

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1



## Minutes of the High Wych Ordinary Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2026 8pm in High Wych Memorial Hall

Cllr Tom Payne (TP) Chairman  
Cllr John Andreotti (JA)\*  
Cllr Jacqueline Jackson (JJ)\*  
Cllr Carrie Payne (CP)\*  
Cllr Brian Sullivan (BS)\*  
Cllr Natalie Higgins (NH)\* following co-option  
**\* Denotes present**

Present: One member of the public

Clerk: Colin Marks, Clerk to the Parish Council

The Chairman opened the meeting at 8.34pm.

**ACTION**

**26.037 Apologies for absence**

1. Councillors: Tom Payne – business. **Approved**
2. Others: Cllr Eric Buckmaster; PC Shelly Marshall

**26.038 Declarations of Interest and requests for dispensations**

1. **Interests declared:** None
2. **Dispensation requests:** None.

**26.039 Co-option**

Natalie Higgins' co-option application was considered and it was **RESOLVED that Natalie Higgins be co-opted as a member of the Parish Council.** The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was duly signed and Cllr Higgins joined the meeting.

**Clerk**

No other co-option applications were received for the two remaining vacant seats.

**26.040 Approval of Minutes**

1. **RESOLVED: to approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2026.** The Chairman signed the Minutes.

**Clerk**

***The meeting was not suspended for public comments***

**26.041 Chairman's announcements**

Cllr John Andreotti as the presiding Chair said he had no announcements; however, Chairman Tom Payne sent the following notes to be read in his absence:

*An update on a number of open actions for me from the March meeting.*

*I investigated the removal of the two vehicles in the MH car park. They were Jaguar LK54 RXZ and Mazda MX-5 EJ04 YEK. The Jaguar's MOT had expired and I have reported via the Hertfordshire County Council web portal for removal. The Mazda has a valid MOT (until the 27th of August) so I don't believe it can be considered as abandoned. I would propose a note be affixed to it requesting that it be moved. I am happy to do this but want to confirm that with the council.*

*I have removed the bin outside the coffee lounge. It is currently stored at home.*

*I looked at the planter on the field with John. In my view it should be removed as it is too decayed to be repaired and the plants in it are overgrown and not slightly or to me particularly worth preserving. Carrie can give a sense of the cost of removal. I would support replacing it but we need to have a plan for the plants to be maintained. John and I spoke to the HTC about that but they raised the reasonable concern that they are often not at the Pavilion for several weeks at a time. Potentially the Manor of Groves may be willing to help given they have grounds-keepers at work across the road?*

Chairman Tom Payne's comments were considered under the appropriate agenda items.

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1

## 26.042 East Herts Rural Police Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT).

### 1. Crime report

The Chairman read the following report from PC Shelly Marshall:

*Apologies for our non-attendance at the meeting.*

*We are in the process of closing our current policing priority which was to reduce reports of Road Traffic Offences on Harlow Road, this has been a successful period, and we are confident that the increase in police presence has had a positive impact on the location. The new priority has been confirmed as increasing feelings of public safety at Pishiobury Park.*

*In recent weeks a cross-border policing operation has taken place between Hertfordshire, Essex and Met Police, this operation saw the highest ever number of Herts officers involved.*

*Hertfordshire officers based their work around the main roads in and out of High Wych and Sawbridgeworth for the purpose of this operation.*

*Between Hertfordshire & Essex Police the following was achieved during the evening 10 x Persons arrested (including for offences of drink/drug drive & possession with intent to supply drugs):*

*20 x Individuals stop/searched*

*12 x Intelligence submissions*

*33 x Traffic offence reports*

*10 x vehicles seized*

*The team continues to work closely with our colleagues from the Neighbourhood Policing Team in Harlow, conducting proactive operations to prevent and deter criminals using the main roads in and out of High Wych and Sawbridgeworth via the Essex borders.*

*We will be hosting a street meet for the community to come and speak to us on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> June at 7pm, we will be at the vehicle entrance to Rivers Hospital. Further details to follow on Herts connected.*

*Crime remains low in High Wych, police patrols will continue throughout the summer as an opportunity to engage and deter criminality.*

It was noted that police presence in the parish has increased.

The Council approved Cllr Tom Payne's offer to put notices on the cars left in the car park.

