

PENSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES – Monday 9th June 2025

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 9 June 2025 at 7pm in Penshurst Village Hall

Present: Councillor Andy Campbell (Chairman), Councillor Diane Broad, Councillor Sally Jolly, Councillor Norman Furnell, Councillor Robert Rees, Councillor Bruce Townsend, Councillor Duncan Howard, Rachael Turner (Clerk & RFO).

Also present: Kent County Councillor Robert Mayall, Sevenoaks District Councillor Richard Streatfeild and 1 Parishioner (Member of Public – MOP)

1. Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor Jonathan Horsford and Councillor Richard Gerard Sharp

Appointment of New Clerk. Confirmation that the new Clerk, Rachael Turner, be appointed as Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) for the duration of employment. Proposed by Cllr Rees and Seconded by Cllr Furnell. Unanimously approved.

2. Declaration of interests in agenda items: No declarations were made at the meeting.
3. The Minutes of the 2025 Annual Parish Assembly were noted. Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Penshurst Parish Council held in May 2025 were duly approved and then signed by the Chairman.

4. Matters Arising:

- (i) **Bus Shelter Refurbishment:** PC Contractor contacted by ED to carry out the work, it was hoped this would be carried out during July or before.
- (ii) **Highways Meeting:** Arranged with Kent County Council Highways team for June 11th in the Penshurst Village Hall Library Room.
- (iii) **School/Village Green Vehicular Damage:** Cllr Furnell reported the effected green could be reinforced with special matting but would need a subbase underneath. Another idea would be to install a high kerb, although it was felt that was not the safest option. It was thought the heavy duty Grassguard option would be best. Cllr Campbell to measure area and seek quotes for the works.

5. OPEN SESSION

- (i) **Kent County Councillor Robert Mayall** introduced himself to everyone and confirmed that he was getting around to all Parish Council meetings. He confirmed he was aware of the planning issues with Kingdom and has written to them. To date he has not received any response. Councillors confirmed concerns that permission was granted subject to restrictions. It appears the restrictions are being breached and, despite reporting these to SDC, there appeared to be lack of follow up action.

Cllr Mayall asked what the key issues were in the Parish. It was confirmed the main concern was highways and issues across the Parish with drainage. The ditches and verges have not

been maintained and are blocked or have disappeared. Issues are reported to Highways who then investigate but works to remedy the situation are not carried out.

In addition, the works carried out by utility companies are often poor workmanship and are causing degradation of the roads. Emergency works are carried out over which Highways has no control over and often roads are left closed, or partially inaccessible, for long periods of time. There are current Emergency Works on the bridge that have led to a road closure which means busses cannot get access and roads are blocked. This impacts on many people and there are often no teams even working on the issue. There is water pouring out and it hasn't been dealt with and will likely cause further damage to the bridge.

Another example is cats eyes put on the road that were stuck on. These subsequently have come off and ripped off the road surface causing further potholes and damage to the road surface. There is often debris from utility works, such as soil and rubble that cause damage to the drainage system and there appears to be no accountability from the utility companies. There should be checks on the quality of the works.

In summary, Cllr Campbell confirmed he would like to see utility companies have works quality checked once they have been completed. PPC have a meeting with Highways on Wednesday so will forward the minutes on to Cllr Mayall.

- (ii) The MOP present reported verge mowing had taken place today. He was concerned over the quality of the cut from Blackwaters to Medway Bridge. It was suggested that maybe they hadn't finished. The Clerk requested if the cuts were not finished in the coming days to an acceptable standard to let her know and she will raise the issue.
- (iii) Swaylands works. Debris is being washed off into the road which is potentially making the surface hazardous. It was asked when the temporary works licence would finish.
- (iv) The leak by the Post Office is pouring into the road. Clerk to chase up KCC.

6. Sevenoaks District Councillor Mr Richard Streatfeild: ¹

Cllr Streatfeild reported that recycling collections continued to be a big topic of debate. It is likely that the area will move onto collections every other week with more types of recycling to align them with the rest of the district. The removal of the recycling bags and introduction of wheelie bins for recycling was being looked into. One of the key issues was if the current bin lorries could be adapted to accommodate this. There are manual handling issues with getting the current recycling bags into the lorries. Cllr Streatfield referred to the minutes of the recent SDC meeting where the health and safety issues and potential options were discussed and differing views of members meant no decision was reached. It is likely that food waste will be collected weekly and recycling every other week with the changes potentially coming in March 2026.

A question was raised with regards to garden waste bin costs as these seemed to increase by £5 every year and asked if this would continue. Cllr Streatfield explained this was different from the normal recycling and bin collections and would raise the question with the Cleaner & Greener Committee.

Cllr Streatfield left the meeting to attend to another commitment.

