

HARBERTON PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT minutes for the ordinary meeting of Harberton Parish Council
at 7.30pm on Tuesday 8 September 2026 at Harberton Parish Hall

In attendance

Harbertonford Councillors

Cllr Beamish: Present
Cllr Bowley: Present
Cllr Davies: Absent
Cllr Finch: Present
Cllr Palmer: Present
Cllr Stirrup: Present

Harberton Councillors

Cllr Camp: Present
Cllr Day: Present
Cllr Hambly: Present
Cllr Paine: Present
Cllr Morris: Present
Vacancy

Others

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

Public Session .

- i) The applicant of the Planning Application on the agenda attended the meeting to introduce the application and to answer any queries.

Agenda

1. Apologies were received as above.

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 Cllr Paine declared a personal interest in the planning application under consideration at 7.1.1. Cllr Paine left the room whilst the item was being considered.

3. Reports for information from:

- 3.1. County Councillor (c.cllr) The c.cllr had circulated a joint report for July and August by email.
 - 3.1.1. Flooding Grants The c.cllr apologised for misleading cllrs at the last meeting. The c.cllr had mistakenly understood that flood grants referred to in literature were available to applications from individual households or landowners, when actually it refers to grants to which Devon County Council (DCC) is the applicant. DCC is seeking funding to install new, wider, piping in Harberton in order to manage flood risk to properties.
 - 3.1.2. Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) It was noted that the Government has announced that Local Government Reorganisation will be paused for the meantime. It was commented that had DCC pursued a judicial review, this would have focused on the public consultation and that the government's preferred option was the least favoured choice from the public consultation. It was noted that ward divisions would have changed. All now await the outcome of the LGR review for clarity.
 - 3.1.3. Combined County Authority (CCA) Scrutiny Committee Regardless of the status of LGR, Devon and Torbay still remain a 'Combined County Authority', having taken this step a year ago, and has become the authority for public transport services and housing. Plymouth City Council has expressed interest in joining that combined authority and a consultation will be opened soon. The c.cllr believes this is a positive step, particularly if CCA comes together as a mayoral authority. The c.cllr has questions on what benefits there would be to becoming a mayoral authority, what funding will come into the region, how it would be spent and what the vulnerabilities are.
 - 3.1.4. Rural Devon Deprivation Partnership The c.cllr reported that they are working with Devon Communities Together looking at health service delivery and services delivered through the VCSE sector.
 - 3.1.5. Emergency Briefing Film It was commented that the film has been positively received at local screenings, and all parishes are encouraged to hold their own screenings.
- 3.2. District Councillor (d.cllr) The d.cllr had sent notes on the following issues in his absence:
 - 3.2.1. LGR and Elections The d.cllr had forwarded a letter from the Minister for Local Government, Devolution and Regional Growth to advise that work on implementing LGR should cease until the Government has conducted a review. Elections due to take place in May 2027 will proceed, but on existing boundaries.
 - 3.2.2. Flooding Preparedness Following reports that the current El Nino event could be the strongest for 1000 years, the d.cllr is making enquiries at South Hams District Council (SHDC) on making preparations for a wet and stormy autumn. This would include supporting residents by making sure there is a good supply of sandbags available in villages, and that drains are cleared regularly.

4. Minutes Consider approval of:

- 4.1. the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Harberton Parish Council 14 July 2026*
- 4.2. the minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting (Planning) of Harberton Parish Council 13 August 2026*

RESOLVED: i) To sign the minutes at 4.1 as a correct record without amendments
ii) To sign the minutes at 4.2 as a correct record with minor amendments to the list of attendees.

