

# PENSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on Monday 12 May 2025 in Penshurst Village Hall at 7.00 pm

**Present:** A Campbell (Chairman), Mrs D Broad, S Jolly, N Furnell, J Horsford, R Rees, B Townsend, R Gerard Sharp, D Howard. 4 Parishioners.

- 1. Apologies for Absence:** **SDCllr R Streatfeild** (Report forwarded via email)
- 2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN:** Cllr Rees proposed Cllr Campbell for the position of Chairman, this was seconded by Cllr Gerard Sharp and unanimously agreed.

**Chairman subsequently signed the Acceptance of Office Form**

**VICE CHAIRMAN:** Cllr Horsford proposed Cllr Rees for Vice-Chairman, this was seconded by Cllr Howard and unanimously agreed.

**Responsible Finance Officer:** In view of the impending retirement of the current Clerk/RFO this appointment was deferred until the June meeting.

### Appointment of Representatives:

**KALC Representatives:** Cllr Howard – KALC service was available to all councillors as required.

**Penshurst & Fordcombe Village Hall:** Cllrs Gerard-Sharp & Rees (Penshurst); Cllr Townsend (Fordcombe)

**Planning Representatives:** All members, Cllrs Mrs Broad and Rees – site visit arrangements

**Footpath/Bridle Path Representative:** Cllr Mrs Broad

**Allotments:** Cllr A Campbell

**Highways:** Cllrs Campbell, Horsford and Townsend

**Play Area:** Cllrs Townsend, Horsford

**Alms Houses:** Cllr Howard

**Emergency/Resilience Planning:** Cllrs Campbell, Gerard-Sharp

**Becket Trust:** Cllr Rees

**Gatwick:** Cllrs Rees and Howard

**Neighbourhood Watch:** Cllr Furnell thanked Cllr Rees for a very successful VE day celebration having attended the Seniors' tea but not the Junior Disco!

**Bridge House Bridge:** Cllr Furnell noted grooves on either side of the bridge at the bottom of Rogues Hill plus a parishioner mentioned that movement could be felt when vehicles travelled over it. ED to report. *(Reported under reference 877954)*

A complaint was noted by members that for years parishioners had seen the degradation of the road network in the parish having been dug up without notice by water, electricity, telephone and gas companies and KCC highways. Resurfacing after a repair had been poor, damaged drains had not been checked causing flooded roads and homes.

Cllr Furnell reported that it had been a fairly quiet month although thefts from cars and stealing of expensive cars continue unabated. The Farmwatch initiative appears to be reducing thefts from farms. Farmers are reporting suspicious activity to the Rural Task Force who are following up on incidents.

- 3. Declaration of interests in agenda items:** Cllr Howard recorded a personal interest for 25/00145 Birches as this was a neighbouring property, and Cllr Townsend had one for 25/00677 Kings Meadows which was also a neighbouring property.

**4. The Minutes of the 2024 Annual Parish Assembly, having been circulated were unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman.**

**5. The Minutes of the 2025 Annual Parish Assembly:** These had been circulated to members and were noted.

**6. Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 14 April 2025,** having been circulated to members were approved and signed by the Chairman.

**7. Matters Arising:**

**8. OPEN SESSION**

**i. Kingdom:** Members noted that further issues had been raised with regard to non-compliance with conditions on the site, SDC Enforcement had been involved and had attended site to discuss the situation with the organiser of the event.

**9. Sevenoaks District Councillor Mr Richard Streatfeild:** In the last month the most significant activity was the full council meeting on 29 April and the County Council Elections on 1 May. Reform won the KCC election for the Sevenoaks Rural South Division. I congratulate Robert Mayall and hope to speak to him in the near future about issues in the Ward.  
District Council this month.

We agreed the community safety partnership strategy and action plan. I'm sure that the parish will note a lack of action activities on rural crime. It is something I will be taking up with the Cabinet member. As part of Local Government reorganisation, the District has agreed a disposals and transfers policy for assets that would be better looked after at Parish level.

The motion on the major development of Sevenoaks was amended and then agreed by all parties giving residents more of a say over the design. The new development will be approximately 360 houses and a new leisure centre.

I asked a question about plans for Edenbridge Leisure centre which should get a considerable package of refurbishment money in the next 5 years but as yet there are no plans in place for the replacement of the centre.

A member of the Lib Dem group asked a question about the definition of grey belt. Given the whole of both Parishes are in National landscape the only sites that might be considered as grey belt are those sites that are already developed. No farmland in this area would be included.

I have had a number of enquires relating to activity at Spring Hill Farm. I was grateful to Cllr Horsford for his swift response regarding the tree felling. I have yet to have a response from the Traffic commissioner on the vehicle licence for the farm but would be grateful for any update.

**10 PC 30366 John Donegan:** ED had forwarded the Newsletter to PC Members. PC Donegan reported that criminal activity in the Penshurst, Fordcombe, Leigh, Chiddingstone had reduced. Three issues had been raised including builders' fraud where homeowners had been cheated financially for work such as tree surgery and similar work. The officer had provided information on setting up Speedwatch teams. The process of directly remanding criminals was raised. Thefts of high specification, expensive cars continued, thefts from farms were reducing in view of the increase in reports of these and action being taken consequently.