7. PC 30366 John Donegan was not present. However, PC Donegan had met with Councillors Furnell, Townsend, Horsford and Rees on Friday for a productive meeting and reported it had been a

¹ Cllr Streatfield had another issue to attend to so gave his report before point 4 to enable him to leave the meeting
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relatively quiet couple of months in the area. The police Rural Task Force had made good use of Farmwatch.

8. Neighbourhood Report – Cllr Furnell:

- (i) Ongoing concerns regarding speeding on Rogues Hill. Clerk to locate Speedwatch document. Rogues Hill needs to be a designated Speedwatch site for police to do speed checks. Clerk to try to find the device used previously. It has been confirmed that GoPro cameras can be used by residents to identify bad driving and can lead to police prosecution.

New Speedwatch members are needed. Members must be over 18 and complete online training. Clerk to produce article for Parish Magazine to seek out volunteers and to clarify length of training. This may also appeal to D of E or uni students during holidays.

In the past a mobile speed monitoring device was borrowed from KCC. Clerk to establish if this might still be available.

- (ii) When the firearms team destroy injured deer it has been requested they notify the authorities to remove the animals rather than leave them in view.
- (iii) Learning that there are only 2 Beat Officers policing a huge area, including Edenbridge and 10 villages, with both the geographical area and the amount of residents was shocking. More police are required. Residents are paying for the service through Council Tax and there is only funding for 2 Officers for such a large area does not seem proportionate. Cllr Furnell is to write to Tom Tugendhat, MP, to express his dissatisfaction and request more resources for the area.

9. FINANCE/ACCOUNTS:

- a. **Payments:** The following accounts were presented and approved unanimously for payment, Councillors signed cheques prepared and signed the payment list:

Penshurst Village Hall	Hall Hire	£16.00
Gallagher Insurance	Annual Insurance Premium	£1054.02
*Vision ICT	PC Phones	£60.00
Mrs E M Divall	Clerk – Final Salary Payment	£2566.73
April/May 2025 Salary, Award		
HMRC	ED Tax/NI	£1060.30
Lucy Fuller Rowell	Lengthsman	£100.00
Lucy Fuller Rowell	Lengthsman (for July 2025)	£100.00

*Duplicate payment so cancelled cheque

- b. **Appointment of new Clerk:** It was confirmed the new Clerk was RFO for the duration of employment. Clerk to have the authority to manage the PC bank accounts in relation to preparation of payments for monthly meetings plus transfers between accounts to meet regular financial liabilities. Clerk to make arrangements with Lloyd's Bank to transfer management of bank accounts from old clerk (ED) to new clerk (RT). Clerk to also explore options for online banking.

c. **Office Equipment:** Members considered the purchase of a laptop plus other technology for new Clerk for PPC use. Clerk confirmed costs would be approximately £650. A mobile phone was also required for PPC business and this would be approximately £20 per month on a 2-year contract. A correspondence address was needed for PPC and a PO Box would be a good option. Clerk confirmed

this could be shared with Hever PC and costs could be split equally. The cost of a PO Box is currently £371 for the year so PPC would incur cost of £185.75 for the current year for this.

Gallagher Insurers to be informed of net cost of new equipment such as lap top and mobile phone. Contact details of new clerk to be provided for Gallagher for records. Gallagher have been advised of the current CCTV system owned by PC to be added to asset register

Proposed by Cllr Campbell, seconded by Cllr Rees and unanimously approved.

d. Grant Application: The Grant Application received from the local Football Club, Penshurst Park, was considered. A £5,000 grant was requested towards essential pitch maintenance equipment, upgrading the current goal nets, replacing fencing to keep livestock off the pitch, installing a permanent pitch-side dugout, and purchase other key items.

Proposed by Cllr Rees, seconded by Cllr Howard and approved.

Note as the Grant awarded is over £2,000, under S137 LGA 1972, the recipient (Penshurst Park Football Club) will need to provide evidence of spend post receipt of grant.

10. PLANNING: Planning Applications:

Two decisions received since last meeting:

25/00146/FUL: Birches, Fordcombe Road, Penshurst: Refurbishment and alteration works throughout the existing property, including the conversion of the existing basement to provide additional habitable accommodation. Construction of an orangery extension to the west-facing elevation. Removal of the existing shed outbuilding and outdoor swimming pool. Construction of a replacement outdoor swimming pool with new detached outbuilding. Removal of the existing greenhouse structure. Construction of a detached garage and storage building with new driveway and parking area, served by new vehicular access. New gates to serve the existing driveway. Associated hard and soft landscaping works in the vicinity of the proposed extension and swimming pool. Sunken area for Air Source Heat Pump units and below ground LPG tanks. Further information has been requested, sections of proposed sunken area for Air Source Heat Pump, below ground LPG tanks and noise assessment report. **Decision: Granted**

25/00637/LDCEX: Westfield House, Nunnery Lane: Confirmation the existing building on site and surrounding land have been in ancillary residential use for a sufficient period of time that these are now lawful. **Decision: Refused**

25/01276/HOUSE: The Grove Cottage, Grove Road, Penshurst: Replacement of domestic outbuilding with a new detached outbuilding for use as a home gym and office with rooflight. Permeable hardstanding.