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

- 5.1. Brockhills Cross Footway (Clerk) Ongoing

- 5.2. Parish Lengthsman Update (Clerk) Ongoing
- 5.3. Defibrillator Update (Clerk) There has been no contact from The Community Heartbeat Trust about status of the support package. The Clerk has chased for an invoice to confirm ongoing support.
- 5.4. Harbertonford Bus Stop maintenance update Ongoing **ACTION: Cllrs Bowley and Finch** agreed to report back to the next meeting as to the maintenance required and estimated costs.
- 5.5. Conferring of honorary titles It was reported that Cllr Beamish and the Clerk presented a scroll conferring the title of Honorary Freeman of the Parish to Cllr Nick Williams.
- 5.6. Road Warden Scheme advertising (Clerk) Ongoing. The scheme has not yet advertised as unclear as to leadership within the council if volunteers come forward. No cllrs volunteered to lead the scheme. **ACTION: the Clerk** to send a call out for interest, subject to there being someone in the community willing to lead.
- 5.7. Harbertonford Playpark grant request Whilst a formal request for a grant from the Harbertonford Park has not yet been received, it was agreed that the park be encouraged to request a grant for both the 25/26 and 26/27 financial years.
- 5.8. Traffic calming measures on A381 (Clerk/Cllr Davies) Liaison with private landowners for permission to erect a secondary speed radar sign for traffic heading into Harbertonford in a Northbound direction is ongoing. It was noted that the Clerk has informed Devon County Highways (Highways) of this and investigating local support for a 20mph zone. Highways was also informed that conversations about a long discussed permissive path off the highways are likely to resume, as the land in question has now changed hands. The Neighbourhood Highways officer was aware of ongoing communications regarding requested traffic calming measures in Harbertonford. The measures requested are not considered feasible for the following reasons:
 - There is insufficient highway width to provide a pedestrian refuge point.
 - There is insufficient space to provide passing places at the turn.
 - There is insufficient space to introduce priority build-outs.
 Highways has also advised the resident raising these measures to contact School Transport to request a Safe Walking Route Assessment between the property and the relevant schools.

6. Parish Councillor Vacancy It was noted that is one remaining vacancy on the Parish Council for the Harberton Ward. Cllrs will continue to raise awareness through word of mouth.

7. Planning

- 7.1. Consideration of new planning applications
 - 7.1.1. 2063/26/HHO Replacement conservatory extension at 1 Moreleigh Road, Harbertonford
Cllr Paine left the room whilst the item was under consideration.

RESOLVED: To SUPPORT the application.

- 7.2. Receive a report on planning or appeal decisions The Clerk gave a verbal update.
- 7.3. Receive a report on enforcement cases (for information only) A hard copy of the enforcement caseload was circulated amongst cllrs for information. The Clerk summarised that there were currently 14 cases on the caseload, the oldest added in 2019 and the newest added in June 2026. Of the active cases under investigation, 5 relate to unauthorised residential caravans, other cases include reported building works in progress (new buildings, conversions or alterations without planning), hedgerow removal, unauthorised storage, camping or untidy sites. Of the 14 cases listed, 2 received enforcement notices and one is under appeal.

8. Monthly reports

- 8.1. Finance Committee update No meeting.
- 8.2. Sustainable Harbourne Valley update Meeting tonight.
- 8.3. Neighbourhood Plan update Currently paused. Weren't able to meet last night as not quorate. Some consideration as to what the next steps are and whether members put time into a document that might not be beneficial in the long term. Online working group meeting.
- 8.4. Harberton Playing Field Association Pleased to report that there is a functioning slide, with a more robust platform made by a local tradesman. No volunteer days in the summer, not likely to get one booked in until the new year. Grass hasn't been cut during the summer due to the dry weather.
- 8.5. Harbertonford Play Area update Similarly no grass cutting for 8 weeks.
- 8.6. Harberton ARK update A working group cleared out the grip at Dundridge. The landowner is going to move the tree.
- 8.7. Tree Warden Update No update.
- 8.8. Parish and Town Cluster update Minutes from a meeting held by representatives of Parish and Town Councils in the Totnes Cluster had been circulated amongst cllrs for information. Minutes detailed suggestions for how Councils could potentially work together within the context of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). Following the Secretary of State's announcement that there is an indefinite 'pause' on LGR in Devon a meeting due to take place on the evening of 8 September was deferred until there is more clarity on what is likely to happen in the coming months. The Town Clerk is of the view that there is still merit in building relationships, looking at possible partnerships, and improving our communication commenting that "strength in

numbers is absolutely essential in what is still a period of change, regardless of what that change is". A meeting is likely to be scheduled before Christmas for those who would be interested in attending.

8.9. Clerk's update

- 8.9.1. Fully digital Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) Cllrs are informed processes for how smaller authorities are audited are in the process of being modernised. In future, smaller authorities will prepare, submit and manage their AGAR digitally. This is to increase efficiency and consistency across the sector. The Clerk has now registered on the online portal and booked onto online training to help navigate the changes.

9. **Bus Turning Circle in Harberton** *To arrange installation of signage* The new 'bus turning circle' signs and a banner discouraging parking in the turning circle have arrived.

