

HARBERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes for the ordinary meeting of Harberton Parish Council
at 7.30pm on Tuesday 12th May 2026 at Harberton Parish Hall

In attendance

Harbertonford Councillors

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

Harberton Councillors

Cllr Camp: Present
Cllr Hambly: Present
Cllr Paine: Apologies
Cllr Morris: Present
Cllr Williams: Resigned
Vacancy

Others

D.Cllr McKay: Present
C.Cllr Hodgson: Present
Clerk Ms Radford: Present
Members of the Public: 3

Public Session

i) A Member of the Public (MoP) commented that they had written a letter to the Parish Council that was due for discussion at item 10.2. Depending on the outcome of the discussion of item 8.3, this may not be relevant.

1. **Apologies** were received as above. Cllrs Williams' resignation was noted.

RESOLVED: To sanction apologies

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) Cllrs had received a written report by email. The following matters were raised:
 - 3.1.1. Devon County Highways (Highways) All hands are to the mill to repair as many potholes as possible whilst the weather is good. It was queried why some individual potholes are being repaired when others on the same road are left. It was commented that if the team have enough time and materials on board to mend additional potholes they will be done, otherwise they will be marked up and logged for a second visit. Devon County Council (DCC) is promoting the Road Warden Scheme to encourage voluntary support from the community to undertake repairs. A booklet describing the scheme has been circulated for information.
 - 3.1.2. Library Consultation It was commented that the recent consultation was not in place with the intention to trim services, but to look for ways to develop the libraries offer to make it more attractive to all parts of the local community and therefore more sustainable. The Council is now reviewing the outcome of the consultation.
 - 3.1.3. People's Emergency Film A 45 minute film made for the briefing to the Houses of Parliament about the latest evidence on the nature and climate crisis and the impact on everyday life has been shown to the District Council and now to DCC. Parish and Town Councils are being encouraged to host their own screenings, with introduction and opportunity to talk about the issues afterwards.
- 3.2. District Councillor
 - 3.2.1. Planning It was reported that from September '26 the planning system will change radically. All planning applications will be decided by Officers with only approximately 20 applications per year being considered by Development Management Committee (DMC). All refused applications will be immediately referred to the inspector for review. The D.Cllr commented this is motivated by Central Government's view that DMCs are putting a break on housing developments going forward. The D.Cllr is of the view that this undermines the democratic process. New annual housing targets will double, without making any additional provision for affordable housing. The D.Cllr will no longer have the power to call applications in for consideration by the DMC. There are lots of questions about the number of applications that will be referred to inspectors, and whether the inspectors have the resources to deal with them.
 - 3.2.2. Ford Farm OPA In response to cllr questions, the D.Cllr confirmed that the query he will raise to the DMC on Ford Farm concerns whether there has been adequate risk management in relation to South West Water's infrastructure in being able to accept 30 beds.
 - 3.2.3. Local Plan A new local plan process has been launched. Undertaking this process will enable to District Council to build an evidence based on which to challenge the new target housing numbers. The Local Plan will gather all the evidence on whether these numbers can be achieved, either through availability of land or because of capacity of local infrastructure.
 - 3.2.4. Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) The Local Plan will not be completed before Local Government Reorganisation. Whilst no-one yet knows how the Unitary landscape will develop, there is a duty to co-operate, which will enable any affected Local Plans to merge through collaboration.
 - 3.2.5. Leisure centres New managers are now in place. It has been a difficult transition which has come at a considerable cost to the District Council, when budget forecasts for the next financial year are already poor. The Deputy Leader of the Council has done an incredible job to manage the transition without disruption to the public or employees.

4. Minutes

Consider approval of the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Harberton Parish Council 14th April 2026

RESOLVED: To sign the minutes as a correct record with minor amendments.

