



THE PARISH COUNCIL OF HELLINGLY

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Minutes of the **Parish Council Meeting** held on Wednesday 11th February 2026
At 7.30pm at Hellingly Community Hub

PCH 087.02.26 to PCH 095.02.26

Present: Councillors: D White (in the Chair), G Hesselgrave (Vice-Chair), W Hesselgrave, C Jackets, D Lewin, F Lulham, J Castle, D Miles, P Young, L Bowman. R Brann and P Milne.

Apologies for absence: Cllrs S Pilkington, S Davis, A Gander, Jenny Hoodless (Clerk)

Official Clerk/Officer: Sarah Miller (Deputy Clerk)

Members of the Public: None

Declarations of Interest: Cllr D Miles declared an interest in **PCH 091.02.26** as he works for one of the companies who have quoted.

PCH 087.02.26 Council approved the **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting** held on Wednesday 14th January 2026 were signed by the Chair.

PCH 088.02.26 County Councillors Report

County Councillor N. Bennett reported that he was unable to attend the meeting on Monday with East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Highways Officer Mark Weston, so Councillor D. Lewin provided an overview. The proposed widening of Park Road and the associated obstacles were discussed. Mark Weston was asked whether, if an application were submitted to Wealden District Council to widen the road, ESCC would support it. He confirmed that he would respond in due course. The condition of the road surface was also raised. It had originally been anticipated that repairs would be undertaken when the Dunnock Road traffic lights are installed. However, it is now considered that the road has deteriorated significantly and requires urgent repair. The bus companies will be contacted regarding the matter, and this issue will continue to be pursued.

PCH 089.02.26 Matters arising (not covered elsewhere on the Agenda):

PCH 084.01.26 - 2026/27 Councillors Allowance, the Clerk enquired with WDC if Hellingly PC could increase to Level 2 due to the large amount of new houses being built in the area. WDC replied:

- The IRP's report is simply a recommendation to the Parish Council. It is for the Parish Council to decide whether it has an Allowance Scheme and, if

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so, the amount of the Allowances. If adopting an Allowance Scheme, the Parish Council must have regard to the IRP's recommendation, but the final choice of Allowance Scheme is at the discretion of the Parish Council.

It was agreed that this would be looked at next year when the consultation goes out in November 2026. Cllr D White recommended that all Councillors claim their expenses. Cllrs G Hesselgrave proposed, D White seconded and all in favour.

PCH 085.01.26

Cllr F Lulham questioned the name of Lower Horsebridge Rec being referred to as Hellingly Rec. It was agreed to amend the website and check the planning application.

Cllr F Lulham also questioned the location of the Men's Shed. It was agreed that this is a work in progress.

PCH 090.02.26

District Councillor's Report

An important capital initiative currently being promoted by Wealden District Council is the expansion of social housing provision.

To support this objective, the Council has an existing loan of approximately £50 million from the Public Works Loan Board. This borrowing originated around 15 years ago when the Government required local authorities to transfer their housing stock into central ownership. Councils were subsequently permitted to repurchase their housing stock at market value. In Wealden's case, we raised approximately £52 million to buy back our council housing. Since that time, the Council has managed the stock responsibly and maintained its position as a reliable and effective landlord.

However, our ability to expand housing provision has been significantly constrained. We currently manage approximately 3,500 council homes and, in recent years, have been able to increase this number by only 15–16 properties per annum.

A key limiting factor has been the continuation of the Government's Right to Buy policy. Eligible tenants are entitled to purchase their council homes at substantial discounts — historically as high as 80%. In many cases, properties purchased at a discount have subsequently been sold on at a considerable profit. Furthermore, central government policy has required that a significant proportion of the receipts from these sales be returned to the Government, rather than retained locally for reinvestment in new housing.

In response, the Council has taken the decision that proceeds generated through its housing operations should be retained and reinvested into further housing provision. Rather than undertaking direct development, the current strategy is to acquire completed homes from developers in order to increase stock more efficiently and at lower risk.

Separately, the Council is due to proceed next Wednesday with plans for a new medical centre in Hailsham, relocating the Bridgeside Surgery to Reef Way.

The concern with the current proposal is that it does not deliver the broader healthcare provision originally envisaged in 2005, when a polyclinic model — incorporating multiple services under one roof — was proposed. Instead, the planned

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development comprises an 800 square metre facility with only 17 parking spaces. In practical terms, the scheme appears to do little more than facilitate the relocation of Bridgeside Surgery, whose existing lease is nearing expiry.

