

HURST GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 9th July 2025 (rescheduled from 24th June) in Hurst Green Village Hall starting at 7.45pm.

Present:- Councillor French (Vice-Chair), Councillor Daly, Councillor Price, Councillor Ralph. The Clerk was in attendance. No members of the public present.

Councillor French chaired the meeting in the absence of Councillor Browne.

1.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: - Councillor Browne (Chair), Councillor Brown, Councillor Johnson-Cloves, Councillor Levine, Councillor Pakenham, District Councillor Barnes, District Councillor Killeen, County Councillor Kirby-Green and the RFO, Anita Maxwell. Reasons approved.

2.0 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETINGS: -

To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on Tuesday the 27th May 2025, the Planning committee minutes of the 27th May and the EGM held on Friday 20th June.

Minutes of the AGM, 27th May, proposed by Councillor Ralph and seconded by Councillor Daly. Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting, 27th May, proposed by Councillor Daly and seconded by Councillor French.

Unanimously approved by those present at the meetings.

Minutes of the meeting held on the 20th June could not be approved as only one councillor present who attended. To be put on next agenda.

3.0 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS, *in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct: to receive any disclosure by Members of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the member regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct.*

None declared.

3.1 APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION – *to consider written requests from Members for Dispensation and to consider the length of time the dispensation should be granted for i.e. as a one-off relating to a matter on this agenda, or ongoing for a set period and relating to any agenda within that period.*

The Clerk has issued a dispensation to the Council to discuss the former community shop of which it was the former leasee, in order to progress the outstanding issues pertaining to the lease which will last until the issues are resolved.

This dispensation does not cover any individual Councillor who needs to declare a personal or prejudicial interest.

4.0 FINANCE Report

No report in the RFO, Anita Maxwell's absence.

4.1 To approve any additional June expenditure as listed on the schedule

List of invoices to be paid emailed to Councillors prior to the meeting.

Resolution to approve payments proposed by Councillor French and seconded by Councillor Daly.

Unanimously approved.

4.2 To approve invoice for streetlight maintenance and electricity supply

This was postponed as a meeting is to be arranged with ESCC re ownership of lights.

4.3 To appoint internal auditors.

Mulberry's have offered a discount for a fixed 3 year appointment as our auditors. The RFO had no issues with their recent audit of parish accounts and was happy to recommend them.

The 3 year option was proposed by Councillor Price and seconded by Councillor Ralph.

It was unanimously resolved to appoint Mulberry's as our auditors for the next 3 years.

4.4 To approve purchase of deer guards for community orchard.

It was proposed by Councillor Price and seconded by Councillor Daly that a sum up to £500 should be allocated to the purchase of deer guards to protect the fruit trees.

Unanimously supported.

5.0 **COMMUNITY Activities and reports.**

5.1 Neighbourhood Plan, progress report from steering group representative

Councillor French gave the report. Main items to note below,

1. *My 4th June edits removing references to Cooks Field had been done*
2. *All policy edits have been done and revised map done.*
3. *Supporting narrative for each policy still to finish.*
4. *NPPF references being updated to reflect new policy.*
5. *Contents and Index to be checked and updated as necessary.*

5.2 Community events, update

Councillor Price reported that she had attended the fete and thought that it was very good if not as well attended as expected. Thought to be due to conflict with other local events.

5.3 District and County Councillors reports

No reports in Councillors absences.

5.4 Clerk's report

The Clerk gave her report.

5.5 Parish Correspondence and local resident issues

Clerk has emailed this to councillors upon receipt.

- i) Invite from RDC to complete survey re Local Government re-organization (devolution).
Date for feedback had passed therefore not discussed.

5.6 Urgent issues requiring attention

Councillor Price expressed concern over 2 very large portable notices being put up in the Coopers Corner area of the A21 which she felt were a distraction to motorists in a known traffic incident area. Merriments Cafe board on the junction, northbound and the Eight Bells Pub, Hawkhurst near Eggs to Apples. Clerk will flag up to the A21 Safety Team.

6.0 **TRANSPORT, ROADS & FOOTPATHS, report**

Councillor Daly expressed concern re inappropriate parking on pavements around the junction of the A21 and Bodiam road at Silverhill. Clerk to contact PCSO.

7.0 **PLAYING & STAGE FIELDS**

7.1 To consider outstanding payment to Andy Frost re the new Play equipment in Lodge Field.

Outstanding issues have now been dealt with and Councillor Price proposed that the final invoices should be paid. This was seconded by Councillor Daly. **Unanimously resolved to support payment.**

7.2 Community Orchard update and finishing of planned works.

Clerk reported that there was one more bench and a boulder to be placed on site before completion along with additional deer guards.

Clerk to check with Councillor Brown to see if dead tree comes under the guarantee.

7.3 To consider a new 'no dogs' metal sign to be welded to side entrance gate

A quote of £140 has been rec'd to make a customised, 'No Dogs' sign for the main side entrance gate as people are still walking their dogs in the field.

Councillor Price proposed that this should be accepted and Councillor French seconded this.

Unanimously resolved to support.

8.0 PARISH COUNCIL ISSUES

8.1 Planning update/report

Little to report, one decision received.

8.2 Progress report and update re employment of contractor for village maintenance services

To be postponed to the next meeting when more councilors present.

8.3 Street lighting contract with ESCC.

No update.

8.4 Appointment of members to committees

- a) Finance committee, election of members and Chair
- b) Staffing committee, election of members and Chair
- c) Planning Committee, election of members and Chair
- d) Events committee, election of members and Chair

To be postponed to the next meeting when more councilors present

8.5 Appointment of Representatives

- a) Community Representatives
- b) Representative to East Sussex ALC (1)
- c) For Other Parish Green Spaces, Tree and Environmental issues

To be postponed to the next meeting when more councilors present

8.6 To appoint members to a working party to review all the council's policies and procedures.

To be postponed to the next meeting when more councilors present

Due to the confidential nature of the following agenda item (8.7) the public and press are excluded for the next item.

8.7 Community Shope update.

i) Current position re dilapidations negotiations

Ongoing negotiations via the respective surveyors. It was agreed that if surveyors could not reach an agreement the matter would go to arbitration.

ii) Position re outstanding debit and motion to authorize our solicitor to proceed with debt recovery

Councillor Price proposed that the Council should proceed to recover the outstanding debt. Seconded by Councillor Ralph. **Unanimously resolved to support this action.**

9.0 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

To be emailed to the Clerk.

10.0 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next Council meeting is due to be held on Tuesday 29th July 2025 in Hurst Green Village Hall starting at 7.45pm with public consultation from 7.30pm.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.08pm.

Distribution of Minutes: -

All Parish Councillors

Parish Council Noticeboard

Parish Council Website

ESCC Councillor Eleanor Kirby-Green

RDC Councillor Barnes.

RDC Councillor Killeen

Signed Cllr. Derek French, Vice-Chair

Dated 29th July 2025