

Meopham Parish Council

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A Civility & Respect
Pledge Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 29 July at 7:00pm at the Meopham Cricket Pavilion, Meopham Green, DA13 0DQ

Members Present:

- Cllr S Buchanan
- Cllr D Bramer
- Cllr R Collings
- Cllr D Fisher
- Cllr S Gofton
- Cllr P Haslam – Vice-Chairman
- Cllr D Johnson
- Cllr J McNamara
- Cllr D Sims – Chairman
- Cllr B Wade
- Cllr P Watson

In Attendance:

- L Winter – Clerk
- 18 members of the public

Meeting commenced 19:02

Item 1: Apologies for Absence: To receive and accept apologies

F.C. 52 Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr S Johnson (prior work commitment).

Item 2: Declarations of Members' Interests: To receive declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests for this meeting

F.C. 53 Cllr Bramer, Cllr Buchanan, Cllr Sims, Cllr Wade and Cllr Watson declared for all the closed session items.

Item 3: To approve minutes of the of the meeting held on 08.07.2025

F.C. 54 Cllr Haslam referred to F.C.50 and stated that he had not volunteered to coordinate and the Councillors that had offered to help were Cllr Buchanan, Cllr Fisher and Cllr Wade.

Cllr Haslam referred to F.C.51 and stated that Cllr McNamara needed adding as a councillor who had offered to help.

RESOLVED that: The minutes of the full Council Meeting of 08.07.2025 be agreed.

Item 4: Land at Blackthorn Farm, Culverstone Green: To consider meeting with Esquire Developments

F.C. 55 RESOLVED that: Councillors were happy to meet with Esquire Developments and requested some options for an evening meeting.

Item 5: Basal Cutting: To agree the basal cutting at Meopham Green, Hook Green and Edmund Green as per the quote

F.C. 56 RESOLVED that: The quote of £850 plus VAT be accepted.

Item 6: Streetlights: Column 36 – To accept the quote from UK Power Networks

F.C. 57 RESOLVED that: The quote of £3694 plus VAT be accepted.

Item 7: Hook Green: To consider correspondence received requesting further works at Hook Green, Meopham

F.C. 58 RESOLVED that:

1. Elite Tree Care be requested to give their recommendation of scope of works required to the trees that encroached over Weavers Cottage at Hook Green;
2. A request be submitted to the conservation officer at Gravesham Borough Council following the recommended scope of works;
3. Three quotes be obtained following approval of the works from Gravesham Borough Council;
4. The parishioner affected by the trees be kept in the loop regarding the process and timescales.

Item 8: Standing Orders: To review and approve the Council's Standing Orders for the 2025/2026 municipal year

F.C. 59 RESOLVED that:

- 3(f) public participation be changed to twenty minutes;
3(v) Add The quorum of a Full Council meeting shall be five.

PROPOSED: Cllr Wade. SECONDED: Cllr D Johnson. All in favour.

Item 9: New Website: To agree the additional cost for uploading the remaining documents to the new website

F.C. 60 Councillor Haslam enquired if a high resolution picture and logo had been located to use on the new website. The Clerk advised that they had not but Councillor Collings may be able to help with producing new ones.

RESOLVED that: The additional cost of £700 be approved.

Item 10: MeophamHub: To receive an invitation to the MeophamHub

F.C. 61 Councillor Wade explained the concept of the MeophamHub and that it was something that Meopham Parish Council may like to fund in full or part going forward as a replacement of the Meopham Review or a newsletter. If Councillors were interested we would invite the editor to present the business plan/idea to the next full council meeting.

RESOLVED that: Meopham Parish Council were very interested in the project and invited the editor to present the idea at a future meeting.

Item 11: Judson's Pavilion: To consider the correspondence received from the trustees of The Colts and agree any actions

F.C. 62 Trustees: Keith Walters and Bob Heming were in attendance for this item who gave some background information. Councillors were advised that booking the Pavilion was now through a WhatsApp group administered by Keith. The trustees also agreed to get a set of keys to Meopham Parish Council.

Item 12: Pitfield Green Toilets: To consider the report and decide the next steps

F.C. 63 Following the opinion of each Councillor present the Chairman asked the members of the public present to offer their input.

A member of the public congratulated the chairman on his handling of the topic. This was followed by a number of opinions from the public present with a variety of views on reopening, refurbishment and the need to balance the requirements of parishioners who pay the precept and visitors.

RESOLVED that: Option 1: Re-open with no building upgrades be agreed. Requirements: reinstatement of electricity supply; drainage survey; deep clean; hand washer/dryer and installation; electrical safety check; asbestos survey; legionella testing; service contract (hours to be clearly defined);

Cllr D Johnson PROPOSED and Cllr Buchanan SECONDED. There were 8 votes for and 2 against. Motion was carried.

Item 13: Public Session & External Reports

13.1 Public Session

Disclaimer: The statements made during the Public Session reflect the opinion of the speaker(s) and are not necessarily accurate or factual information.

F.C. 64 A member of the public advised that the Meopham Parish Council logo was located in the dropbox.

F.C. 65 Suspension of Standing Order 3(x) – a meeting shall not exceed a period of two hours.

PROPOSED: Cllr Wade. SECONDED: Cllr Buchanan. All in favour.

13.2 Borough Councillor and County Councillor

F.C. 66 There were no Borough Councillor or County Councillor present.

13.3 Police

F.C. 67 There were no Police present.

F.C. 68 Closed Session – all public and press were asked to leave the meeting.

Cllr Gofton, following a discussion with the Clerk, declared an interest in the closed session items.

Cllr D Johnson stated to all the councillors who had declared an interest that they should leave the meeting, however, under the extenuating circumstances, they were invited to remain in the public seating area to listen to the reasoned decisions being proposed and the ensuing debate, as they were all affected by the decisions. However, they must not take part and everything must remain confidential.

PROPOSED: Cllr Haslam. SECONDED: Cllr D Johnson. All in favour.

Councillor Haslam was Chairman for the remainder of the meeting.

CLOSED SESSION

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that due to the confidential nature of the next item, the public and press were asked to leave the meeting

Item 14: Personnel Committee:

14.1 To receive the draft minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 23.07.25

F.C. 69 The draft minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting of 23.07.25 be received and noted.

14.2 To receive and accept the recommendations of the Personnel Committee

F.C. 70 The HR matter was discussed and resolved fully.

Item 15: Employment Tribunal: To review the letter from DAS Law and consider entering into settlement negotiations

F.C. 71 This item was not required following the acceptance of 14.2.

Item 16: Fraudulent Email: To consider the findings of an internal investigation and to consider taking appropriate action

F.C. 72 This item was not required following the acceptance of 14.2.

The meeting ended at 21:52.