MINUTES OF THE MEETING of Hadlow Down Parish Council
held in Hadlow Down Village Hall, Hadlow Down
at 7pm on Tuesday 13th January 2026

Present: Councillors: Michael Lunn (ML) Chairman (+WDC), Peter Weston (PW) Vice-Chair, Ben Floyd (BF), David Munday (DM), Stephen Lester (SL) and Graham Long (GL).
In attendance: Vicki Rutt (Clerk), Cllr Bob Standley (ESCC) and three members of the public.

ML opened the meeting and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

195. PUBLIC QUESTIONS – The following issues were raised during public question time and were noted:

- A resident noticed that Hadlow Down failed to appear on the PCSO village meetings list, ML will find out why this is. **Action 1**.
- A resident asked could something be put in the Parish Magazine again about getting emails for the Mailchimp app in order to communicate better with the village, for those who do not have social media. **Action 2**
- A resident has found out that School Lane is going to be closed for 3 weeks in the summer to replace the substation. Clerk to speak to UKPN to find out their plans. **Action 3.**
- A resident thanked the Parish Council for their speedy response to the huge road failure on the A272 at the start of this week. The resident did state however that the road will continue to disintegrate due to the blocked gulleys. Clerk to speak to ESH. **Action 4.**

196. APOLOGIES – Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Alan Hobbs.

197. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – BF and DM mentioned after the meeting their link to the burial ground so whilst not a personal interest per se, for transparency they declared an interest in agenda item 205g.

198. MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on the 2nd December 2025 was recommended for approval and signed as a true record (previously circulated).

199. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

a. Action Log - Clerk reported from the action log which is available on the village website.
b. Clerks report - This was noted (previously circulated).

200. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a. WD/2025/2857/LDP for CRISPHAMS COTTAGE, ROSERS COMMON, BUXTED, TN22 4QA
Proposed outbuilding for hobbies use
The PC agreed not to submit comments as it is a lawful development.
b. Planning updates
WD/2025/2089/FR for Wilderness Wood, Main Road, Hadlow Down, TN22 4HJ – Application withdrawn.

201. REPORTS FROM CLLR BOB STANDLEY, ESCC & CLLR MICHAEL LUNN, WDC

ESCC - Cllr Standley reported that the settlement before Christmas shows they are receiving £6m less than before, so they will need to apply for exceptional funding which is a loan. They will have a £55m deficit. SEND will be in deficit of £100m by 2028. The SEND white paper been delayed, due this year sometime. ML stated that the gritting service has been great but he has heard there could be cuts. Cllr Standley confirmed that there is a possibility to reduce from 51% to 32% of areas being serviced, main roads will still be gritted. ML stated there needs to be village access, Cllr Standley will find out which areas may be affected. **Action 5.** The Mayoral elections have been delayed to May 2028 but conversations are still taking place so this may change. Cllr Standley noted all the comments made in public questions about the state of the roads in Hadlow Down.
WDC - Cllr Lunn reported that there are a number of important proposals coming up at Full Council. There is one to do a 0% Council Tax increase. The alliance has agreed to go with the 5-area proposal regarding the Local Government Reorganisation. Regulation 18 local plan goes out for secondary consultation, cabinet paper being discussed this Week, housing numbers will go up. There is no allocated housing in Hadlow Down but there is additional gypsy sites identified. The consultation starts on the 29th January for 6 weeks.

202. HIGHWAYS: None.

203. COMMUNITY CENTRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE – next meeting 10th February 2026.

204. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON DEVOLUTION – None.

205. ANNUAL REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS

a. Standing Orders
b. Financial Regulations
c. Freedom of Information publication scheme
d. Risk Management policy
e. Asset Register
f. New IT policy for 2026, linked to Assertion 10 audit requirements

It was agreed to review and approve all the above documents. This was proposed by BF and seconded by DM. All agreed. RESOLVED: The Governance documents for 2026 were reviewed and approved.

g. Burial Ground Regulations and fees

BF proposed that the under 16 fees being at zero cost should be amended to under 18 for both burial and Memories for residents of the Parish. This was seconded by SL. All agreed. RESOLVED. **Action 6.**

206. REVIEW OF COUNCILLOR PORTFOLIOS AND RESPONSIBILITIES – the following responsibilities were agreed:

- ML – Community Plan, Public Transport, Wealden District Association of Local Councils, Police & Neighbourhood Watch, Community Projects
- PW –Strengthening Local Relationships Meetings/Support, Speed Indicator Device
- BF – Playing Field, Planning Applications, Parish Panel Meetings
- DM – Planning Applications, Parish Panel Meetings, Emergency Co-ordination Plan
- SL – Rights of Way
- AH - Tree Warden
- GL - Burial Ground

207. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED – None.

208. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS (COUNCIL MATTERS AND OUTSIDE BODIES): Nothing to report this month**.**

209. RISK ASSESSMENTS:

a. Quarterly Village risk assessment report – Reviewed and noted.

b. Fingerpost maintenance quote report – The quote was discussed and all repairs to be made except the one where there are two quotes available, that once will receive a maintenance visit. **Action 7.**

210. CLERKS MATTERS:

a. Clerks hours for December 2025 – These were approved.

211. OTHER FINANCE MATTERS:

a. Agree Finance Report for January 2026 - The finance report was noted and approved by PW and DM. The detail can be found in **Appendix A**.

b. Agree and sign Bank Reconciliation for December 2025 - Approved and signed by PW and DM.

c. Note sight of Interim internal audit report 2025/26 and discuss any comments – this was noted and the Clerk was congratulated and thanked for her hard work.

d. To agree the budget and precept for 2026/27 and sign the relevant paperwork – The budget for 2026/27 has been reviewed in full by Councillors at a separate finance meeting. All confirmed approval, this was proposed by ML and seconded by PW. RESOLVED: The budget for 2026/27 has been agreed.

All Councillors confirmed that they are up to date with their Council Tax payments, as per recent legislation changes prior to agreeing the Precept. The precept required for 2026/27 was agreed, this was proposed by PW and seconded by ML. RESOLVED: The Precept for 2026/27 was agreed as £64,140. The paperwork was signed by the Clerk and Chair and will now be submitted to WDC. **Action 8.**

A report explaining the increase of the precept will be published by the Clerk widely tomorrow. **Action 9.**

e. To receive and note Q3 figures for 2025/26 – these were noted.

212. DEFIBRILLATOR BATTERY – this was checked on the 13th January 2026.

213. ITEMS TO GO ON NEXT AGENDA: None.

214. TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC ATTENDANCE FOR AGENDA ITEM 215, THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION MUST BE PASSED.

That in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, that the public including the press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of agenda item 215 as financial lease matters are to be discussed, and this would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

It was proposed by PW and seconded by DM that the Full Council move into a confidential session at 19:58.

**** CONFIDENTIAL SESSION ****

215. TO DISCUSS THE RECENT RESPONSE FROM THE SOLICITOR REGARDING THE LEASE QUERIES RAISED BY HDCC AND ALSO AGREE THE REVIEW PROCESS FOR THE RENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE HADLOW DOWN COMMUNITY CENTRE

The above was discussed in full and decisions made. Clerk to now feedback to the solicitor and HDCC. **Action 10.**

The meeting closed at 20:30

The next PC meeting date is Tuesday 3rd February 2026 at 19:00

Appendix A

Finance report for 13th Janaury 2026 PC meeting

Payments by Bank Transfer *paid* pending authorisation			
Date	**Payee**	**Payment Details**	**Amount**
16.12.25	Lawson Partnership	Village Hall survey	£696.00
Payments by Bank Transfer pending authorisation			
Date	**Payee**	**Payment Details**	**Amount**
28.01.26	Vicki Rutt	Standing Order January 2026	£1,216.02
13.01.26	Vicki Rutt	December underpay	£201.99
13.01.26	Vicki Rutt	Q3 mileage	£37.80
13.01.26	East Sussex Pension Fund	Pension Dec 2025	£421.30
13.01.26	HMRC	Tax and NI for Dc 2025	£326.23
13.01.26	Mulberry and Co	Interim internal audit	£203.10
13.01.26	Hadlow Down Village Hall	Hall hire Dec 2025	£50.00
13.01.26	Hadlow Down Village Hall	Hall hire Jan 2026	£76.00
13.01.26	Lucy McConachie	Dec play area inspection	£40.00
13.01.26	Surrey Hills Solicitor	Legal fees so far for 2 x new leases	£4,220.00
Payments by direct debit for authorisation			
Date	**Payee**	**Payment Details**	**Amount**
08.12.25	BT	Phone and broadband	£293.51
15.12.25	Wealden District Council	Parish Conference	£30.00
31.12.25	Unity Trust	Service charge	£6.00
Acknowledge receipt of monies			
03.12.25	Hadlow Down Playing Field	2025-26 Rent	£1.00
12.12.25	Richard Green Funeral	Funeral for M. Davis	£335.00
22.12.25	UKPN	Chq from UKPN	£3.61