RESOLVED: **ACTION:** Cllr Day and Morris will replace current signage and put up the banner. Cllr Stirrup will post pictures of the arrival of the new signage on social media and via the Harberton Circular.

10. **Community Emergency Hub application** *To receive an update on the training and on approving an application made for Harberton, Harbertonford, or both.* Cllrs were informed that the Clerk and Cllr Paine attended the Community Emergency Hub training offered through Devon Communities Together, which provides a structured response for emergency events through the provision of a emergency hub kit. Having undertaken the training, the Clerk has contacted the committees of both Harberton and Harbertonford Village Halls, proposing that they act as the host venue in emergency situations. Both have agreed to discuss the proposal with their committees if the Parish Council agrees to move forward with an application to receive a kit for each village.

RESOLVED: **The clerk** to register Community Emergency Hubs for Harberton/Harbertonford or both in order to receive a Community Emergency Hub box, following approval of Harberton Parish Hall and Harbertonford Village Hall committees.

11. **Correspondence**

- 11.1. E-Circulars for information Cllrs were provided with a list of regular e-circulars received.

11.2. Items of correspondence for information

- 11.2.1. 20260716 DALC LGR bulletin #5 Cllrs were advised this bulletin includes a link to Central Government's Announcement Local Government Reorganisation in 13 areas across England. The announcement relevant to Devon, Plymouth and Torbay follows: *"11 councils being reorganised into 4 unitaries. This will align boundaries with economic geography to unlock housing and infrastructure growth, supporting Plymouth's defence sector and Exeter's expansion as key urban engines"*.
- 11.2.2. 20200716 Government confirms four unitary council model for Devon A newsletter from Devon County Council provides a link has been provided to a statement made by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with the following reference to the preferred option for Devon, Plymouth and Torbay: *"Four unitary proposal submitted by Exeter City Council and Plymouth City Council. I will exercise the power to modify the proposal to achieve the boundary change Exeter City Council and Plymouth City Council requested alongside the proposal"*. The Bulletin notes that Government's announcement marks the next stage in the reorganisation process. Work will now continue nationally and locally to develop detailed implementation plans, and the arrangements required to establish the new authorities. Devon County Council will work with partners, stakeholders and government to support the transition process.
- 11.2.3. 20260717 An update on Local Government Reorganisation in Devon A bulletin from South Hams District Council advises on the Government's announcement on plans for LGR, noting that the Government's preferred option will result in a substantial part of the South Hams incorporated into Plymouth (in the West), Torbay (in the East) with the remainder of the district incorporated into the new Devon Coast and Countryside council, and with a quote from the Council Leader commenting on the Government's *"failure to understand or appreciate the needs of Devon's rural towns and villages or our coastal communities"* and criticising the Government's *"flawed obsession with economic growth solely in urban areas, it demonstrates a lack of understanding for what matters for our residents and businesses, and what will actually support growth and prosperity for our area"*. The District Council's priority is to ensure a smooth, well-managed transition that protects essential services.
- 11.2.4. 20260717 Queries and concerns about gravel on Morleigh Road (Harbertonford) post resurfacing Cllrs were informed of worries raised by a local resident about the potential for excess gravel to be washed down Morleigh Road and into the drains and putting the houses at the foot of the hill at a higher risk of flooding. At the resident's request, the Clerk forwarded the query to Devon County Highways to ask for reassurance as to whether a flooding risk assessment was done and how Highways plans to manage the excess gravel. A reply from Highways was received to comment that The loose chippings will be compacted the more they are driven over. There will be a sweep undertaken to pick up the loose chippings that are not compacted by vehicular movement. The Neighbourhood Highways Officer can carry out a check on the drains in a few weeks and if required raise tasks for DCC contractors to attend. Having asked for an update, the Highways Officer has confirmed attending site on 10 Aug and there were no immediate

issues to report or raise prior to the planned contractor visit after final sweep. The gullies between Hernafor Cross to outside 3 Chapel Cottages were all inspected on the 17 August by DCC contractors, the gullies have been noted as operational on leaving with no requirements for further work. The buddleholes were inspected and cleaned on the 11 August. Woodcourt Road was also inspected on the 17 August.