25/00085/LBCALT: The Oast House, Ashcombe Priory, Chafford Lane: Internal alterations, alterations to fenestration and replacement of existing windows and doors. Conversion of garage to habitable rooms. Application now amended, original PC comments will be considered.

25/00084: Amended plans and Heritage/Design and Access Statement. Any comments made on the original application will be considered when the decision is made.

22/03007/HOUSE: Redwood, Penshurst Road, Penshurst: Alterations and improvements to elevations and roof comprising: enlargement of existing window openings, new window openings to existing lower ground floor, new railings to windows new roof lights to existing east wing. External safety balustrades to west elevation and rear.

25/01076/LBCALT: Woodgates, Walters Green Road, Penshurst: Replacement of modern side attached double garage with detached rear secure store, including room over and solar panels. Link attached extension. Courtyard terrace. Extension to rear stair hall and replacement dormer, minor internal alterations including the addition of bathroom to the attic room and reconfiguration of the existing drive.

Replacement to Garden store with new outbuilding and pergola. Dormer to be replaced. Landscaping. Alterations to fenestration and one window and brickwork to be removed.

25/01139/LBCALT: Yeomans, Walters Green Road, Penshurst: Demolition of existing garage, summerhouse and single storey extension. Erection of linked single storey extension. Internal alterations. Alteration to fenestration. Associated landscaping.

25/00968/HOUSE: Titchfield Barn Salmans Lane Penshurst: Erection of carport with EV charger and front gates.

25/01177/LBCALT: Hill Corner Cottage, The Lane, Fordcombe: Alterations to modern single storey rear extension: Demolish and rebuild with front wall on new alignment, new windows and entrance; and replace existing pitched roof with cat-slide roof.

Tree Surgery: No information received at time of preparation of agenda.

Footpaths: Path SR465/1 Weavers Cottage - Walters Green Road: Poor condition reported for attention to assist people using it to get through the mud. Numerous complaints received regarding the reduction in width of paths plus poor condition of surfacing. **Confirmation on website issue being processed.**

11. HIGHWAYS

Emergency Road Closure - B2188 Spring Hill, Penshurst - 5th June 2025 (Sevenoaks)

It will be necessary to close B2188 Spring Hill, Penshurst from 5th June 2025 for up to 7 days.

The road will be closed at 1 Pumping Station Cottages. The alternative route is via Spring Hill B2188, Fordcombe Road B2188, Ashurst Road A264, Langton Road A264, Bishops Down A264, Church Road A26, London Road A26, Mount Ephriam A26, St Johns Road A26, Bidborough Ridge B2176, Penshurst Road B2176, Rogues Hill B2176, High Street B2188, Fordcombe Road B2188, New Road B2188, Saints Hill, Spring Hill B2188 and reverse. This is to enable burst water main repairs to be carried out by South East Water.

Emergency Road Closure - Chafford Lane, Fordcombe - 16th May 2025

It will be necessary to close Chafford Lane, Fordcombe from 16th May 2025 for up to 6 days, the road will be closed at number 9 Chafford Cottages. The alternative route is via Chafford Lane, Walters Green Road, Sandfield Road, B2188 Spring Hill, Chafford Lane and reversed. This is to enable water pipe repairs to be carried out by South East Water.

S E Water - Temporary Road Closure - The Lane, Fordcombe - 17th June 2025 for 3 days

The road will be closed outside Lane Cottage. The alternative route is via The Lane, B2188 Fordcombe Road, Old House Lane, Poundsbridge Lane and vice versa. Pedestrian access will be maintained during the works. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while works are undertaken by South East Water.

SMARTS HILL, PENSURST: 17 JULY 2025 FOR 1 DAY: From Saints Hill to Nunnery Lane

B2188 Saints Hill, Sandfield Road and Nunnery Lane (And vice versa)

871609: Poundsbridge Lane: Drainage and Flooding, blocked drain/gulley'.

854466: Spring Hill: Public House and Village Hall: Issue reported again, report on information relating to work carried out and further work to be done requested. Flooding reported to KCC Highways, confirmation received regarding problem with pipework serving the area, Southern Water responsible for work required to rectify. **Update not currently available for above two issues.**

826354/755185: Finches, Fordcombe Road: Flooding due to blocked Drain/Gulley. Gulley scheduled for cleaning.

826364: Blocked Drains - Rogues Hill: originally promised for clearance in July 2023, reported on 20.8.24 that cleaning was scheduled.

