



MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 8th SEPTEMBER 2025

Present

Councillors Mr S Hoskins (Chair), Mr S Dunn, Mr K Rhatigan, Mr J Woodford and the Clerk, Mr S Marshall.

Cllr Mellor, Cllr Conquest and members of the public were also present.

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Cllr Parker and post meeting from Cllr Bound.

The Chair explained that there had been two resignations of Parish Councillors over the summer.

2. Declaration of interest

None.

3. Minutes of previous meeting for approval

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 9th June 2025 were solely approved by the Chair and signed by the Chair as a true record.

4. Matters arising & Outstanding Action Points

Since Mr Sunley had resigned from the Parish Council, the Chair agreed to acquire the results from the allotments survey and to arrange for them to be available on the Parish Council's website. Further to discussion, the Parish Council would consider postponing any further work on the Ashford Hill allotments project until decisions had been made regarding the structure of the new devolved unitary Council.

The allotments questionnaire that had been undertaken had produced very little interest from residents as far as wanting to undertake an allotment. The Chair asked for residents to express their opinions regarding such a project during the interim period.

Cllr Rhatigan expressed concern regarding the number of vehicles parked on the Ashford Hill Road in Headley and believed regardless of any future MUGA project, that additional parking should be provided to avoid the need for drivers to park on pavements and open spaces.

Cllr Woodford had previously raised a staffing issue and the Chair confirmed that the matter had been addressed by Councillors and would be reviewed again after 3 months.

The notification of a broken footpath sign by Old Lane in Ashford Hill had been dealt with by the Chair.

The new covered bin for Ashford Hill recreation ground had been installed and was proving to be successful in storing waste before collection.

The unaligned 'beware bends' sign on A339 just south of Cheam School had been repaired.

The Chair reported that several projects had been completed over the summer which included new play panels for the playgrounds, maintenance work on the wooden panelling of the Headley Pavilion, new noticeboards installed in both villages, Headley bus shelters cleaned and repaired, and additional benches installed on Ashford Hill recreation ground.

The goal mouths on the Headley recreation ground had been re-seeded with grass seed over the summer, but it had been difficult to grow during the dry period.

A new Speed Indicator Device for Ashford Hill had been purchased and installed over the summer.

Final repairs to the damaged height barrier in the Ashford Hill car park would soon be completed.

A decision by the County Council's Commons Commissioner regarding an application to deregister land wrongly registered as common land would be made soon.

5. **Highways issues**

Cllr Woodford strongly expressed his ongoing concerns regarding the condition of local roads and how they posed serious safety issues for drivers as identified by a specific example of how damage had been caused to a vehicle. Cllr Woodford explained that whilst road repairs were marked up to identify the works required, there was very little progress in the actual repair of road surfaces. This opinion was endorsed by Cllr Rhatigan who explained the situation of totally unsatisfactory local road surfaces.

6. Planning Applications

Cllr Rhatigan offered to undertake the scrutiny of planning applications for both Ashford Hill and Headley which the Chair would consider as an option and expressed his appreciation to Cllr Rhatigan.

Previous applications :

25/01386/ROC – Catts Farm, Newbury Road, Headley

- Variation of conditions relating to application 20/03597/FUL – 4 no. dwellings - to improve design, safety and access to development

Re-iteration of original objection

25/01885/FUL - Catts Place, Newbury Road, Headley

- Construction of vehicular access.

No objection

25/01512/PIP – Land adjacent to Harrow Drive, Headley

- Permission in principle for a single residential dwelling

No objection

25/01466/FUL – Home Farm Lodge, Newbury Road, Headley

- Construction of storage barn,
- New access with gate and driveway
- Erection of soundproof fencing along boundary of the A339

No objection

25/01613/HSE & 25/01614/LBC – The White House, Galley Lane, Headley

- Erection of a rear single storey extension
- Repair and replacement of roof finishes to main house
- Reconfiguration and relocation of kitchen
- Reconfiguration of first floor barn bedroom & brickwork/mortar repairs

No objection

25/01711/TDC – Land adjacent to social housing north of Galley Lane, Headley

- Technical details consent for the erection of 4 no. dwellings in accordance with PIP approval 24/02973/PIP