- 11.2.5. 20260722 Scoping Consultation: South Hams and West Devon Joint Local Plan Cllrs were advised that the Councils are seeking views on: the vision and objectives for the new Joint Local Plan; the key issues for the new Joint Local Plan to address; and, how the Councils should engage with people throughout the plan-making process. The best way to read and respond to the local plan scoping consultation is on the council's [online consultation platform 'Commonplace'](#). Representations must be received by the Councils by 11.59pm on Thursday 24 September 2026.
- 11.2.6. 20260730 #34 2026 e-bulletin Cllrs were informed that the senior responsible officer and deputy senior responsible officer for local government reorganisation in Devon, will provide an update on the reorganisation programme at DALC's annual conference on 7 October 2026. The bulletin also advises that the Revised National Planning Policy Framework has been delayed until September.
- 11.2.7. 20260804 Update on Natural Flood Management (NFM) delivery in Harberton Cllrs are informed of an update from the Devon Resilience Innovation Project (DRIP) Project Officer that the Flood and Coastal Risk Management Team has been working with the landowners in the catchment to finalise NFM plans across three fields. Land drainage consent has been approved for two of these and are just waiting on the third. Officers will then work with the landowners to find contractors and aim to deliver the schemes late summer/early autumn whilst it is still dry. An Expression of Interest will then be submitted into the Environment Agency's new NFM fund, with the aim of delivering a phase two of works in the remaining fields across the catchment. The deadline for this is 7 September, with decisions on successful bids expected in the new year. If unsuccessful, alternative funding streams will be sought to deliver these works. The Parish Council will be kept informed on delivery of NFM in coming months. Any questions are welcomed. In addition, cllrs were informed that DCC [has now released flood risk modelling report for Harberton](#) that were not previously published in the public domain, under a Freedom of Information request.
- 11.2.8. 20260807 Temporary Traffic Order OLD ROAD, Harberton TTRO2671668 and TTRO2671671 On Site Notices Cllrs were informed that there were two road closure notices, the first covering the period 17 – 21 Aug, and the second from 22 Aug to 12 Sept 2026 in order to enable a sewer connection.
- 11.2.9. 20260809 Agenda and papers for TRAYE Project AGM Saturday 15th August 2026 Cllrs were informed of the invitation to attend the AGM. The agenda for the meeting together with the annual Statement of Accounts and the minutes of last year's 2025 AGM were attached and can be forwarded to interested cllrs. please consider standing for election as a Trustee. The elections for Trustees and project officers would take place at the AGM.
- 11.2.10. 20280814 TAPs update - LGR in Devon Cllrs were informed via a Town and Parish Council update from South Hams District Council, the Senior Responsible Officer for Devon has developed new warding arrangements for the 4 new unitary authority areas on the request of Central Government. These are interim/temporary warding arrangements to intended to enable safe, lawful and deliverable elections for the new shadow authorities in May 2027. A [presentation providing a full update on the details is available here](#) (HTML). The decision to accept these rests with the Secretary of State who will set out the final arrangements as part the draft Structural Change Order, expected in the autumn.
- 11.2.11. 20260820 DALC e-bulletin #37 2026 This bulletin provides further information on interim warding arrangements for Devon, providing links to [DCC Cabinet papers for the special meeting of the Cabinet on 14 Aug 2026](#), (HTML), and [a YouTube recording of the meeting here](#) (HTML).
- 11.2.12. 20260903 Temporary Traffic Notice PLYMOUTH ROAD Harberton TTRO2672617 Cllrs were informed of the road closure notice between 9:30am – 3:30pm on Sun 22 Nov 2026 affecting Plymouth Road, Totnes, Outside Hay Hill to between Prospect Place and Elwell Gardens. The closure is in place to enable cabling work. No alternative route is in place.
- 11.3. Items of correspondence for consideration
 - 11.3.1. 20260707 All Town & Parish Council Briefing: Planning Decision-Making Process Cllrs were informed of an online meeting via MS Teams at 5pm on Thursday, 24 September to provide information on changes Central Government is making to how planning applications will be determined, with the objective to *'introduce greater clarity and consistency in the role of planning committees in Development Management (DM) decision-taking'*. A meeting link will be provided for any cllrs or officers who wish to attend.
 - 11.3.2. 20260903 All-Town & Parish Council Briefing: UPDATE In addition to the email above, an update has been provided informing cllrs that SHDC is going to take the opportunity to add a second discussion item (Local Government Reorganisaion (LGR)) on to the 'agenda'. For absolute clarity (and with indicative timings), this Briefing will now take the following form: 5:00pm to 5:45pm: LGR; and 5:45pm to 6:30pm: Revised Planning Decision-Making Process.
 - 11.3.3. 20230903 Autumn DCRF Forum and Hub Workshops Cllrs were informed of a day long workshop taking place between 10am – 4pm on Thurs 22 Oct at Totnes Civic Hall focused on Emergency Planning, Skills Mapping and Networking. The session will be interactive and practical and designed to help communities strengthen their emergency preparedness through structured mapping and skills auditing activities. During the session, attendees will have the opportunity to: Define and understand your community in an emergency planning context; Identify and map local strengths, assets and risks; Assess existing skills and