There is growing concern that this approach may underserve Hailsham. In addition, both Hailsham Medical Centre and Seaforth Surgery face uncertainty regarding their future. It is also noted that the decision-making process has involved individuals who do not reside locally, raising questions about whether the full needs of the community have been adequately reflected.

PCH 091.02.26 Council approved the Financial Matters for 01 – 31st January 2026 listed below:

- Noted Bank reconciliation summaries
- Noted List of payments & receipts
- Noted the following December net payments above £1,000:

Cllrs P Milne proposed, D Lewin seconded, all in favour.

- o Storage Container project for Grounds equipment
- Agreed to give the Clerks and Ground staff a budget to go ahead with the project. A budget of £6,000 for the container and electrical supply.
 - o Hub overflow car park – change concrete squares to tarmac
- Agreed to appoint a subcommittee, to look into the project. Members to include:- Cllrs S Pilkington, C Jackets, D Lewin, P Young.
- o Install a new Dog Bin on New Road on entrance to Magnolia Gardens.
- Councillors declined this request.

Cllrs D White proposed, G Hesselgrave seconded, all in favour.

PCH 092.02.26 Council approved the following updated policies & key documents:

- **Standing Orders** – Cllr D White couldn't see the justification for removing the highlighted blue. He will recheck and bring back to the Meeting in March.
- **Recording Meetings Policy** – Add 2.1 in the event that we are being recorded, we also record the meeting.
- **Transparency Code** – Cllr D Lewin was not happy with having the addresses of properties that he owns disclosed on his declaration of interest. Clerks to contact the Monitoring Officer and ask if addresses can be redacted.
- **Complaints Procedures** – Cllr D Lewin provided some amendments, attached.

Cllrs C Jackets, proposed, P Milne seconded and all in favour.

PCH 093.02.26 Noted the unadopted minutes from the Planning & Environment Committee meeting which took place on 14th January 2026.

PCH 094.02.26 Clerk's Report:

1. **Projects Update**
LHB Sports Project:

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- i. The Clubhouse/Pavilion plans have been changed and would be going back to planning for approval.
- ii. Tenders are being received from the Play Area and then for the Pathway and MUGA.

Hub Office Extension

Cllr C Jackets gave an update

CIL A22 Land Transfer Projects

– GTA Civils have been asked to quote at a cost of £650.00 to make enquiries as to the possibility of said access.

Cllrs D Lewin proposed, G Hesselgrave seconded and all in favour.

Park Road widening scheme already covered in Matters Arising

Grounds

Storage container already covered in Financial matters

Community Mens Shed – Cllr S Pilkington gave a written update in his absence

Parish Bins – WDC have been informed that we are taking this service back in house from m1st April 26.

Country Park – SLS have been informed that we are taking this service back in house from 1st April 26.

PCH 095.02.26

Chairman’s Report :

- i. Medical provision in Hailsham, Cllr D White has asked that he and one other Councillor have an invitation to attend the presentation
- ii. We have had a claim from Mr Sheffield who owns land next to the Scout Hut at Lower Horsebridge. He claims that the Scouts have imported waste material onto the site which has caused pollution on the land. He claims that as we own the land and lease it to the Scouts, we are responsible. He also claims that we should have charged a commercial rent to the Scouts. This is being handled by the Scout legal team.
- iii. Consultation on local plan and there are sites in NW Hailsham, causing a flood risk. Request for 124 house turned down, reapplied to build 70 houses which again was turned down and the expectation is that he will try for 24 houses. Cllr D White has been in touch with the local paper and they have quoted £350 for a days drone filming. Cllr D White request permission to go ahead with this. Cllrs D Lewin proposed, J Castle seconded and all in favour.

Next Meetings:

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Councillor David White – Chair

CIL Projects	TBA	2pm
Planning & Environment Committee	Wednesday 25 th February	7pm
Planning & Environment Committee	Wednesday 11 th March	6.30pm
Full Council	Wednesday 11 th March	7.30pm
Finance Committee	Wednesday 18 th March	7pm
Grounds Committee	Wednesday 25 th March	7pm
Flood Working Group	Friday 27 th March	11.30am

MC 9.15pm

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