TP

Noted: that the coffee shop has noted that the bin has been removed.

## 26.043 Reports by County and District Councillors

County Cllr Eric Buckmaster's written report is included in the Minutes as Appendix B.

District Cllr Ian Devonshire did not submit a report.

## 26.044 Planning

### 1. New Applications:

3/26/0531/HH	<b>Bonnys Row:</b> Two storey side extension and part single/part two storey rear extension; relocation of front door and storm porch; alterations to fenestration <b>RESOLVED: To object on the following grounds:</b> <b>1. The proposal significantly increases the building footprint and therefore represents over development of the site.</b> <b>2. The Parish Council is also concerned that there has previously been unapproved development of the site and against which there remain outstanding issues.</b> <b>3. Within a Group 2 Village, it is considered to be in breach of the 2018 East Herts District Plan Policy VILL2.V (a), (b), (c), (g).</b>
--------------	---

Clerk

2. Decision Notices. As detailed in Appendix A below – for information only

3. Other planning matters, including items received too late for the agenda: NONE

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1

26.045 Finance

**1. Report of the Council's Accounts at year-end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026**

Opening cashbook balance 28 <sup>th</sup> February 2026	22,255.18
Plus income to year-end 31 <sup>st</sup> March	0.00
Minus expenditure to year-end 31 <sup>st</sup> March	<u>1,320.98</u>
<b>Balance available to Council at year-end 31<sup>st</sup> March</b> (cashbook balance)	<b>20,934.20</b>
Plus unrepresented payments	<u>0.00</u>
<b>Bank statement/cashbook balance year-end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026</b>	<b><u>20,934.20</u></b>

**RESOLVED: That the Accounts Statement to year-end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 be approved.**

Clerk

**2. Bank Reconciliation at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026**

Cashbook balance 31 <sup>st</sup> March	£20,934.20
Bank balance 31 <sup>st</sup> March	£20,934.20

Clerk

**RESOLVED: To agree the bank reconciliation as presented.**

**3. Performance against 2025/26 budget at year-end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026**

	Budget	Actual 31 <sup>st</sup> March
Income	22,036	22,709
PWLB Loan	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Income total</b>	<b><u>22,036</u></b>	<b><u>22,709</u></b>

	Budget	Actual 31 <sup>st</sup> March
Expenditure Net of VAT	24,445	19,839
PWLB Loan servicing	0	<u>0</u>
<b>Expenditure balance Net of VAT</b>	<b><u>24,445</u></b>	<b><u>19,839</u></b>

Budgetted deficit 2025/26	- 2,409
Actual net budget surplus year-end 31 <sup>st</sup> March	2,870 (net of £812 VAT)
Opening bank balance 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2025	18,876
Bank balance year-end 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2026	20,934 (£812 VAT to be reclaimed)

**RESOLVED: To agree the performance against budget as presented.**

Clerk

**4. Payments for approval: All expenditure to be made under The General Power of Competence As at 13<sup>th</sup> May**

		Value	VAT incl
HAPTC	Annual membership subs	500.71	
Clerk reimburse	Office stationery	7.99	
Color-Board Ltd	Poo and litter bins April	120.00	20.00
High Wych Mem Hall	Electricity car park lights April	27.06	
High Wych Mem Hall	Post Office subsidy Q2 2026	96.25	
Zurich Municipal	Annual insurance 01/06/26 - 31/05/27	1,370.35	
Clerk	Salary April	514.20	
HMRC	PAYE April	128.40	
HMRC	Employer's NIC	33.84	
Unity Trust Bank	Monthly service charge	7.00	
Mokut Mower Services	Grass cutting 1 <sup>st</sup> , 15 <sup>th</sup> , 29 <sup>th</sup> April	555.00	
Accountancy Services	Internal Audit for AGAR	130.00	
Clerk	Expenses April-May	21.80	
Clerk	Salary May	514.00	
HMRC	PAYE May	128.60	
HMRC	Employer's NIC	33.84	
Unity Trust Bank	Monthly service charge TBC	7.00	
** Grass cutting KGV Field High Wych and Allen's Green village green			

Clerk

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1

VAT included <i>To be reclaimed under VAT Act 1994 (1), (3)</i>	20.00
---	-------