**11. Neighbourhood Report – Cllr Furnell:** Action Fraud are urging the public to look out for phishing emails that relate to extortion as the Suspicious Email Reporting Service (SERS) received over 2,924 reports in March 2025, a staggering increase compared to only 133 previously. Scam emails being circulated from M&S, PayPal, Oasis fans, Boots, Phishing Facebook post.  
Leigh Road, Hildenborough: BMW118 broken into, small items taken. Trench Road, Hildenborough – tools stolen from Ford Transit.

Cllr Furnell noted that free trackers were available for motorbike owners in Canterbury, he asked if it would be possible to make this facility available to farmers to protect their vehicles and equipment. The devices were compact, water-resistant Bluetooth trackers which use apps for locating lost items. This live data would be valuable to officers investigating thefts of motorcycles equipped with trackers, leading to their swift location of and any potential arrests.

## 12. FINANCE/ACCOUNTS:

**Approval of Accounts for submission to External Auditors:** Mazars LLP, Newcastle. Members had been provided with the accounts on a quarterly basis throughout the year plus the final year end detailed information. Members approved the accounts as presented:

- (i) **Annual Internal Audit Report 2024-25:** The RFO had provided all documentation required to enable internal auditors to complete their Audit Report on 8 May 2025. Members had been provided with the accounts prior to the PC meeting.
- (ii) **External Audit: Signing and Approval of Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024-25 (AGAR Form 3),** Members had been provided with quarterly accounts, balanced to bank statements and verified by internal auditors throughout the financial year plus the end of year Internal Report, these having been approved. In view of this the Chairman and the Responsible Finance Officer signed the documentation in accordance with the instructions received from Mazars LLP.
- (iii) **Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024-25** had been circulated to members prior to the meeting, all information provided listed on the Statement was agreed and approved, the Chairman and RFO signed the document.
- (iv) **Section 2 – Accounting Statements – 2024-25:** The form had been completed with the documentation prepared for submission to the Auditors by the RFO. This was approved by the members and signed by the Chairman and the RFO.
- (v) **Exercise of Public Rights:** The RFO advised members that the dates for public access to the accounts had been set from the 2 June – 11 July 2025.
- (vi) **External Audit:** The documentation to be forwarded to the External Auditor by the Clerk/RFO via Royal Mail 'to be signed for'.

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	£46.00
Sevenoaks District Council	Bulk Freight Payment	£305.54
HMRC	Clerk Income Tax/NI	£185.30
Complete Weed Control	Village Weed Treatment	£234.0
Lucy Fuller Rowell	Lengthsman	£100.00
Oast & Oak	Churchyard Maintenance	£990.83
HMRC April 2025	National Insurance/Tax - ED	£185.30

**b. Community Infrastructure Levy:** 2024 – 2025 return submitted to SDC for end of year records, confirmation of receipt received, copies forwarded to members.

**c. Verge Maintenance:** Advice received from Leigh Clerk that funding from KCC this year should be approximately £5420, the contractor is prepared to keep the cost to the same level as 2024 – depending on fuel cost. Cllr Campbell advised that the costs would be in line with 2024, the only issue being fuel costs if they increased. It was unanimously agreed that the quotation be accepted, ED to confirm with Clerk at Leigh.

**d. Bus Shelters:** ED had asked the PC Contractor to check the three units after a report of damage

to one by a vehicle. The three bus shelters had been inspected by the PC Contractor for any repairs, the quotation was £1600 for all three units for labour and materials. The Penshurst unit required concrete spurs at the back, stain and oiling the roof; Smarts Hill required a clean inside and out and oiling of the roof; Fordcombe required some shingles on the roof to be renewed plus oiling roof after staining outside, plus clean inside. It was agreed that the work be authorised, Clerk to action.

**d Penshurst Village Hall Project:** Clerk confirmed that initial information had been received relating to the project which would initially cover building required to provide a new kitchen and new toilets, it was also anticipated that disabled toilet facilities might be possible. The PC would arrange payments to meet invoices submitted at the monthly meetings during the work period

**e. Insurance:** PC Insurance due for renewal; suggestion by Cllr Howard that PC address be altered as required due to Clerk's retirement; plus checking for cover provided which might not be required due to change of clerk.

**f. Highways Meeting:** ED to contact Kent Highways with regard to overdue Parish meeting with Councillors.

### **13. PLANNING: Planning Applications:**

**SE/25/00677/CONVAR: King Meadows, Fordcombe Road, Fordcombe:** New landscaping. Install new swimming pool, pool house and associated landscaping. Demolish existing detached garage and store. with amendment to change the timescale for demolition of the garage and shed.

