Minutes for the Parish Council Meeting held on 12th June 2025 at Shorne Village Hall

PRESENT Mr R Lane (Chairman)
Mr R Theobald
Ms P Clifton
Ms S Lindley
Mr J Bugg
Mr R Hardy
Mr T Rochard-Pullen
Mrs D Salmon (Clerk)

APOLOGIES Mr C Rea

IN ATTENDANCE Ward Cllr L Pearton
1 Parishioner – not in attendance to speak

21. To receive any declarations of interest for any items on the agenda

Mrs Williams declared an interest in item 28.1, as a beneficiary of the livestock grazing agreement. Members agreed to grant a dispensation for Mrs Williams to remain in attendance for item 28.1 for clarifications and to answer any questions, but Mrs Williams will not take part in any decision making.

22. To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 8th May 2025

The minutes were approved as a true record.

23. Any items raised by Parishioners in attendance (at Chairman's discretion)

Parishioner in attendance did not wish to raise any items.

24. To confirm Members' Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs)

The Monitoring Officer requests that Parish Councillors review their declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests on an annual basis. All members confirmed that the Disclosable Pecuniary Interest previously completed remain unchanged. Clerk to ask confirmation from Mr Rea via email.

25. Finance Report

The finance report and a copy of the account balances were circulated with the agenda and are set out below:

Date	Description	Net	VAT	Total
BARCLAYS CURRENT ACCOUNT				
29/03/2025	**B/fwd Reconciled Bank Balance**			**£7,686.40**
RECEIPTS				
01/04/2025	Gravesham Borough Council Precept 25/26	£46,000.00	£0.00	£46,000.00
	Total Receipts for April Statement			**£46,000.00**
TRANSFERS				
10/04/2025	From Barclays Reserve	£1,961.83	£0.00	£1,961.83

10/04/2025	To Barclays Precept Reserve	£43,000.00	£0.00	£43,000.00
PAYMENTS				
10/04/2025	Sainsbury - Parish Assembly Refreshments	£46.32	£9.27	£55.59
10/04/2025	No 3 Coffee Shop - Parish Assembly Refreshments	£192.50	£0.00	£192.50
10/04/2025	KALC - Annual Subscription	£996.73	£199.35	£1,196.08
10/04/2025	To CCLA Asset Renewals Fund - Annual transfer	£3,000.00	£0.00	£3,000.00
11/04/2025	Shorne Village Hall - Quarterly Committee Room Hire	£126.00	£0.00	£126.00
28/04/2025	Airlandline - Telephone provider	£9.99	£2.00	£11.99
28/04/2025	Clerk Allowances	£51.00	£0.00	£51.00
28/04/2025	Clerk Salary	£1,046.50	£0.00	£1,046.50
	Total Payments for April Statement			**£5,679.66**
29/04/2025	**C/fwd Reconciled Bank Balance**			**£6,968.57**
RECEIPTS				
30/04/2025	CCLA Dividend Re General Asset Renewals Fund	£68.13	£0.00	£68.13
30/04/2025	CCLA Dividend Re Crabbles Bottom Fund	£1,200.52	£0.00	£1,200.52
	Total Receipts for May Statement			**£1,268.65**
TRANSFERS				
16/05/2025	To Barclays General Reserve Re CCLA Dividend	£68.13	£0.00	£68.13
23/05/2025	From Barclays Precept Reserve	£10,000.00	£0.00	£10,000.00
PAYMENTS				
06/05/2025	Amazon - Stationary - Clerk purchase	£25.33	£5.07	£30.40
06/05/2025	Versatille Property Services Ltd - Crabbles Bottom Fence Repair	£295.00	£59.00	£354.00
19/05/2025	M Fielder-White - Internal Audit	£90.00	£0.00	£90.00
19/05/2025	Gozzett Tree Surgery & Tree Management - Crabbles Bottom 1st Cut	£715.00	£143.00	£858.00
28/05/2025	CPRE Annual Subscription (*only 5% is accountable for VAT*) *Zero VAT*	£56.40	£0.00	£56.40
	20% VAT	£3.00	£0.60	£3.60
28/05/2025	One.com - Annual Email Hosting	£239.35	£47.87	£287.22
28/05/2025	Zurich - Annual Insurance	£698.80	£0.00	£698.80
28/05/2025	Airlandline - Telephone provider	£9.99	£2.00	£11.99
28/05/2025	Clerk Allowances	£51.00	£0.00	£51.00
28/05/2025	Clerk Salary	£1,046.50	£0.00	£1,046.50
	Total Payments for May Statement			**£3,487.91**
30/05/2025	**C/fwd Reconciled Bank Balance**			**£14,681.18**