capabilities within your community; Highlight gaps and develop initial actions to improve local resilience. Participation is free, and includes a light lunch and refreshments. A booking link can be provided.

- RESOLVED**
- i) All matters were noted for the minutes.
 - ii) Item 11.2.7 **The Clerk** will forward DCC links publishing the Harberton flood modelling to **Cllr Morris** to share with Harberton Ark.

12. Finance

- 12.1. Notice of Conclusion of 2025/26 Annual Governance and Accountability Return The Clerk updated cllrs.
- 12.2. To consider raising staff salaries in line with the 2026/27 National Salary Award Cllrs were informed that the 2026/27 National Salary Award has been agreed, and new pay scales have been published.
- 12.3. 2026/27 Play Area Agreement To note renewal from 1 Sept 2026. Cllrs were informed that the service provided by SHDC to inspect and insure the play areas in Harberton and Harbertonford will auto renew on 1 Sept unless the Parish Council wishes to opt out. The service includes: Public Liability Insurance in respect of the play equipment and safety surfacing, monthly inspections by qualified SHDC Mobile Locality Officers, plus an annual engineering report, undertaken by Zurich. The cost of £250 plus VAT per play area does not cover the cost of the Zurich inspection, without taking into account the other services included in this cost. This remains a heavily subsidised service.
- 12.4. To note receipts and payments made between meetings
 - 04/09/2026 Receipt from South Hams District Council for second half of precept = £17,275
 - Payment 2607_12 to The Harbertonford Community Limited for agreed Community Benefit Fund Grant = £1130.
- 12.5. To consider payments as per the September payment schedule*
 - Payment 2609_1 to Cat Radford, payslip dated 22 Sept 2026 includes Clerk salary £575.81, Neighbourhood Plan Salary at £66.44 and back pay at £102.48 minus £23.80 PAYE deductions = £720.93 no VAT
 - Payment 2609_2 to Cat Radford, Clerk Sept expenses claim for mileage at £ 4.62, broadband for Sept at £7.50, reimbursement for Printed.com Scroll Printing at £17.99 and signage/banner at £160.97 and Godaddy renewal and support at £107.99 incl. VAT = £299.07
 - Payment 2609_3 HMRC Shipley for PAYE incurred on Sept Salary ESTIMATED = £72.96 no VAT
 - Payment 2609_4 Harberton Parish Hall for Room Hire on 08/09/26 at £15 and 07/09/26 for Neighbourhood Plan meeting at £15 = £30 no VAT
 - Payment 2609_5 EXPECTED Lloyds Bank for banking service charge = £4.25 no VAT
 - Payment 2609_6 PKF Littlejohn 2025/26 External Audit at £210 plus £42 VAT = £252
 - Payment 2609_7 Harbertonford Play Park for play area grant x 2: funds not drawn down in the 2025/26 Financial year and for the 2026/27 Financial Year= £2000 no VAT

- RESOLVED:**
- i) To note conclusion of the 2025/26 audit, including a note from the External Auditor that page 5 of the AGAR was not accurately completed before submission for review: in follow up questioning, the Parish Council confirmed that it is not a sole managing trustee and that the response 'no' to Section 2, Box 11 is incorrect and should be 'Yes'.
 - ii) to increase the Clerk's rate of pay from £16.08 per hour to £16.61 per hour according to new pay rates for LC1 spine point 17, and to backdate those increases to 1st April 2026.
 - iii) to increase the standing order that pays the Clerk's salary to reflect of the increase.
 - iv) To continue to opt into 2026/2027 Play Area inspection service provided by South Hams District Council at a cost of £250 plus VAT per play area.
 - v) to note receipts and payments in between meetings.
 - vi) to approve all payments listed at 12.5.

13. Date and location of next meeting Tuesday 13 October 2026, Harbertonford Village Hall.

Meeting closed at 20:30