**SE25/00655/HOUSE: 10 Paddock Close, Fordcombe:** Demolition of single storey side addition and entrance porch, erection of a two-storey side extension and single storey front extension. PC have no comment with regard to this application. **GRANTED**

**25/00372/FUL: Westover Farm, The Lane, Fordcombe:** Change of Use of Residential and Agricultural Land and the installation of an Equestrian American Barn with Hardstanding and Track Connecting to Existing Facilities, and Removal of Existing Stable Building and yard. Penshurst PC have no objections to this application. **Withdrawn**

**25/00084/5/LBCALT: The Oast House, Ashcombe Priory, Chafford Lane, Fordcombe:** Internal alterations, alterations to fenestration and replacement of existing windows and doors. Conversion of garage to habitable rooms. **GRANTED**

**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 been 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.

**22/02983/& SE/22/02984/HOUSE: The Village House, High Street, Penshurst:** Proposed demolition of the existing single storey rear projection, shed and garage and the erection of a replacement single storey rear extension, a new outbuilding and double garage, together with associated landscaping works. **GRANTED**

**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.

**SE/22/03024/FUL: Land Southeast Of Redwood, Penshurst Road, Penshurst:** Conversion of outbuilding to dwelling. **GRANTED**

**SE/22/03058/HOUSE: Gardeners Annexe, Little Chart, Smarts Hill, Penshurst:** New dormers, additional fenestration to annexe. **REFUSED**

**SE25/00145/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.

**SE24/03327/HOUSE: 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. **GRANTED (24/03328/LBCALT Refused)**

**SE/24/03041/FUL: Lake House, Poundsbridge Lane, Poundsbridge, Penshurst:** New dwelling with outbuildings, including self-contained guest accommodation, and swimming pool. Associated hard and soft landscaping works. **GRANTED**

**SE/24/02520/FUL: Fordcombe Village Recreation Ground Fordcombe Road Fordcombe:** Existing single storey storage building 36 sqm and one 15 sqm shipping container to be removed, and to be replaced by storage building of 56 sqm, for storing equipment for charitable functions. **GRANTED**

**SE/24/02585/FUL: Barn North of Little Chafford, Spring Hill, Fordcombe:** Conversion of existing agricultural buildings to residential use. Penshurst Parish Council note the reasons for the refusal of the previous application (23/02304) and consider that these have been fully addressed in the current application. We therefore support the proposed development. The applicant has provided a BNG metric and BNG report. **No Objections Lodged**

**SE/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.

**SE/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.

**SE/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.

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

**SE/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:**

**24/02738/WTCA: Rogues Hill House, Rogues Hill, Penshurst:** Various works to trees.

**24/02722/WTCA: Garden Cottage Fordcombe Road Penshurst:** Various works to trees

**24/02803/WTCA: Rogues House, Rogues Hill, Penshurst:** Beech Tree - Cut back 20% of tree canopy.

**25/00181/WTPO: Daneby Hall, The Lane, Fordcombe: Proposal (T1 & T2) Oaks - reduce lower lateral spread over garage by 30% (G1) group of Oaks - reduce by 30%**

## **14. HIGHWAYS**

**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.

**835121: White/Yellow Lines:** Request for road markings to be reinstated adjacent to hedging from new rectory area down towards entrance to Leicester Square. Work arranged and paid by PC (White lining for this requirement responsibility of parish) and authorised for SDC to complete.

**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

**Chafford Lane Wall:** Notification received that SDC owned the area – now denied, confirmation awaited on way forward with regard to clearance of materials in road and further repair works. ED advised by KCC Highways that SDC liable for reporting problem for action.

**PROW Report 250225697/241097018:** Inadequate drainage on footpath SR465 – Allocated, awaiting inspection.

**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 2.5.2025 – ED asked to report 2 leaks in Leicester Square, Stop Cock access cover no longer in place in vicinity of Stables Cottages/Old Post Office. Cllr Horsford confirmed fresh water leak on Spring Hill, Fordcombe.

## **15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

- i. **PROW – Walters Green: Weaver Cottage now not passable.** Query was raised with regard to width requirements for public footpaths, many in the area had been reduced in width when hedges had been cut.
- ii. **White Lines:** Poundsbridge Area and the 'T' junction in Penshurst by the Village Hall required attention as they were badly worn.
- iii. **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.
- iv. **Ownership – Chafford Lane Property:** It was noted the Land Registry could provide information on historical ownership.

**16. Retirement of the Clerk, Mrs Evelyn Divall:** Cllr Campbell raised the retirement of the Clerk who had worked in the parish for over thirty years and advised her the members wished to show their appreciation for her work. They wished to award her a leaving bonus in recognition of her work and also a bouquet of flowers which was a surprise for her and which she very much appreciated and thanked all those present, she had enjoyed her work, although it had been challenging now and again. A further gift of an apple tree would be provided when planting time was correct for planting.

**Meeting concluded at 8.20 pm**

**PENSHURST PARISH COUNCIL**  
**SCHEDULE OF ACCOUNT**

**MAY 2025**

**Cheque No:**

1217	Penshurst Village Hall	Hall Hire	£46.00
1218	Sevenoaks District Council	Bulk Freighter	£305.54
1219	HMRC	ED Tax/NI	£185.30
1220	Complete Weed Control	Village Weed Treatment	£234.00
1221	Lucy Fuller Rowell	Lengthsman	£100.00
1223	Oast & Oak Services	Churchyard Maintenance	£990.83

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

