Meopham Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Tuesday 06 May 2025 at 7:00pm
at the Cricket Pavilion, Meopham Green, DA13 0PZ

Members Present:	Cllr S Buchanan – Chairman **for item 1** Cllr D Bramer Cllr A Evans Cllr D Fisher Cllr P Haslam – Vice-Chairman **from item 3** Cllr D Johnson Cllr D Sims – Chairman **from item 2** Cllr B Wade Cllr P Watson
In Attendance:	S Bennett – Clerk for the meeting Apologies given for the Clerk, L Winter 8 members of the public

Meeting commenced 1902

Cllr Evans addressed the meeting with her thoughts on how the council should be conducting itself and how it should be setting up its committee and working group and Chair/Vice Chair positions.

Item 1: **To elect the Chairman of Meopham Parish Council for the 2025/2026 Council Year and to receive the Declaration of Acceptance of Office from the Chairman**

F.C. 01 Cllr Sims was proposed by Cllr Haslam and seconded by Cllr Watson. Elected unanimously.

Cllr Sims signed the Acceptance of Office and thank councillors for their support.

Item 2: **To elect the Vice-Chairman of Meopham Parish Council for the 2025/2026 Council Year and to receive the Declaration of Acceptance of Office from the Vice-Chairman**

F.C. 02 Cllr Haslam was proposed by Cllr Buchanan and seconded by Cllr Bramer. Cllr Evans was proposed by Cllr Watson and seconded by Cllr Fisher. Cllr Haslam received five votes and Cllr Evans three votes.

Cllr Haslam was elected Vice-Chairman of Council and signed the Acceptance of Office.

The Clerk was asked about the potential to elect joint vice-chairs and was advised that it is possible but would need the council to amend its standing orders to clarify who would act as chair and when, and how the right to the casting vote would be fulfilled.

Item 3: **Apologies for Absence: To receive and accept apologies**

F.C. 03 None. All present.

Item 4: **Declarations of Members' Interests: To receive declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests for this meeting**

F.C. 04 None declared.

Item 5: **To approve minutes of the of the meeting held on 15.04.2025**

F.C. 05 RESOLVED that: The minutes of the Full Council meeting of 15 April 2025 be agreed.

Item 6: **Committees & Working Groups – Terms of Reference**

6.1 Personnel Committee: To agree the terms of reference for the Personnel Committee
6.2 Planning: To agree the terms of reference for the Planning Applications Working Group

F.C. 06 This agenda item was deferred. Each terms of reference was last resolved within 6 months.

Item 7: **Membership**

7.1 Personnel Committee: To elect members to the Personnel Committee as per the agreed terms of reference

F.C. 07 It was agreed that the Personnel Committee would consist of the Cllr Evans, Cllr Fisher, Cllr Johnson, Cllr Watson along with Cllr Sims ex officio.

It was agreed that Cllr Haslam would serve as a substitute member.

Any vacancies to be returned to the June Council meeting.

7.2 Planning: To elect members to the Planning Applications Working Group as per the agreed terms of refence

F.C. 08 It was agreed that the membership to be Planning Applications Working Group be retained as per 2024-2025 with exiting councillors removed.

Any vacancies to be returned to the June Council meeting.

Item 8: **Council Governance**

F.C. 09 RESOLVED that:

8.1 The consideration of Standing Orders be deferred until June 2025 and that the clerk be requested to consider the recently released NALC model and to present to council with tracked changes.

2027 The Chairman left the meeting and the Vice-Chairman took the Chair

8.2 The consideration of the Financial Regulations be deferred until a later meeting as the current version was resolved with the last 6 months.
8.3 The Scheme of Delegation be agreed.

2029 The Chairman returned to the meeting and resumed the Chair

Item 9: Annual Review of Council and Administration

F.C. 10 Councillors considered the matters placed before them. Concern was raised that the schedule of meetings might clash with those of the Borough Council and asked that clashes be avoided when setting the schedule to enable borough councillors to be able to attend.

RESOLVED that:

9.1 The schedule of meetings be agreed.
9.2 The starting time of meetings to be 1900.
9.3 The asset register be received but that it be returned to the agenda with the insurance values added.
9.4 The key holder list be agreed but the Clerk to investigate keys Held by persons no longer assisting the council.
9.5 Professional membership fees be agreed.
9.6 That the Software Licences be approved with the current suspension of Parish Online provided that there was no loss of data.
9.7 The arrangements for receiving correspondence be continued.
9.8 The bank signatories be agreed subject to the replacement of Cllr Price with the Chairman and Vice Chairman. If there are subsequent vacancies this to be returned to Council
9.9 Standing Orders and Direct Debits to be agreed.
9.10 The information re insurance cover be received.

Item 10: 2024-25 End-of-Year Financial Matters

F.C. 11 Councillors considered the documentation presented.

RESOLVED that:

10.1 The statement of Internal Control in support of the Annual Governance Statement be agreed
10.2 The Internal Audit report of 2024-2025 be received
10.3 The Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25 of the AGAR be received.
10.4 Section 1 and 2 of the AGAR be deferred to the June Council meeting.

10.5 The bank reconciliation and variance be deferred until June Meeting to follow the Secion1 and 2 agreement
10.6 The financial risk assessment be agreed.

Item 11: **Financial Matters**

F.C. 12 The payment and bank documents were considered.

RESOLVED that:

11.1 The schedule of payments since the last meeting up to 28th April I2025 be agreed.
11.2 The receipts and payments report for the same period be agreed.
11.3 The bank statements be received.
11.4 The council reserves statement be received.

Item 12: **Parish Council Representatives on External Bodies**

F.C. 13 Councillors considered the proposed representatives.

RESOLVED that: All appointments be agreed subject to the substitution of Cllr Price and the inclusion of representatives for the Landscape Group and the PROW and Footpaths Group to be considered a the June Council meeting.

Item 13: **Contracts and Leases Register**

F.C. 14 This item was deferred to the June Council meeting.

Item 14: **Work Programme for 2025/26**

F.C. 15 RESOLVED that: The work programme be received.

Item 15: **Harvel Green**

F.C. 16 RESOLVED that: The request from the Harvel Village Hall Management Committee to use Harvel Green for the Village Fete be agreed.

Item 16: **Community Grants Scheme**

F.C. 17 RESOLVED that: The report from the Finance Officer be agreed and that all the grants issued were in accordance with the Community Grants Policy.

The meeting ended at 8.20pm