

7.1. Finance Committee update Next meeting is due to take place 7<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

7.2. Sustainable Harbourne Valley update Several events are planned for spring and summer.

7.3. Neighbourhood Plan update The Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held a public facing meeting at Harbertonford CE Primary school the previous week as part of the Regulation 14 consultation. Several members of the public attended from across the Parish. It was commented that this was a helpful meeting with residents bringing actionable and constructive comments in response to the draft plan. Comments will be compiled with comments from Statutory Consultees and any further comments collated through the online questionnaire. SHDC has been in touch with reference to changes in the NPPF and the potential impact on the Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan. A meeting with the Neighbourhood Plan Officer will be arranged to discuss this. The end of the consultation process closes on 23<sup>rd</sup> March. Cllrs are encouraged to respond. The Plan will be redrafted in light of comments received. The updated document will be brought to the Parish Council for comment before being submitted to the Local Authority before regulation 16 starts. Cllr Stirrup has offered to attend the upcoming NPPF briefing being held by the District Council.

7.4. Harberton Playing Field update The working day will be rearranged following poor weather on the advertised date. A meeting has been held with the D.Cllr to discuss options for investment.

7.5. Harbertonford Play Area update It was reported a successful working day took place in February, where the willow sculpture was pruned, and safety surfaces were power washed. The sign announcing the rules of the park needs to be replaced.

7.6. Harberton ARK update See Clerk's report re update on West Country Rivers Trust below.

7.7. Tree Warden Update No update.

7.8. Clerk's update

- 7.8.1. Westcountry Rivers Trust Report Cllrs were informed that the Environment Agency (EA) and Devon County Council (DCC) has been working with Westcountry Rivers Trust (WRT) to develop Natural Flood Management (NFM) options in Harberton and Harbertonford. WRT made initial engagement with landowners across the catchments to gauge interest in NFM, land management, and their openness to options within schemes such as Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI), and Countryside Stewardship. WRT produced an internal report for project partners which summarises the current condition and character of two catchments: Harberton West and Yeolands Stream in Harbertonford, outlining feasible NFM and land management interventions. The internal reports present conclusions with potential next steps. The EA and DCC will not be releasing the full report at this stage, as it shows all possible interventions, which will not all be taken forwards to delivery. DCC and the EA are now working with WRT to take these recommendations forwards and develop some preferred options for NFM delivery, whilst continuing landowner engagement.. A short briefing document has been prepared that can be shared with residents, which includes a comment that it is important to note that there is currently no specified timeline for delivery or established funding. These works are still exploratory and will be subject to gaining the necessary funding and approvals.
- 7.8.2. Open Forum on Flooding: Harbertonford 12<sup>th</sup> March 2026 Cllrs were encouraged to attend the workshop, which is being facilitated by Devon Communities Together.

**8. Annual meeting dates** Consider setting dates for Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and the Annual Parish Meeting.

- RESOLVED:**
- i) to hold the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council at 7pm on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2026, immediately before the May meeting of the Parish Council.
  - ii) To hold the Annual Meeting of the Parish at 7:30pm on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2026, with a simple agenda inviting reports from local community organisations.

**9. Devon Local Government Reorganisation Proposals** *to discuss proposals ahead of consultation closure on March 26 2026* Cllrs invited comment from the C.Cllr and D.Cllr on the time line. It was commented that DCC has asked the Government to rescind the proposal, having calculated that the reorganisation will cost in the region of £40m. Cllrs who had read the proposals commented that all options were likely to be problematic.

**10. Correspondence**

- 10.1. 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.
- 10.2. Items of correspondence for information
- 10.2.1. Temporary Traffic Notice MORELEIGH ROAD (TTRO2667939) Cllrs were informed of an application of a road closure between 18 – 20 March to enable ground investigation works on Moreleigh Road, in relation to the upcoming flood mitigation works in Harbertonford. A signed diversion will be in place.
- 10.3. Items of correspondence for consideration
- 10.3.1. Lights and Puddles It was noted that a resident has written to Cllr Camp to comment about plants and vegetation an area in Riverdale, Harbertonford, causing puddles when it rains and making it difficult to use the paths. It was commented that the matter is worsened by the lamppost on the edge of the square not working. The resident also comments that parking issues cause problems for wheelchair users, where cars and camper vans often park on the pavement. It was reported that the resident had been advised by Cllr Camp to use the Devon County Highways 'report it' website, as most of the issues raised were relevant to DCC. It was also suggested to speak with residents or post a message on Village Life about considerate parking, and to raise with the PCSO.
- 10.3.2. Sheep Cllrs were informed that a resident has been directed to the Parish Council by the Police, having raised the issue of livestock on the road in the Eastleigh Cross to Sandwell area. The resident commented that the farmer is doing nothing to contain the sheep, causing a hazard to traffic and themselves. The resident asks if there is anything that can be done to force the farmer to stock proof his fields or any legislation that could be used to prosecute him. It was noted that the Parish Council has no powers with respect to any landowners maintaining boundaries, but that cllrs have spoken directly with the farmer and understands that a fencing contractor is expected to replace the stock fence.
- 10.3.3. All Town & Parish Council Briefing: NPPF and its Relationship with Neighbourhood Plans Cllrs were informed of a briefing hosted by the District Council on March 12 to address reforms to the national planning system and the impact on how planning applications are determined locally. Huge increases in housing numbers handed down by government have left a lot of planning authorities vulnerable to speculative development as locally adopted policies are given less weight in decision making. By intentionally undermining adopted local and neighbourhood plans, government intend to create a 'boost' to the supply of housing across the country. Despite the District Council trying to protect the integrity of Neighbourhood Plan policies for as long as possible, emerging decisions from the Planning Inspectorate and the High Court are clear that certain Neighbourhood Plan policies can no longer be given the weight that either the Local Authority, or local

communities would like. The virtual briefing to Town and Parish Councils to explain how changes to national policy will impact certain local and Neighbourhood Plan policies, and what the options are in the short to medium term. **ACTION: Cllr Stirrup** agreed to attend.