BARCLAYS SAVINGS ACCOUNTS		
BANK BALANCES 30/05/2025		
	Barclays Current Account	£14,681.18
	Barclays Reserve Re Precept	£90,789.84
	Barclays Reserve Re General Savings	£68.13
	TOTAL	**£105,539.15**

The payments and receipts were noted and approved.

26. Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR)

26.1 To review the internal auditor's report and recommended actions

Mrs Salmon has previously circulated the internal auditor's report. The internal auditor was satisfied that the Council is run in accordance with current Financial Regulations and Standing Orders, that there is transparency in the operating of the finances, and that all governance objectives have been met. The internal auditor noted that we had taken action to close non-interest bearing bank accounts and to transfer reserves to sound long-term investments as recommended last year.

Mr Lane said that once again this is a very pleasing result, and conveyed his thanks to Mrs Salmon for her work in achieving this very satisfactory result.

26.2 To review and approve the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1)

Members reviewed the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1). It was noted that all governance objectives had been met. The Annual Governance Statement was **approved**, and was signed by Mr Lane and Mrs Salmon.

26.3 To review and approve the Accounting Statements (Section 2)

Members reviewed The Accounting Statements (Section 2). The figures included have previously been agreed by The Clerk and the Internal Auditor. It was noted that the value of Fixed Assets in box 9 has increased to reflect the transfer of reserves to CCLA long-term investments. The Accounting Statements were **approved**, and were duly signed by Mrs Salmon and Mr Lane.

Mrs Salmon was requested to publish the full AGAR and Notice of the period for the Exercise of Public Rights on the Parish Council website. Although it is not a legal requirement, Mr Lane requested that the Internal Audit also be added.

27. To review an interim report from the Planning & Highways Committee

- Mrs Lindley, Mr Lane, and Mr Theobald attended the Gravesham Borough Council Planning Committee meeting on Wednesday 11th June. Mrs Lindley was registered to speak on behalf of the Parish Council regarding application: 20250110 Land South of Pear Tree Lane. The GBC Planning Committee approved the application with limited acknowledgment of the concerns raised by consultees.
- Since the above meeting, Mr Lane has written to Gravesham's CEO and Director of Environment to express concerns regarding the interpretation of grey belt and the way that this application has been determined, including the timing and lack of weight given to objections, and will discuss this at the next meeting with the Director of Environment.
- Due to the work involved by Mrs Lindley in advance of speaking at the meeting on 11th June, there are no other updates for planning, or highways, at this time. A full update will be provided to members at the next Planning & Highways committee meeting on 10th July.

Meeting suspended at 7:50pm for Cllr Pearton to express his thanks to Mrs Lindley for her comprehensive presentation at the GBC Planning Committee meeting. Cllr Pearton reported on his continuing actions as Ward Councillor regarding the protection of Green Belt land. There was a general discussion on the adverse implications to Green Belt land presented by the latest revision of the National Planning Policy Framework. **Meeting resumed at 7:54pm**.