**RESOLVED: to approve all payments as per the Clerk's report**

## 5. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2025/26

1. **RESOLVED: that the Parish Council meets the criteria and wishes to be an exempt authority** Clerk
2. The RFO and the presiding Chairman signed the **Certificate of Exemption** Clerk
3. The **Internal Auditor's signed report** was received and noted. **RESOLVED: To approve the signed Internal Audit Report** Clerk
4. **Section 1: The Annual Governance Statement** was received and noted. **RESOLVED: To approve Section 1: The Annual Governance Statement as presented.** Clerk  
The Clerk and the presiding Chairman signed Section 1.
5. **Section 2 Accounting Statements**, signed by the RFO, was received and considered.
6. **RESOLVED: To approve the signed Section 2: Accounting Statements as presented.** Clerk  
The presiding Chairman signed Section 2.
7. **RESOLVED: to set the 30-working day period for the Exercise of Public Rights as 3 June to 14 July** Clerk
8. To note the AGAR submission deadline is **Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July** Clerk

## 26.046 1. Highways

1. Blounts Lane speeding issues: Ongoing possible resolution with Cllr Eric Buckmaster. EB/TP

## 2. Footpaths and other Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

1. The Clerk noted that Simon Thake has advised that after a number of years doing the job he has not been awarded the new PROW maintenance contract.

## 3. Other Parish Matters

### 1. High Wych Memorial Hall and car park

1. Update on matters raised at the November meeting:
  - iii) Moving PC records from HWMH: Cllr Brian Sullivan to check if the filing cabinet can be stored at Allen's Green Village Hall. BS
2. A parishioner's request to install two EV charging points at the HWHM car park was considered. It was agreed that this would not be possible for the following reasons:
  - i) There is no available electricity supply the Memorial Hall.
  - ii) The car park is too small to provide the necessary spaces.
  - iii) Other local options are already available – eg, there are two at the Manor of Groves.

### 2. Other matters raised

1. The issues at the bus stop as described by two parishioners earlier in the evening at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Electorate were again noted. Where illegal activity may be involved, the concerns should be forwarded to the police.
2. New domain and email addresses: Ongoing with two councillors yet to successfully set up their dedicated email. The Clerk to liaise with TEEC to set up a dedicated email for Cllr Natalie Higgins. CP/JJ Clerk
3. Parishioners' concerns about travellers and other matters: The concerns raised about the vulnerability of Allen's Green and High Wych Village Greens to being used as illegal caravan sites was considered together with a request for bollards to be erected along the perimeter with the road. Cllr Brian Sullivan to explore the cost of installing bollards. BS
4. Dog/litter bin servicing contractor: The Clerk said that East Herts have been given the bin locations together with photos of the bins. East Herts have yet to decide whether to take on the servicing contract. Clerk

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1

- 3. Other matters raised**
- Flower / Plant holder at the corner of the play area: Having assessed the condition of the plant container, it is beyond repair and is to be removed. **RESOLVED: to consider a replacement at a later meeting if regular plant maintenance can be arranged.** TP Clerk
  - Adding yellow lines to car park to identify accessible parking. The Clerk to raise an order with D Line Markings Ltd. Cllr John Andreotti to arrange for the work to be done. Clerk JA
  - Cars left in Car Park: With reference to agenda item 26.041 above, it was agreed that Cllr Tom Payne's offer be accepted to affix a notice to the Mazda requesting that it be moved. TP
  - Additional bin outside HTC pavilion: It was agreed not to get an additional bin. TP
  - Removal of bin by Coffee Lounge: Removed and stored by Cllr Tom Payne. TP
- 26.047 1. Playing Fields and buildings**
- 1. Harlow Theatre Company**
    1. No issues raised.
  - 2. Play area**
    1. Disintegrating swing seat cover: Sovereign Play should rectify under warranty. Cllr Tom Payne confirmed these are still under warranty. TP
  - 3. Allen's Green Village Green traveller concerns**