Re-iteration of original objection

25/01963/RES – Land at Galley Lane, Headley

- Approval of reserved matters pursuant to outline permission granted under application 20/00386/FUL

Re-iteration of original objection

25/01735/RET & Amended application – Land at Hockford Lane, Brimpton Common

- Timber 5 bar gate & area of hardstanding for access

Objection

25/01953/HSE – Ivy Cottage, Old Lane, Ashford Hill

- Garage conversion to make habitable room

No objection

Nota Bene

1. 23/02694/FUL – Land east of The Cedars Ashford Hill Road, Headley

- Erection of 8 no. dwellings

An appeal has been made to the Secretary of State against the BDBC's decision to refuse permission for the proposed development.

2. Commons Act 2006 - Schedule 2, Paragraph 7 Commons Registration Regulations 2014 Application to deregister land wrongly registered as common land at Mill Green, Headley – Decision pending late summer/early autumn

7. Election of a Vice Chair to the Parish Council

The Chair proposed the election of Cllr Dunn to the Office of Vice Chair of the Parish Council, which was seconded by Cllr Woodford. Cllr Rhatigan agreed to the proposal which had also been endorsed by Cllr Parker via a proxy vote. Cllr Dunn was duly elected as Vice Chair of the Parish Council and signed a 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office' which was witnessed by the Clerk as Proper Officer of the Parish Council.

8. Co-option of a Parish Councillor following statutory 'notice'

Cllr Dunn proposed the co-option of Mr Geoff Allright as a Parish Councillor for the ward of Headley. The proposal had been seconded by Cllr Parker with a proxy vote. By a show of hands all other Councillors were in approval of the proposal.

The Clerk explained that the Parish Council would be undertaking a recruitment campaign to attract interested residents to apply for the vacant Office of Parish Councillor for Ashford Hill.

9. Multi Use Games Area Project

The Clerk reported on the next stage of the project progression which needed to be voted on by Councillors and, consisted of a proposal consisting of 3 parts.

Part 1. To agree to a professional questionnaire/survey to be devised by 'Social Engine Ltd' at a total cost of £1,240.

The cost would allow the following to be undertaken:

- a. Design of a survey after consultation regarding the questions needing to be asked - £450.00
- b. Flyer / artwork and a core of set messages - excludes printing costs - £490.00
- c. Charts of questionnaire/survey results but with no analyse of the results - £300.00

The company that has produced these costings is called 'Social Engine Ltd' and is the same company used by BDBC for their surveys and therefore can be trusted as offering value for money within their area of professional expertise.

Part 2. To agree to professional drawings for potential additional parking on Thornford Road, Headley to be undertaken by Austin Lebbon Architecture Ltd to allow the PC's planning application to proceed to the 'pre application advice service' stage as offered by BDBC, at a cost of £1,745.

a. Site Visit & Existing Drawings

Site visit, converting the topographical survey to Austin Lebbon format, production of existing drawings – location plan, site plan, sections & elevations - £795.00

b. Feasibility & Design – RIBA Stages 0 – 3

Initial proposals and design development in 2d line drawings, liaising with other consultants, meeting - £650.00

c. Planning Pre-Application

Preparation and submission of application, management of application - £300.00

Part 3. To agree to the appointment of an external specialist Consultant to undertake a 'design' stage and a 'competitive tendering' stage for the project at a cost of £3500, conditional upon the Parish Council satisfying itself of a satisfactory projected level of consistent usage of such a facility, through the results of a professional questionnaire/survey as detailed as Part 1 of the proposal as detailed above.

The Clerk further reported that dependent upon the results of parts 1., 2. and 3. as above, there would be a final vote by Councillors sometime in the future, to determine if the project is to proceed to the installation stage.

The Clerk asked for a proposer and a seconder to the 3-part proposal and Cllr Dunn supported the proposal which was seconded by Cllr Woodford. Cllr Hoskins and Cllr Rhatigan and Cllr Parker by proxy vote, supported the 3-part proposal.

