



HIGHWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Monday 18th November 2024 at 7.30pm at Highwood Village Hall (foyer)**

In Attendance

Cllr P Latham (Chairman)
Cllr T Horsnell (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr S Maclean
Clerk

41/24 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Appleton, Cameron, Latham-Pearmain and Maher.

42/24 Declaration of Interests

None.

43/24 Minutes

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 16th September 2024 were approved and signed.

44/24 Cllr Mike Steel/Cllr Nicolette Chambers

Councillors Steel and Chambers were not able to attend the meeting. Councillor Steel circulated a report on the following:

- By-election for the Stock division.
- ECC meeting on 15th October passed two motions – one opposing the removal of the winter fuel allowance and one opposing green belt development and asking the Government for better funded infrastructure.
- The lamppost SID process is currently with the Cabinet Member for Highways.
- Primary healthcare – lobbying the Integrated Care Board to address shortfalls in the area.
- CCTV on lampposts – an update for the Parish Council's project.
- Congratulations offered to the MP, Kemi Badenoch, for becoming leader of the opposition in parliament.

45/24 Public Forum

No members of the public were present.

46/24 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported on the following:

- ECC Licensing – installing a CCTV column on the Bennett junction of Wykes Road is unlikely to be permitted.
- The Clerk has completed the Foundation Degree in Community Governance and will be starting the final two years of study in February.
- The Clerk has completed the Routine Playground Inspection course with the EALC.
- Update on annual leave.



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- Rural crime officer (PC John Davey) will be attending the March meeting, subject to operational demands.

47/24 Reports from Representatives

- (a) School Liaison – No update at this time.
- (b) Play Area – The play areas are currently wet and muddy. The Edney Common goal post has been damaged. Bird spikes are recommended to keep the equipment clear of bird droppings.

48/24 Finance and General Purposes

- (a) **It was resolved** to approve the payments made between 16th September 2024 and the date of this meeting, as follows:

F Horsnell	£144.00
T Poole	£120.00
DW Maintenance	£522.00
Staff costs	£1,252.68
Unity Trust Bank	£31.95
Mayor, Cuttle & Co	£102.00
PKF Littlejohn	£504.00
S Gaeta (expenses)	£47.78
Highwood Village Hall	£108.00

- (b) The conclusion of the External Audit for financial year 2023/24 was noted.
- (c) The budget update was received with no comments.
- (d) **It was resolved** to set the meeting dates for 2025 as follows: Monday 20th January, Monday 17th March, Monday 19th May, Monday 21st July, Monday 15th September and Monday 17th November.
- (e) Communication with Chelmer Housing Partnership was discussed.
- (f) Document storage arrangements were discussed.

49/24 Planning

- (i) The following submission made outside of a meeting was noted:
24/01424/FUL
Demolition of existing rear conservatory with replacement infill single-storey extension at Wellington House, Cooksmill Green, Highwood – **no comment**.

50/24 Environment

- (a) **It was resolved** to appoint Mortimer Contracts to carry out the play area maintenance highlighted on the annual inspection, except for the gate works, at a cost of £4395.00 + VAT.
- (b) (i) An update on the CCTV project was received. (ii) Following discussion, it was proposed to consult residents regarding the availability of their land for the placement of the columns.
- (c) **It was resolved** to purchase the following items for Highwood Primary School:
 - (i) Three hexagonal tree seats at an estimated cost of £1403.58 + VAT.
 - (ii) Six large square wooden planters at an estimated cost of £179.70.
 - (iii) Three outdoor canopies at an estimated cost of £599.00 each.



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- (d) Future plans for St Paul's Church were discussed and suggestions made, which will be passed on.
- (e) The safety of pedestrians on the walkable verge near the Church was discussed. Further information on how the Parish Council can support this will be obtained for a future meeting.

51/24 General Information

The following matters were raised:

- (i) Annual litter pick event to take place on Sunday 23rd March 2025.

The meeting closed at 8.31pm