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 the process is advancing, slowly.
- 5.2. Brockhills Cross Footway (Clerk) No update.
- 5.3. Parish Councillor's Email Addresses No update.
- 5.4. Parish Lengthsman Update (Clerk) No update.
- 5.5. Defibrillator Update (Clerk) No update.
- 5.6. Harbertonford Bus Stop maintenance update No update.
- 5.7. Woodland Road Dog Waste Bin No update.
- 5.8. Bus turning circle update No update.

The Clerk would welcome working party to progress the issues above.

RESOLVED: To note the information.

It was RESOLVED to take the agenda items out of order. Item 8.3 'Neighbourhood Plan Update' was taken first, before returning to the agenda in numeric sequence.

- 6. Parish Councillor Vacancies** It was confirmed that the District Council have received no requests to hold an election, and therefore the Parish Council can move on to co-option.

RESOLVED:

- i) **ACTION: The Clerk** to circulate a poster to cllrs that could be printed as fliers and given directly to possible interested parties to encourage them to stand.
- ii) To circulate a call for councillors via Harbertonford Village Life and the Harberton Village Circular.

7. Planning

7.1. Consideration of new planning applications

- 7.1.1. 0145/26/LBC Listed Building Consent for reinstatement of present window back to door at High Barn Harberton **It was RESOLVED** to SUPPORT the application.
- 7.1.2. 1017/26/TCA T1: Conifer – fell, suppressing adjacent T2 Turkey Oak. T2: Turkey Oak – crown raise by up to 5m from ground level at Pear Tree Court Old Road Harbertonford **It was RESOLVED** to SUPPORT the application.
- 7.2. Receipt of Development Management Committee Notification
- 7.2.1. 0828/25/OPA Land at SX 780 585, Meadow Close, Harberton will be considered by the Development Management Committee on 11 June following a site visit on Monday 8 June. **It was RESOLVED** that the Parish Council would not send a representative.
- 7.3. Receive a report on planning or appeal decisions No update.
- 7.4. Receive a report on enforcement cases (for information only) A hard copy of the caseload was circulated amongst cllrs for their information.

8. Monthly reports

- 8.1. Finance Committee update No update
- 8.2. Sustainable Harbourne Valley update It was reported that the AGM had been held in the previous week. Finances are fairly robust following receipt of a grant to build owl and bat boxes. Recent talks have been interesting and well attended. The group's activities are vibrant and going well.
- 8.3. Neighbourhood Plan update Cllr Stirrup provided the following report:
 - It was proposed that two representative members of the Steering Group and working groups attend the meeting being convened by the MP for South Devon to discuss the role of Neighbourhood Plans in Planning Policy.
 - Following receipt of the Local Planning Authority's comments on the regulation 14 draft of the Neighbourhood Plan and a follow up meeting with Strategic Planning Officers, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) will not hold a meeting in June, as it waits for the decision of the Development Management Committee on the planning application on the Ford Farm site, for reasons described below.
 - Strategic Planning Officers advised the NPSG that it may find it challenging to move the plan forward without allocating sites for development. Officers wanted to be positive and support the NPSG in the arguments that it could make to justify non allocation. It was noted that public opposition to sites is not considered sufficient grounds, nor is the narrow road network. The NPSG could make an argument of lack of capacity of SWW's water treatment plant. Confirmation on SWW's position will be required and the NPSG is considering its approach. The D.Cllr commented that lack of capacity in the infrastructure is an issue across the whole district and SWW has a duty to connect. Queries were raised by cllrs as to whether justifying lack of allocation through lack of infrastructure could be viewed as being anti-development. Steering Group and Working Group members disagreed, as if additional capacity in the infrastructure were provided, there wouldn't be the same concerns about development.
 - It has been suggested by Officers that the NPSG consider undertaking another call for sites. The NPSG does not believe this is in the interests of the Parish, as it would delay progress of the plan significantly, and bring additional costs as a site options appraisal and additional reports would be required.