10. **Sapling Planting Scheme – Headley recreation Ground**

Following on from and as part of the tree management works on Headley recreation ground, the Clerk had researched the cost of a sapling planting scheme to replace the dead trees removed as well as augmenting the current stock and variety of trees. Two companies have expressed an interest and had visited the site and have provided indicative costs of a planting scheme to include 28 native trees such as Birch, Hornbeam, Acer, Black alder and Beech. The cost of supply, planting, staking, deer guards, soil and watering would be in the region of £5000 and would be funded from CIL funds.

The Clerk asked for a proposer and a seconder for the proposal to undertake the tree sapling planting scheme on Headley recreation ground. Cllr Rhatigan supported the proposal which was seconded by Cllr Hoskins. Cllr Woodford, Cllr Dunn and Cllr Parker by proxy vote were in favour of the proposal.

11. Reports

County Councillor

Cllr Mellor's verbatim report:

"Finance

HCC has continued to cut its current budgets, happily with little impact on services. Staff cuts costing £18M will be recovered in next year's staff budget.

Capital wise, the £173M gradual upgrade or building new in Care Homes is being amended by not replacing the Bishops Waltham Care Home (the residents all objected) and other plans are in place.

Although we continue with the school building (12 in the programme), the declining birth rate may well have an impact on future plans. 12 new schools are planned with 3 new schools opened last week including one in Basingstoke and Deane. The massive forecast on Home to School (SEND) transport -currently approaching for Hampshire at c£100M will probably be modified with some joint Community Transport action- currently in its embryo stage. We keep our head above water- in essence if the Govt would repay HCC for the massive increase in staff cost incurred by NI levies, increases in minimum wage and other charges, then we are more than viable, debt free and will be able to work to the £3.2Bn budget.

Highways

Relevant to all Parishes in my ward has been the resurfacing 90 % of the A roads, notably A339 with just the crossroads at Little Knowl Hill/Ashford Hill Road, the B3051 issue in the village etc and a handful of patches still outstanding. Baughurst in relatively good condition. During July, Members had several briefings re the revised priorities on Road Resurfacing, Road Maintenance and the engineering approach being implemented which at least lets us know what they are planning now and two years ahead. Sadly, there will always be potholes and surface defects and - the LGA reckon an immediate injection of £16.9Billion is required along with thousands of staff nationwide to bring them all roads up to a reasonable quality. it will take some time to repair due scheduling etc

Of course, some of this work has been undermined by the telcom companies exercising their legal right to demand access for cabling work. Streetworks, part of HCC attempts to coordinate some 36000 access permits per annum on Highways and this is very difficult when the cabling companies and to a lesser extent the water authorities demand immediate access with little or no notice. Resultant traffic delays are as ever blamed on HCC such that we are now implementing a lanes rental scheme where the companies have to pay for the access as opposed to the current token fines levied for non-adherence to the permit terms mean poor resurfacing quality; any diversions can bring additional problems! Sadly, this may well fall on the likes of water authorities whose financial plight is well known- suffice to say, ten years ago, 'immediate' installation of Superfast Broadband, much of it with financial support from HMG/HCC was a high demand and HCC achieving quicker than most 97% targets of customer access.

Now the issue is one of competing telcom firms as they push for 5G business. This activity is now dropping considerably and hence the diversions have reduced; no problems reported in this area as nowadays One Network and the HCC portals pre warn drivers in addition to HGV's having their own advice systems.

Highways have now some 36 'boxes' for online reporting under the Hants roads/Report a Problem website leading to a much faster response. Do please look at and use these; the amount of pothole reports has dropped considerably possibly because they eliminate much of the duplication but probably because the fast fixes we introduced in 23/4 to increase the pothole repairs have lasted well. For those weary of the topic let me add some comparative data in that Hampshire holds a high-performance rating by both the Dft and RAC ; happy to provide more information on this.

Of course, we still have the haunches problem on the rural C/unlisted /single track etc roads to contend with amongst Hampshire's 5200 miles of road (excluding the Motorways). Accident records are good - as our Safer Roads people review all major accidents with the HC/TVP Accident Reduction Unit with suggestions to prevent future issues. The Police Reports do tend to take some time. In June HCC launched its Community Funding Initiative. Quite simply, we recognise that where a local request for some infrastructure improvement has been turned down by HCC, we may be able to help with some joint activity with the Parishes/Towns, some of whom have abundant funds as a result of e.g. allowable S106/CIL remittances borne out of local planning applications. That substantial document is with the Parishes- well aware that where there is very limited planning /development activity and where precepts are limited per head of population, this may well be difficult to activate. More details online or ask me!