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28. To review an interim report from the Footpaths, Land & Properties Committee

- The National Nature Reserve (NNR) launch event was held on 30th May at Shorne Country Park. Ms Clifton attended the event and expressed to members how successful it was.
- Ms Clifton has circulated the Crabbles Bottom Management Plan, produced by the Farm Advisory Services Team (FAST).
- Mrs Williams has currently sited a water bowser at Crabbles Bottom following the dry weather. Ms Clifton has been watering the recently planted trees with a lightweight watering can but does need more volunteers should the dry weather continue. It was agreed to meet Mrs Williams's reasonable expenses for providing the bowser.
- There continues to be no replacement for John Pelham, Public Rights of Way Officer at Kent County Council, but footpaths are being suitably looked after by KCC.
- Ms Clifton has reported the work required at Crown Lane, and Malthouse Lane, to KCC.
- Colin Lawrence (contractor) has completed his final cut of the grass verges. Ms Clifton advised members at the Planning & Highways committee meeting on 22nd May, item 17.6.1, that KCC had cut the verges around the village. She has since identified that this was done by Mr Lawrence, not KCC.
- The next Footpaths, Land & Properties committee meeting is on 26th June.

28.1 Approval of the Crabbles Bottom Grazing of Livestock Agreement

Mrs Williams has declared a pecuniary interest in this matter but has been granted a dispensation to remain in attendance for clarifications and to answer any questions, but will not take part in the decision making.

The proposal for the grazing of livestock at Crabbles Bottom has been agreed by Ms Clifton and Mrs Williams and reviewed by Mr Lane with amendments incorporated and was circulated to Members for review on 23rd May. The proposal is that the agreement is approved. The agreement was approved.

29. To receive any report from Borough Councillor(s)

Cllr Pearton was in attendance at the meeting. It was noted that Cllr Meade had spoken in opposition to planning application 20250110 at the Planning Committee on 11th June on behalf of all Higham & Shorne Ward Councillors. Cllr Pearton discussed his concerns over the future development within the area and his continuing actions to protect the area from inappropriate development.

30. To receive any report from County Councillor

No report received.

It was noted that Cllr Morton had spoken in opposition to planning application 20250110 at the Planning Committee on 11th June.

Mr Lane also noted that Cllr Morton has taken an interest in the highway issues at Shorne Crossroads, and other local matters.

31. To note the date of the Civic & Patronal Service on 29th June 2025

Mr Lane conveyed his apologies, but he will not be able to attend as he will be away on holiday. Mr Theobald as Vice Chairman will be the principal representative of the Parish Council. The Mayor Jenny Wallace will be there, as will Diane Morton our County Councillor. Lauren Sullivan MP has been invited as have our Ward Councillors, so it would be good to get a good attendance from the Parish Council.

32. To Review and Approve the Council's Health & Safety Policy

The policy was last approved on 11th April 2024 and was recirculated for review on 19th May. The policy was approved.

33. Correspondence requiring action (to be circulated before the meeting)

No correspondence received.

34. Update on Potential Land Exchange and Request for Delegated Authority

Mr Lane and Mr Riddick met officers from KCC's PROW Team on 3rd June to discuss the potential diversion of footpath NS166 which would be necessary to facilitate any proposed land exchange. KCC has advised that they have a 2½ year waiting list before they can consider any new footpath diversion application but saw no reason not to proceed with the application ASAP, and have provided an application form. The initial review will not incur significant costs, and we can withdraw the application at any time.

Mr Lane requested delegated authority to proceed with the process on behalf of the Council, and to draft a consultation document to advise parishioners of the proposal, whilst keeping Members informed. This was approved.

35. General matters raised by Members for discussion

- Mr Theobald has written to Network Rail for an update on the delayed footbridge installation at Shornemead Crossing. He has received no response but will continue to chase.
- Mr Theobald has reported the weed growth at Shorne Cross Roads to the Highways Authority (KCC).
- Mrs Lindley advised members that the drain issue on Tanyard Hill is currently under control, but further tests are still being carried out.
- Mr Lane currently has 600+ names on the petition regarding nuisance vehicles at Park Pale. This needs to exceed 750 names for KCC to review it.

There being no further public business, the **public meeting closed at 8.17pm**. Cllr Pearton and parishioner in attendance left the room.

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36. Matters to be discussed in private under item 13 of Standing Orders

Possible options for the support of the Village Hall were discussed.

There being no further business, the **meeting closed at 8.35pm**.

Signed Mr Lane:…….. Dated:……..