- Should the live planning application at Ford Farm be approved by Development Management Committee the issue of allocation would be taken out of the NPSG's hands, as those housing figures would contribute towards Harberton's indicative housing target. It was noted that the policies in the plan relating to the design and build of housing would be applied to any new development at that site, or any further sites that came forward within the lifetime of the plan.
 - Due to expected increase in housing targets countrywide, it is expected that all Neighbourhood Plans will need to be updated in the next 2 years to identify sites that could bring forward those numbers. It was noted that should this iteration of the Neighbourhood Plan pass examination, the review process will be much simpler than starting from scratch.
 - Whilst awaiting the outcome of the Development Management Committee's decision on the Ford Farm OPA, the NPSG will continue review of Regulation 14 comments received from statutory consultees, members of the public and landowners/agents, and begin undertaking work to revise policy wording.
 - It is expected that an updated draft of the plan taking all comments into account will come to the Parish Council in September '26.
- 8.4. Harberton Playing Field Association (HPFA) update The contractor that cuts the main field has undertaken a third cut of the play park area for a small fee. Volunteers now only need tidy up the edges. The big mower has been serviced and the HPFA is glad of the upcoming annual grant from the Parish Council to cover these costs. Whilst a temporary repair is planned for the roof of the shipping container, the HPFA is considering purchasing a new container as the items being stored in there are suffering in wet conditions. It was suggested that Devon Communities Together be approached to discuss a grant application that could contribute to the cost of the container as a 'flood defences/emergency store'. Upgrades are being made to the fencing line between the main field and car park. Cllr Camp is supporting the installation of this through loan of time and equipment. The Devon Air Ambulance sign will be installed at the same time.
- 8.5. Harbertonford Play Area update No update.
- 8.6. Harberton ARK update It was noted that land agents and owners have had meetings with Westcountry Rivers Trust, support plans for more natural flood mitigation measures.
- 8.7. Tree Warden Update No update.
- 8.8. Clerk's update No update.
9. **Annual Parish Meeting** It was commented that reports given by community groups in the Parish shows the sheer volume of activities that take place, and how uplifting it is to see how many volunteers give their time to community. There was general support for the concept of a 20mph speed limit on the A381, up to the primary school and along Bow Road. The C.Cllr commented that DCC needs evidence that atleast 50% of the local community support implementation of lower speed restrictions. The D.Cllr offered to initiate a petition that could open up engagement door to door as well as being available through meetings or at local amenities.
10. **Document review** required as part of annual audit
- 10.1. Review of Statement of Internal Control was reviewed and no changes made.
- 10.2. Review of Parish Council Risk Assessment was reviewed and no changes made.
- 10.3. Receipt of Grants and Proof of Need Summary 2025/26 It was noted that the Clerk has produced a document showing grants given and received within the financial year, which will be posted on the website.
- 10.4. Confirmation of bank signatory arrangements Remove Nick from Lloyds. Add Tania as signatory on the account. Following Cllr Williams' resignation it was agreed to remove Cllr Williams as a signatory from the Lloyds account and replace with Cllr Paine. Cllrs Beamish and Camp will remain signatories. The Clerk is a signatory for the purpose of setting up payments and liaising with the bank. The Barclays account is now closed.
- 10.5. Approval of Standing Orders and Direct Debits It was agreed to continue to pay the Clerk by monthly standing order. The only other direct debit is to the Information Commission's Officer, to benefit for a discount from the annual fee.
- 10.6. Review of protocol on recordings of meetings was reviewed and no changes made.
11. **Correspondence**
- 11.1. E-Circulars for information Cllrs were advised of the regular circulars received by the Clerk, who can forward any of interest.
- 11.2. Items of correspondence for information
- 11.2.1. Surface Dressing Programme 2026 - Totnes & Dartington Division Cllrs were informed that sites for 2026 include Bennetts Cross to Brockhill, Harberton (Parish) and Hernaford Cross to Spanish Lane End, Halwell and Moreleigh (Parish).
- 11.2.2. TTRO2669757 On Site Notice Temporary Traffic Notice - VARIOUS ROADS Cllrs were informed that roads will be closed for road dressing between Hernaford Cross to Spanish Lane End and Morleigh Road for up to three days within the period 11-15 May 2026. Local signs will be installed to give residents atleast 7 days notice.
- 11.2.3. DALC #21 E Bulletin Cllrs were informed that this bulletin includes a link to a recording of the recent Connect Event about 'clustering'. The session brought together examples from councils already working collaboratively, highlighting how clusters can take many forms - from small, informal groups to larger networks involving councillors, clerks and officers. A link to the recording on the DALC website.