Buses

There have been some minor changes-cuts- in operating a high frequency nonsubsidized the South of the County; suffice to say the number 2 service is still operating to schedule and on a high frequency basis.

EVP- Electric Vehicle Parking

In 2022/3 the Chargepoint Grant Scheme 'subsidized the introduction, some on trial, of EVP parking bays. Although the increase in acquisition of EV's has been much slower than anticipated due cost and other factors HCC is now looking to move forward to how the EV problem can be managed on the high housing density areas- notably in Tadley and Baughurst Common where there appears to be an expectation that residents can expect to have the space outside their house 'reserved' for themselves; we cannot do as public highway. With suppliers also all too keen on laying the car to house cable under the pavement then HCC is reviewing policy on these matters. A dedicated EV 'Transition' Officer now focussing on this.

Trees

Many letters were dispatched in the past month or so asking residents to trim back their bushes etc where there was overhang on the pavement or road. Obviously, some negative feedback as expected; due lack of summer rain, growth of the bushes has been very low, but we must retain good visibility.

Children's Services

This term sees the switching of the School Meals contracts with HCC to Chartwell, the UJK's biggest deliverer of such. Quite simply, HCC could no longer subsidise the costs. Sad in many ways as quality was always high. I believe that the difference in cost was around 40p per head ...multiply that figure by some 200 +days by the number of pupils consuming such and children, including the Free School Meal takers and one can see the real cost. Strange that the Govt is going to focus on breakfast clubs for all when what is wanted is a good lunch.

SEND/Mental Issues

The news that 1 in 6 children has a mental issue is frightening and reflected in the way that all our Schools are focussing on greater provision/specialist teaching for such. Last month HCC extended this with a Mental Health, Happy Mind programme with family involvement to improve matters. Of course, this year was the first where COVID period affected pupils were taking the GCSE's and although the results in Hampshire were well above National Average, I do not have the individual school performances to hand. Well done to all participants.

Social Care

Under Finance I mentioned the decision to curtail one home from the building programme as-one reason- the current residents were objecting re leaving their current home. The quality of service is in the HCC Sharepoint portal still very high with a daily update on all the extras. Social Care costs are approaching £2Bn in Hants. It is interesting that Official Complaints in Hampshire- i.e. those that might reach the Ombudsman or similar totalled just 133 in total last year- some upheld with compensation, most rejected. Suffice to say nearly all these were related to SEN. although some did involve Social Care. Compared to most authorities moving into 4 figures, a satisfactory performance. Other factors to contend with.

LGR

With all but one (Gosport) local authorities due to submit their plans on September 26th along with the current Labour Govt in turmoil with moves of the two Ministers involved with the plans, we now have a change of the rules on boundaries, more flexibility on the numbers for a Unitary and although both the Conservatives and Liberal Dems have already announced their nominations for the Mayoral position with its election next May 7th, there is still a lot of uncertainty as to the speed of the introduction of the Shadow Authorities and even the CC elections next year. The volumes of press releases and websites on this topic at least mean I do not need to say more.

Environment

Plans for a mega Nature reserve in the north of the County and in the South of other counties are still pending- no doubt Govt Finance will be a barrier now; suffice to say the HCC operated Parks- Queen Victoria, Lepe, QE at Petersfield etc have all won Green Flags and are thriving....albeit with revised car parking charges. Great Value for Money.

Staffing

Effective August 4th HCC appointed a new Chief Exec, Gary Westbrook.”

Borough Councillors

Cllr Conquest supported Cllr Rhatigan’s concern over the condition of roads in and around Kingsclere. Cllr Conquest had been unsuccessful in securing the reduction of the speed limit on the stretch of the A339 near Knowl Hill as he was concerned over the number of road traffic accidents. Members of the public confirmed to Cllr Conquest that food waste bins had been delivered and Cllr Conquest confirmed that the weekly food waste collection would start in October.

Cllr Conquest explained that the Borough Council’s preferred option for a new devolved local government authority was one which merged the Borough Council with Harts District Council and Rushmoor Borough Council. Cllr Conquest further explained that the update to the Local Plan had identified an allocation of some 20 new dwellings for Headley but none for Ashford Hill.

