

Harrietsham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 26th November 2025 at 7.30pm
in the Booth Hall

Cllr Powell welcomed all present to the meeting.

Public Discussion

A resident reported that there was a wheelchair available, if it would be of use to the Parish Council or Village Hall Trust. The Clerk highlighted that someone in the village had recently requested one on social media. A resident spoke regarding the pressure placed on local roads, when the M20 is closed. It was noted that the latest closure had resulted in a driver's death, requiring an extended closure for Police investigation work. Before the meeting commenced the Clerk, who had recently attended two conferences, gave an update on the Local Government Restructure for Kent and MBC's plans to form a Town Council.

Present

Cllr E Powell (Chair), Cllr T Sams, Cllr J Sams, Cllr C Roots, Cllr R Dayes, Cllr G Dean, Cllr S Donley, Cllr S Luck, RFO/Amenity Manager Mr M Cuerden and Parish Clerk Mrs A Broadhurst
5 Members of Public

1 Apologies for absence

Cllr S Brown, Cllr T Griffiths, County Cllr S Emberson, Borough Cllrs S Povey, C Houlihan and M Nedelcheva

2 Minutes of the last meeting

Parish Council Meeting 29th October 2025: The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Dean, seconded by Cllr Luck; with 7 in favour, 1 abstention.

3 Disclosures and confidential items

Changes to the Register of Interests

There were no changes to the register.

Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

Cllr C Roots: Agenda Item 7.3 - Finance (Grant Applications - Harrietsham in Bloom) as he is the Treasurer of Harrietsham in Bloom, who has submitted a grant request.

Requests for Dispensation

No requests were submitted.

4 Items to be taken in Closed Session

There were no items on the agenda to be discussed in a closed session.

5 Planning

5.1 The outstanding planning applications were noted.

5.2 The approved applications were noted.

5.3 The withdrawn applications were noted.

5.4 Other Planning Matters

Nothing other planning matters to note.

6 Environmental

6.1 To Approve the Minutes of the Environmental Meeting held on 10th November: It was proposed by Cllr Dean, seconded by Cllr Luck; with 4 in favour (those present at the meeting).

6.2 Recommendations from the Environmental Committee:

- The New Burial Ground to be renamed Millenium Field: It was proposed by Cllr J Sams that the New Burial Ground should be renamed Millenium Field, seconded by Cllr Luck; with all in favour.
- The Saxon Place Open Space to be renamed Saxon Field: The Clerk requested that the recommendation be amended, as new play area signs had just been installed, naming it 'The Saxon Place Play Area'. It was proposed by Cllr J Sams that, instead of Saxon Field, the open space should be renamed Saxon Place Field, seconded by Cllr Dean; with all in favour.

- Annual Allotment Rent to be increased from £27 to £30 (for 2026-2027): Cllr J Sams commented that the recommendation amounted to a 10% increase and suggested that the Council should consider increasing the cost by £1 a year so that the Clerk would not have to write to the tenants annually; saving on costs. After brief discussion it was proposed by Cllr T Sams to increase the allotment rent by £1 each year for the next 3 years. This was seconded by Cllr Roots; with 4 in favour, 3 against and 1 abstention. **ACTION: Clerk**

6.3 Other Environmental Matters

- Swift Boxes for the Parish Office: The Clerk had circulated a report and it was proposed by Cllr Roots to approve the quote of £300 to supply and fit 3 swift boxes at the Parish Office. This was seconded by Cllr J Sams, with all in favour. **ACTION: Clerk**

7 Finances

- 7.1 Income and Expenditure spreadsheets: The finance sheets were proposed as accurate by Cllr T Sams, seconded by Cllr Roots; with all in favour.

- 7.2 Minutes of the F&GP Meeting held 6th November: It was proposed by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr T Sams; with 4 in favour (those present at the meeting).

- 7.3 Recommendations from the F&GP Committee:

The Clerk asked whether Councillors were happy to approve all but the Harrietsham in Bloom grant application recommendations together and this was agreed. The Clerk then read the following:

- Grant Applications for 2025-2026
 - Harrietsham Gardening Society (£175)
 - Harrietsham Fish Scheme (£882)
 - Harrietsham PCC (Church £1,593)
- Grant Applications for 2026-2027
 - Friday Coffee Morning - hall hire fees from Village Hall (approx. £1,400)
 - Harrietsham Lawn Tennis Club (£750)
 - St John's Game Club - hall hire fees from Village Hall (approx. £325)

The above grants were proposed by Cllr T Sams, seconded by Cllr Dean; with all in favour.

- Grant Application for 2026-2027
 - Harrietsham in Bloom (£250) - proposed by Cllr J Sams, seconded by Cllr Dean; with 7 in favour and 1 abstention.

7.4 Other Financial Matters

- Exterior Clean of the Parish Office: The Clerk informed all present that the Parish Office's window cleaner had submitted a quote of £350 to clean the exterior of the Parish Office (soffits, fascia, cladding and gutters) and this would include the windows being cleaned. It was noted that this should be undertaken regularly, however it has not been completed in the 7 years that the Parish office had been occupied. It was proposed by Cllr J Sams to accept the quote of £350, seconded by Cllr Roots; with all in favour. **ACTION: Clerk**

8 Highways

There was no report to note.

Cllr J Sams reported that the gulleys at the bottom of Stede Hill and on Church Road have been dug out and looked much better.

The Clerk reported that concerns had been raised regarding the pedestrian refuges on the A20 and road markings, particularly in the Downlands area, when approaching from Lenham. After brief discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should discuss this further with the HIP Officer. **ACTION: Clerk**

9 Santa's Grotto & Sleigh

The Clerk gave a brief update to Councillors on both forthcoming events.

10 Post Office Closure

The Clerk reported that she had been in discussions with Post Office Ltd, who wish to organise visits from a mobile Post Office once the village branch closes. Having spoken with the Village Hall Trustees, it was felt that the Village Hall car park would be the safest venue, with the staff being offered access to the toilets. They are intending to visit 3 times a week for 3-hour periods (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) with mixed visiting times to try to give as many opportunities as possible for residents to pop along. There is currently some ongoing discussion regarding the Friday visit, with the Clerk asking whether the start time could be altered slightly to catch the end of the Coffee morning. This is currently being investigated to see whether the scheduling can be altered slightly to accommodate the request. The Clerk added that, if the times can't be amended, there may be the need to ask whether the coffee morning could start slightly later, or to leave the Booth Hall available for a further 15 minutes so that visitors weren't left standing in the car park in poor weather.

Cllr Roots commented that the Lenham Post Office, which is also due to close in the New Year, has been up for sale, however no interest has been shown, which may be due to requiring the purchase of the building.

11 Future Events

30th November - Santa's Grotto (Village Hall 12.00-4.00pm)

5th December - Kettle Concertina Band (7pm in the Church)

16th December - Santa's Sleigh Visit around the Village (Starting at 4pm in the Village Hall car park)

12 Items for Future Consideration

Nothing to be added to a future agenda.

13 Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 28th January 2026 at 7.30pm in the Booth Hall

With no further matters to discuss the meeting was closed at 8.13pm.

Cllr Roots wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

A resident, on behalf of Harrietsham in Bloom, thanked Councillors for the grant awarded.