11.2.4. Highways Assembly 6 May 10am – 1pm Cllrs are informed that a digital copy of the 'Handbook for Highways' launched at the Highways Assembly event on 6 May has been circulated to all Parish and Town Councils. A copy can be forwarded to cllrs on request.

11.3. Items of correspondence for consideration

11.3.1. 20260414 Grant of Support Harberton Playing Fields Association (HPFA) has made its formal request for a grant of £1000 as budgeted in the Parish Council's 2026/27 financial year to support maintenance projects in the play park.

11.3.2. Meeting to discuss planning policy (Case Ref CV21972) Caroline Voaden MP has invited an open meeting with other South Hams Town and Parish Councils to discuss the role of Neighbourhood Plans in Planning Policy. The meeting is called following the MP's awareness that many Town and Parish Councils are unhappy that the Neighbourhood Plans they worked so hard to put together are being disregarded in planning decisions. The MP's view is that development should be community-led, and that local authorities are best placed to know what developments are needed in their area, not central government. Each Council is welcome to send a maximum of two representatives, providing names by email ahead of the event. 13:45 – 15:15 on Thursday 11 June 2026 at Halwell and Morleigh Community Hall.

11.3.3. Ford Farm 0828-25-OPA. Re-affirmation of PC position A member of the public had requested that the Parish Council submit the following statement to the District Council's Development Management Committee ahead of its meeting of 11 June 2026: *'The Parish Council re-affirms its decision to oppose this OPA. Furthermore, the Neighbourhood Plan will state that this site will not to be allocated for development'*.

RESOLVED: i) To note items 11.1 and 11.2 for information.

ii) to approve a £1000 grant to Harberton Playing Field Association

iii) that Anne Watson and Jo Poulton attend the meeting held by the MP to discuss planning policy, and report back to the next meeting of the Parish Council.

iv) that the Parish Council will write to the District Council ahead of the June meeting of the Development Management Committee: *"The Parish Council reaffirms its previous statements on planning application reference 0828/25/OPA as follows:*

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."*

12. Finance

12.1. To note receipts and payments made between meetings There were none.

12.2. To consider payments as per the May payment schedule

12.2.1. Payment 2605_1 to Cat Radford, payslip dated 22nd May 2026 includes Clerk salary £557.44 and Neighbourhood Plan Salary at £64.32= £621.76 no VAT

12.2.2. Payment 2605_2 to Cat Radford, Clerk May expenses claim for mileage at £5.58, and broadband for May at £7.50 = £13.08 no VAT

12.2.3. Payment 2605_3 HMRC Shipley for NI Payment incurred on May Salary ESTIMATED = £30.71 no VAT

12.2.4. Payment 2605_4 to Harberton Parish Hall for meeting for 2 hr meeting of Neighbourhood Plan Committee on 11 May and 2 hr meeting of Parish Council on 12 May 2026 @ £7 per hour = £28 no VAT

12.2.5. Payment 2605_5 to Harberton Playing Fields Association for 2026/27 contribution to costs = £1000 no VAT

12.2.6. Payment 2605_6 EXPECTED Lloyds Bank for banking service charge = £4.25 no VAT

RESOLVED: To approve all payments above.

13. Date and location of next meeting Tuesday 9th June 2026 at Harbertonford Village Hall.

Meeting closed at 21:05.