PROW: 822853: SR465 – Walters Green Road/Weavers Cottage: Poor surfacing with possible septic tank issue; **240712840: - Coach Road, SR 546:** Overhanging trees. *Footpath repairs delayed.*

823784: Extension of yellow lines to The Lane in Fordcombe: To improve safety for the septic tanker whilst working. PC advised to include on HIP. Reported again under 844790 for update on current situation.

842230: Poundsbridge Manor: White lines require reinstatement; Poundsbridge Manor – Speldhurst drains now blocked due to hedge cutting, clearance required & **839558: Cleave House:** Multiple potholes. Work noted as completed 20.11.24

PROW Report 250225697/241097018: Inadequate drainage on footpath SR465 – Allocated, awaiting inspection. Note: footpaths should be 1.5m minimum generally; bridleways should be 3m, alternatively in absence of other evidence a 2m width should be applied.

862579: Overhanging Branch between Little Chart and Spotted Dog (Reported by others). Issue under investigation 21.2.25

864529: Rogues Hill: Report of Gulley clearance lorry attending site at 1.30am 28.2.2025 for approximately 10 minutes but no visible work carried out.

5163484-Water Leaks: Reported outside Penshurst Village Hall, Village House and adjacent to Leicester Square with Southern Water under reference 5163484 – 2 leaks in Leicester Square, Stop Cock access cover no longer in place in vicinity of Stables Cottages/Old Post Office. **6/25 there are still concerns about this as the road is sinking, with a hole now 4-5" deep and filled with water. Clerk to chase up 6/25**

880778: Water leak on Spring Hill **6/25 Clerk to chase up as still leaking**

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

- i. **White Lines:** Poundsbridge Area and the 'T' junction in Penshurst by the Village Hall required attention as they were badly worn. To be raised at Highways Meeting next week.
- ii. **Fence Panels in Fordcombe Play Area:** Cllr Horsford noted that there were missing uprights in the fence at the play area, ED to report to contractor. Netting also required reinstatement.
- iii. **Penshurst Village Hall works:** It was confirmed that invoices for the agreed works, which are due to start by the end of June, should be submitted to the Clerk for reimbursement up to £25,000 as PPC was unable to reclaim VAT for the works as they were not for PPC. It was requested if further funding to the original level of 40k could be reinstated. Clerk to advise on budgets and further amount to be added to the agenda for consideration at the next meeting and also suggested Village Hall Committee is aware of possible other funding options, however it was not believed there was anything readily available at present.
- iv. **Location of PPC Meetings –** These used to alternate between Fordcombe and Penshurst Village Halls. It is believed that the club that was running is no longer there. Clerk to investigate possibility of holding PPC meetings there in the downstairs hall every other month from September.
- v. **Chafford Park –** wedding traffic has been coming down Chafford Lane which is not in line with conditions agreed by licencing/ Highways. There also appears to be a significant amount of windows on one side which may well impact sound proofing and light pollution when events are in progress. Cllr Jolly to look into.
- vi. **New Clerk:** Handover with ED has reached final stages and would like to thank ED for her help with this. RT has taken over management of the website and set up clerk email address.

PPC are paying for councillor email addresses. Clerk will circulate details of log on to individuals and Cllr Campbell encouraged all to use these and not their own personal one. Whilst not a legal requirement, it is more professional to have them separate from personal email addresses.

Contact details need to be updated in Parish Magazine. Cllr Rees to produce an article to thank ED and to welcome RT as new Clerk.

- vii. **Environmental:** Press release last week Rooftop solar panels to save schools thousands in energy bills. Clerk to write to both school head teachers and chairman of governors re: <https://letsgozero.org/>
- viii. **Leaving Gift:** Cllr Furnell confirmed there were some funds left from the collection for ED. It was agreed to purchase an additional gift with the remaining funds.
- ix. **Next Meeting:** Monday 4th August. There will be no July meeting. Clerk will collate any invoices and raise cheques for signature so bills can still be settled. Payments can then be ratified at next meeting.

Meeting closed 8.40 pm

PENSURST PARISH COUNCIL

SCHEDULE OF ACCOUNT

JUNE 2025

Cheque No:

1223	Penshurst Village Hall	Hall Hire	£16.00
1224	Gallagher Insurance	Annual Insurance Premium	£1054.02
1225	HMRC	Clerk April/May Salary	£1060.30
1226	Mrs E M Divall	Clerk – Final Salary Payment	£2566.73
*1227	Vision ICT	PC Phones	£60.00
1228	Lucy Fuller Rowell	Lengthsman	£100.00
1229	Lucy Fuller Rowell	Lengthsman (dated 1/7/25) invoice to follow	£100.00

*Duplicate payment as invoice already paid, cheque cancelled

It was resolved that payment of the accounts be ratified and cheques drawn in settlement of the above account.

Signed.....Councillor

Signed.....Councillor

Signed.....Councillor

