



# HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of the Meeting of Hailsham Town Council held at the Hailsham Civic Community Hall, Vicarage Lane on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at 7.00pm.

HTC/26/4 /185 **Present:** Councillors: A. Blake-Coggins, G. Blake-Coggins, C. Bryant (Chairman), M. Caira, B. Carpenter, D. Chapman, B. Holbrook, P. Holbrook, M. Laxton, C. Mitchell, K. Nicholls, A. M. Ricketts D. Rusu and G. White.

186 **Officers in Attendance**

Mr J. Harrison (Town Clerk), Mr. T. Lee (Operations Manager), E. Hastings (Corporate Services Manager), Mrs K. Giddings, Mr D. Saxby and Mr J. Cottingham.

Also in attendance: East Sussex County Councillors G. Fox and S. Murphy.

187 **Public Question Time**

A member of the Hailsham Boxing Club said he hoped he would get Council's support for the application for a grant to enable the Club to move to new premises.

188 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received and accepted from Councillors A. Clarke, F. Clarke, Crittenden and Smith.

189 **Declarations of Interest**

The Chairman and Councillor Chapman declared an interest in the agenda item on the budget as one of the potential recipients of a grants was the Hailsham and District Bonfire Society, that they were both members of.

190 **Confirmation of Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Meeting of Hailsham Town Council held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

This resolution was carried unanimously, apart from Councillor Caira, who was not a councillor at the time.

191 **Hailsham Neighbourhood Plan**

Councillor Laxton said that a number of pop-up sessions had been held during the week and the consultant, Jon Herbert had attended them all. She encouraged all councillors to complete the online survey by 14<sup>th</sup> February. The next step would be a public referendum.

The Chairman introduced Jon Herbert from Troy Planning. Mr Herbert thanked Councillor Laxton for being the driving force behind the Plan.

He outlined the importance of having a Neighbourhood Plan and the status of the new one.

Councillor P. Holbrook thanked Mr Herbert for his hard work and spoke about the recent local flooding and how it had affected farms.

Councillor asked if having a Neighbourhood Plan was advantageous in CIL receipts. Mr Herbert explained that if a town or parish council did not have a neighbourhood plan, they would only receive 10% of CIL money, whereas with a neighbourhood plan it would receive 25%. This is why it was important that Hailsham Town Council updates its Plan.

The Chairman thanked Mr Herbert.

## 192 **Chairman's Update**

The Chairman said that he had attended the Youth Service Christmas lunch.

He and the Deputy Chairman had attended an Open Day for the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance. He said that it cost £51,000,000 a year to run.

He and the Deputy Chairman had attended the one year anniversary party at the Railway Club.

## 193 **Town Clerk's Update**

The Town Clerk said the new Human Resources Officer, Rachel Brazier was joining the team on 2<sup>nd</sup> February. The Corporate Services Manager, Emily Hastings was leaving on 19<sup>th</sup> February.

The Post Office Manager was on agreed leave for a while.

He spoke about the priorities for the Council, which included the review of the Staff Review and on-going legal matters.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Hastings for all her work for the council. Councillor P. Holbrook also thanked her.

## 194 **East Sussex County Council Update**

Both county councillors had submitted written reports that had been circulated with the agenda.

Councillor Fox said that there were three major items: the budget, Highways issues and local government reorganisation.

Councillor Murphy also spoke about local government reorganisation and the recent local flooding. He said that there were five roundabouts that needed redeveloping and work on the first one would start in September 2026.

Councillor Nicholls said that there was increase in the amount of heavy lorries using Ersham Road, Hailsham Road and Station Road.

Councillor Mitchell said that there was an increase in the number of "Road Ahead Closed" signs when no work was taking place. Councillor Murphy responded that

constructors were responsible for road signs.

**RESOLVED** to note the County Councillors' updates.

195

**Wealden District Council Update**

An email had been received about plans for future medical services in Hailsham. Councillor Laxton said that it was important that all councillors had the chance to have an input into the Council's response and proposed an extraordinary meeting of Hailsham Town Council.

**RESOLVED** to hold an extraordinary meeting of Hailsham Town Council to discuss the future provision of medical services in Hailsham before the next Strategy Committee.