- 10.3.4. TRAYE Conference Cllrs were informed of an invitation to attend the TRAYE Youth Conference on April 13 2026 at Stover Country Park. As TRAYE celebrates its 10 year anniversary, the conference offers an opportunity to reflect on the impact of rural youth work across nine towns and parishes and to look ahead to how TRAYE can continue strengthening support for young people in South Devon. All proceeds from ticket will go directly towards supporting TRAYE youth clubs and young people.
- 10.3.5. Bus Turning Area in Harberton The council has received three emails raising concern about parking in the bus turning area in Harberton. Emails have been received by two residents and by TallyHo! that operates the bus service. Since the agenda was published, two further emails have been received directly from the driver, with photographs. Emails note that the number of cars parking opposite the bus stop in Harberton make it very difficult for the bus service to and from Totnes to turn around. The condition of the road is causing the vehicles to ground out and the consistent parking on the turning circle is making it impossible to turn around. Some of the vehicles which have served the village for numerous years are unable to go down at all because of the damage being caused. The email from the bus driver informs the Parish Council that he had to reverse the vehicle from the centre of the village back to the first Harbertonford road, and the drivers are collectively calling for something to be done. TallyHo! is hoping to find a solution other than withdrawing the service from the area. Emails from the public also comment that the extra parking along Preston Farm can make it difficult to get the bus or other larger vehicles through the corner of the road before the bus shelter. Those parking on the bus stop itself create a hazard for children getting on or off school buses.
- RESOLVED:** i) **ACTION: Cllr Stirrup** to post a notice on social media to discourage bus stop parking.  
ii) **ACTION: Cllr Morris** to clean the bus turning circle signs  
iii) **ACTION: The Clerk** to forward emails from Tallyho! to the village circular.  
iv) The C.Cllr agreed to pursue a parking restriction (double yellow lines).
- 10.3.6. Road in our parish Last month, cllrs were copied into correspondence to Devon Highways from residents of Tigley with regard to the condition of the road, making access hazardous and impossible for smaller vehicles. **ACTION: The Clerk** to write to Devon County Highways in support of the residents, with particular concern about access for emergency vehicles.

## 11. Finance

- 11.1. To consider arrangements for 2025/26 Internal Audit The Clerk has been in touch with the internal auditor contracted for the 2024/25 audit in preparation for the 2025/26 audit.
- 11.2. To consider 2025/26 Grant Request from St Andrew's Church Cllrs were informed that a request to support cemetery maintenance had been made. End of year accounts had been provided.
- 11.3. To note receipts and payments made between meetings Cllrs were informed that £31,087.52 had been transferred from Barclays to the Parish Council's Lloyds account on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2026 as the account had been closed by Barclays due to inactivity.
- 11.4. To consider payments as per the March payment schedule
- 11.4.1. Payment 2603\_1 to Cat Radford, payslip dated 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2026 includes Clerk salary £557.44, Neighbourhood Plan Salary at £64.32, overtime payment 3 of 3 at £227.27 = £849.03 no VAT
- 11.4.2. Payment 2603\_2 to Cat Radford, Clerk March expenses claim for mileage at £23.04, parking at £3 and broadband for March at £7.50 = £33.54 no VAT
- 11.4.3. Payment 2603\_3 HMRC Shipley for NI Payment incurred on March Salary ESTIMATED = £64.80 no VAT
- 11.4.4. Payment 2603\_4 to Harberton Parish Hall for Room hire for the meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan 3<sup>rd</sup> March 19.00 – 21.00 and Parish Hall on 10<sup>th</sup> March 19:00 – 21:00 total of 4 hrs @ 7.00 per hour = £28 no VAT
- 11.4.5. Payment 2603\_5 to Harbertonford Village Hall for hall hire 1<sup>st</sup> April – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026: 6 x full council meetings at £25 each; 4 x Finance Meetings at £10 each and 1 x Neighbourhood Plan Meeting at £10 each = £200 no VAT
- 11.4.6. Payment 2603\_6 to St Andrew's Church PCC towards cemetery maintenance in 2025/26 = £550 no VAT
- 11.4.7. Payment 2603\_7 to Birbeck Landscapes Playing field 14 cuts @ £60.00 per cut = £840 no VAT
- 11.4.8. Payment 2603\_8 EXPECTED Direct Debit to Lloyds bank for March banking charge = £4.25 no VAT

- RESOLVED:** i) That the auditor, Heather Heelis, is a competent auditor and being independent of the Parish Council meets the requirements to provide auditing services to the Parish Council in 2026.  
ii) To make a grant of £550 to St Andrew's Church, Harberton to support upkeep of the cemetery.  
iii) Receipts and payments between meetings were noted.  
iv) To make all payments as per the payment schedule.

## 12. Date and location of next meeting Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2026.

Meeting closed at 21:15