Dealt with under item 26.046.3.2.3 above BS
  - 4. Scarecrow Festival**

A request to allow some participating organisers to park on the playing field was discussed at length at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Electorate earlier in the evening. Cllr John Andreotti, as a charity managing trustee of the Playing Field - which is also a registered Village Green – was adamant that under the Trust's governing document and also under Registered Village Green legislation, vehicles are not permitted to drive, and therefore park, on the playing field. The Clerk said that the Parish Council is only the Custodian Trustee with no management powers and permission therefore rests with the trustees. However, the Clerk agreed that Cllr Andreotti was correct in his assertion regarding vehicular access to the playing field/registered village green.
  - 5. Other parish matters**

None raised.
- 2. Allotments**
1. The water leak from the new meter has been reported and is being resolved by Affinity Water.
  2. Allotment hedge trimming: Cllr Carrie Payne to obtain a quote from Alan Felsted for cutting the hedge prior to the Scarecrow Festival in September. CP
- 26.048 Correspondence:** The list of correspondence was noted as it appeared on the Agenda:
- Parishioner: Request for Council to consider installing 2 EV charging points at the car park (26.046.3.1.2)
  - Parishioner: Access to Allen's Green Village Green concerns (26.047.1.3)
  - Parishioner: Traveller and other concerns High Wych (26.046.3.1.3)
  - EHDC: litter/dog bin servicing contract (26.046.3.2.4)
- 26.049 Late items and items for future agendas**
1. Late items raised: None
  2. Obtain quote for trimming allotments boundary hedge before Scarecrow Festival (26.047.2.2)
  3. Other items raised for future agendas: None

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1

## 26.050 Date and venue of next Parish Council meeting

*It was agreed that the July meeting would be convened on July 1<sup>st</sup>, ie two weeks earlier than originally planned due to councillor availability.*

Clerk

**1<sup>st</sup> July** Allen's Green Village Hall; **16<sup>th</sup> September** High Wych Memorial Hall;

**18<sup>th</sup> November** Allen's Green Village Hall; **20<sup>th</sup> January 2027** High Wych Memorial Hall

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 10pm.

Signed.....Dated .....

## APPENDIX A

### 26.044.2 26.044.2 PLANNING DECISION NOTICES for information only as at 7<sup>th</sup> May

3/26/0228/HH	Templewood, High Wych Road: Two storey front porch extension, raising of ridge height and adding 3 dormers to front elevation and fenestration alterations	REFUSED
3/26/0247/HH	1 Stepped Gable Mews, High Wych Lane: Replacement windows and doors.	Awaited
3/25/1578/FUL	Little Toad Hall, 3 Trimms Green: Demolish sheds; site a mobile holiday home and new boundary fence.	Awaited

## APPENDIX B

### E Buckmaster County Councillor Report May 2026

Following our Area SEND monitoring inspection in October 2025, the Secretary of State for Education has confirmed the decision to lift Hertfordshire's Improvement Notice. The decision recognises key improvements and progress made across the local area partnership, including stronger governance and quality assurance, improved performance against statutory timescales, better use of data, and more meaningful coproduction with children, young people and families.

#### Albury School

#### WHETHER TO AGREE TO THE STATUTORY PROPOSAL TO CLOSE ALBURY Church of England VA PRIMARY SCHOOL ON 31 AUGUST 2026

DECISION: -Cabinet, in relation to the proposal to close Albury C of E VA Primary School, decided to approve the proposal. The cabinet decision has subsequently been called in and will be discussed at Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

#### Hertfordshire moves forward with franchising

Hertfordshire County Council is progressing with its involvement in the Government's Bus Reform and Franchising Pilot Programme. Bus franchising could improve routes, fares, and service standards by giving it more control over how services are run. Mark Doran, Executive Director for Growth and Environment, said: "This is an exciting step for Hertfordshire. More regular and reliable bus services could make a real difference to our residents."

#### Hertfordshire County Council appoints Believ to deliver £38m of EV infrastructure |

Hertfordshire County Council has appointed electric vehicle (EV) charge point operator (CPO) Believ to assist in the £38 million rollout of public EV charging infrastructure for residents without off-street parking.

Mark Doran, Executive Director for Growth and Environment, said: "We know that lack of access to home charging can be a barrier for many people, particularly those without driveways. This programme will help address that by providing reliable, convenient charging options closer to where people live. It also supports our commitment to growing a greener Hertfordshire by reducing emissions and enabling more sustainable journeys across the county."