The vote on this proposal was unanimous.

Councillor White updated the meeting on the latest on asylum seekers being housed in Crowborough.

The Local Plan would be discussed at a meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> January.

There were plans to update Vicarage Field.

196

**Standing Orders**

The following is the current standing order 5. Committees and sub-committees

v. Shall appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Town Clerk or the Deputy Town Clerk by mid-day on the day of the meeting that they are unable to attend

I would move to change the wording to Shall appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee who can replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members are unable to attend.

And add the following to the end of the motion: "before the commencement of the meeting." And to delete the words "Deputy Town Clerk" and insert "proper officer". And "if the Councillor requests that the seat remains unfilled, this can be done".

**RESOLVED** that this amendment stands adjourned until the next meeting.

197

**Financial Regulations**

**RESOLVED** to agree the amendments to the Council's Financial Regulations.

**Committee Recommendations to Council**

198

**Assets Management Committee 17<sup>th</sup> December 2025 – Quinnell Drive Play Park**

**RESOLVED** that £14,000 be reinstated to the fencing budget and to allocate £28,000 from CIL to undertake the fencing work at Quinnell Drive Play Park.

199 Assets Management Committee 17<sup>th</sup> December 2025 – CCTV

**RESOLVED** that £9,057.25 is allocated from CIL money for the replacement of 3 public facing locations in High Street near the bus stop, South Road Car Park and South Road.

200 Committee Membership

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Ciara be a member of the Assets Management and Staffing Committees for the remainder of the Council year.

201 Internal Audit Report

**RESOLVED** to note the Internal Audit Report.

Policies

202 Data Protection Policy

**RESOLVED** to adopt the Data Protection Policy.

This resolution was carried unanimously.

203 Data Transparency, Freedom on Information and Publication Scheme

**RESOLVED** to adopt the Data Transparency, Freedom on Information and Publication Scheme.

This resolution was carried unanimously

204 Report of the Independent Wealden Parish Remuneration Panel 2026/27

Members were asked to consider the recommendations contained in the Wealden Remuneration Panel 2026-27.

**RESOLVED** to accept level 3 of the Independent Wealden Remuneration Panel 2026/27. The basic allowance being £1,595 and the Chairman's allowance being £2,203.

Councillors A. Blake-Coggins, G. Blake-Coggins, C. Bryant, D. Chapman, B. Holbrook, P. Holbrook, M. Laxton, C. Mitchell, K. Nicholls, A. M. Ricketts D. Rusu and G. White voted for the resolution.

Councillor Caira voted against the resolution.

Councillor Carpenter abstained from voting.

205 Precept 2026/27

Councillor Mitchell spoke. He welcomed the introduction of individual committee budgets and the four-year budget prediction.

**RESOLVED** to adopt the Responsible Finance Officer's recommendation of an increase in the precept of 3.46%; this amounted to and £7.29 annual increase for a Band D property.

The vote on this resolution was unanimous.

206 **Confidential Business**

**RESOLVED** that the press and public are excluded during discussion on during the discussion on agenda items 14 and 15 as it concerns: the beginning of legal proceedings, terms and conditions of service or negotiations for contracts, (in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders No, 1E).

207 **The Station Building**

Mr Cottingham spoke in support of his report that had been circulated with the agenda. The recommendation was that storage space was needed. This would cost £22,616.

Councillor Laxton proposed that Hailsham Town Council loaned the money to the Youth Service form Reserves. This would be repaid over two years at £800 per month.

Councillor Caira asked if grants would be available. Mr Cottingham said that a grant would not be viable because of the timing.

Councillor Mitchell said that a report from the structural engineer had still not been received.

A counter proposal was put by Councillor G. Blake-Coggins that the £22,616 be paid through CIL money.

Councillor Laxton's proposal that the Youth Service should be loaned the money from Reserves and repaid at £800 per month over two years was defeated by 6 votes to 5.

Councillor G. Blake-Coggins proposal that the £22,616 be paid from CIL money was carried by 8 votes to 6.

**RESOLVED** that the works to the Youth Club costed at £22,616 be paid for by CIL money.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.26pm.

CHAIRMAN