Chair of the Parish Council

The Chair reported that Cllr Parker had kindly agreed to undertake the role of Co-ordinator for the Community Speed Watch which would cover both villages.

Cllr Rhatigan kindly agreed to take over the responsibility of maintaining the defibrillator outside the Ashford Hill Village Hall.

The Parish Council representation on the Ashford Hill Village Hall Committee was yet to be determined, and Ashford Hill Educational Trust had determined that it no longer required representation from the Parish Council to serve on its board of trustees.

The Chair was also acutely aware that since the resignation of Mr Sunley from the Parish Council, the Parish Council did not have the resource available in the form of a Parish Councillor to undertake the workload of the allotments project at this point in time but reiterated as he had in the ‘matters arising’ section of the meeting that residents should inform the Parish Council if there is an interest in becoming involved in such a project and becoming an allotment holder in the future.

Parish Councillors

A footpath access issue in Ashford Hill was raised by Cllr Woodford who suggested a letter to the landowner would be appropriate. *

Cllr Woodford reported that the Cricket Club had purchased its new pitch covers which advertised the Parish Council's sponsorship and Cllr Woodford would provide an appropriate photograph for the Parish Council's website and the Parish Magazine. *

Cllr Woodford updated the meeting regarding the new solar powered Speed Indicator Device and its technical potential. Cllr Woodford was keen to resurrect the Community Speed Watch initiative which would now be managed by Cllr Parker.

Cllr Rhatigan had attended Borough Council meetings regarding the options for local government devolution as well as identifying sites and numbers for future housing developments. The unsustainability issues supported the opinion that Ashford Hill could not support any further housing developments.

Cllr Rhatigan, following a question from the Chair, confirmed costings of playground equipment and potential Cricket Club house expansion discussions in connection with the work being undertaken by the Ashford Hill Playground Subcommittee.

Clerk to the Council

There were no issues that had not already been covered by the agenda and discussion.

12. Recess

Subjects covered during Cllr Mellor's report session and during recess included the potential introduction of a 20-mph speed limit on the approach to Ashford Hill via the Ashford Hill Road as well as the need to introduce the ANPR equipment to the same stretch of road where residents were witnessing the regular speeding of vehicles.

13. Financial statement

The Lloyds TSB current account of the Parish Council stood at £836.71.

The Lloyds TSB deposit account of the Parish Council stood at £41,626.79.

14. Accounts for approval & payment

Mr S Marshall – Clerk's salary – October – December 2025 & Expenses - £5,337.15

Mrs S Kemp – Litter Warden's salary – October - December 2025 - £1,074.33

Mr J Kirkby – Litter Warden's salary – October – December 2025 - £561.81

NBB Recycled Furniture – Benches for Ashford Hill recreation ground - £2410.20 & £52.20 – PAID

Mr A Miles – Bus shelter repairs - £532 – Noticeboard installations - £350

Installation of new benches - £667.38 – Removal of trees from Thornford Rd - £200 – PAID

Infinity Playgrounds – Play panels for playgrounds – S106 funded - £3132.56 – PAID
Elan City – Speed Indicator Device equipment – CIL funded - £3107.99 – PAID
Mr J Woodford – Clips for new SID - £15.99 – PAID
Traffic Technology – Pre repair inspection of old SID - £216.00 – PAID
HMRC – Employee tax contributions – July – September 2025 - £1417.80
Garden Thyme Ltd – Headley football pitch pre-season works - £840.00 – PAID
GW Shelter Solutions Ltd – Cleaning of bus shelters in Headley - £240.00 – PAID
Mr Simon James – Brush cutter course - £250.00 - PPE - £60.98 - £310.98 total – PAID
BDO LLP – External financial audit 2024/2025 - £504.00
KT Design – Website management fee – 3 months - £300.00 & Flyer design/ printing -
£260.74
RAW Tree Services - Removal of damaged oak tree to ground level - £1200.00
Scofell – Grounds maintenance - discounted as only 1 cut in August 2025 - £764.90
Bramley Business Services Ltd – PAYE administration - £105.00

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 9.06pm.