#### £169m sales of Hertfordshire council land and buildings expected by 2030

Hertfordshire County Council has agreed plans that could see £169 million raised from the sale of land and buildings by March 2030 as part of a new strategic asset management plan. The proposed disposals are intended to help address a significant funding gap, with the council stating that assets

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1

should only be retained where they directly support services, deliver community benefits or generate income.

## **Consultation on Bus Services Help us choose new stop locations - HertsLynx Survey**

HertsLynx is Hertfordshire's on-demand bus service, providing flexible transport in rural and less well-served areas. We want to make HertsLynx easier for people to use. We're looking at where we could add new stops. Your feedback will help us decide.

[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/)

Closes 8th May 2026. Separate email sent to local parishes

## About HertsLynx

HertsLynx is an on-demand bus service serving villages in North and East Herts and fixed destinations in Key Hub Towns: Bishop's Stortford, Royston, Baldock, Stevenage, Hitchin and Letchworth. The HertsLynx service is designed to improve connections between rural areas and town centres, as well as expand access to employment, education, healthcare and shopping.

## **UPDATE ON DELIVERY OF NEW SCHOOL PLACES TO SUPPORT EDUCATION INFRASTRUCTURE TO SERVE THE GILSTON DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL TO CAPITAL SPEND AGAINST S106 DEVELOPER FUNDING**

Cabinet agreed to authorise:

- (i) approval of the capital budget for a 3FE Primary School in Village 1 of £18.53m (DfE scorecard cost plus indexation and 10% sustainability uplift) – funding dependent upon timing of programme (either through Housing Investment Grant or S106);
- (ii) approval of the capital budget for Village 7 Primary School of £18.53m (funded by s106 contributions);
- (iii) approval to allocate funding from s106 contributions (as funding is received) for Village 1 Primary School (dependent upon timing and HIG) and Village 7 Primary School; and
- (iv) approval for the final contract value of Village 1 primary school and Village 7 primary school schemes to be delegated to the Executive Director of Childrens Services & Education, in consultation with the Director of Finance and the Executive Members of Education, SEND & Inclusion and Resources and Performance.

Cabinet also noted that the Council will, at an appropriate time in the school delivery programme, run a competition to seek an appropriate School Trust to run the new school(s) within the development.

County Cllr Eric Buckmaster, May 2026

## **COUNCILLOR ACTIONS ARISING**

### Cllr Tom Payne

- Sign the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office before the July meeting
- HWMH. Discuss with HWMH Chairman: management requirements; ongoing storage of PC documents – to check possibility of storing at Allen's Green Village Hall
- Allotments (with Cllr Carrie Payne)
- Gilston development
- Blounts Lane S&V study – liaise with Cllr Eric Buckmaster and parishioner and contact Police & Crime Commissioner to see if grant funding is available
- Contact Sovereign Play re warranty on disintegrating swing seat
- Monitor play area risk items in RPII report (with Cllr Natalie Higgins)
- Remove and dispose of plant holder at corner of play area; explore maintenance possibilities if new planter installed
- Affix removal notice to car in car park

### Cllr John Andreotti

- HTC liaison
- Car park liaison
- Monitor playing field and open spaces issues
- Attend Police community engagement
- Arrange yellow lining for car park

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1

## Clr Carrie Payne

- Monitor Highways issues, including parking
- Allotments (with Clr Tom Payne)
- Get quote for allotments boundary hedge cutting for Scarecrow Festival

## Clr Jacqueline Jackson

- Footpaths, Public Rights of Way and accessibility matters
- Attend the next Police Cross Border meeting and report back to Council
- Follow up co-option prospects

## Clr Brian Sullivan

- Check with AGVH whether a filing cabinet of PC papers can be stored in the VH
- Obtain costs for installing bollards along the verge of the village greens
- Liaise with police on Police Locality issues

## Clr Natalie Higgins

- Monitor play area risk items raised in RPII report (when received)

## Clerk

- Set up agreed bank payments
- Planning comments
- Hall booking for next meeting
- Website: upload papers; updating and email changes to .gov.uk
- Add Fireworks Code and policy to website
- AGAR 2025/26 to external auditor; Public Rights notice
- Raise order for car park yellow lining
- Add Christmas tree to September agenda

## ALL

- Seek to find co-optees to fill vacancies
- Set up and use councillor .gov.uk email addresses

DRAFT

**Blank page**