MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 24th SEPTEMBER 2026

Present

Councillors Mrs C Read (Chair), Mrs Wyatt-Tilby (Vice Chair), Mr P Smail, Mr P Luckett, and Mrs C Chapman.

Members of the public were also present.

1. **Welcome & Apologies**

   The Chair welcomed Councillors to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Cllr Milne, Cllr Crutchfield and Mr S Marshall, the Clerk.

2. **Declaration of interest**

   There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Minutes of previous meeting for approval**

   The minutes of the meetings held on Thursday 30th July 2026 were approved by the Chair and would be signed by the Chair as a true record.

4. **Matters arising & Outstanding Action Points**

   Cllr Thacker had reported on the restrictions under which he was able to offer a County Councillor grant to the Parish Council, and the Chair would be replying to his request to explain the Parish Council's approach to funding the Pavilion Refurbishment Project. Cllr Thacker had subsequently agreed to award the Parish Council £500 towards the cost of the Pavilion's refurbishment.

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The Chair had asked the Clerk to write to the resident on behalf of the Parish Council to express their concern over the need to have full access along a footpath in Tufton which necessitated the repairs to the fencing being undertaken. The Clerk had written to the resident concerned but had not received a reply.

5. **Recess**

Mr & Mrs Burgess again raised the issue of a Hampshire Highways licence being granted to the Parish Council which would enable it to maintain the common land adjacent to the riverside at Tufton. The Chair confirmed that the licence had been applied for and paid for by the Parish Council for a 3-year period and the licence would outline the specific areas of responsibility including the cover required for public liability insurance. The Chair agreed that there would be full consultation with residents as to the choice of suitable replacement trees or shrubs for planting once the licence had been granted. Mrs Burgess agreed to forward to the Clerk a copy of an HCC biodiversity report.

Mrs Burgess reported that a 'leaf gate' had been approved by BDBC to be installed at Mr & Mrs Burgess's property in Tufton.

6. **Reports**

Chair of the Parish Council

The Chair reported that she and a representative of the newly formed 'Playground subcommittee' of the Parish Council had meet representatives from BDBC's Landscape team to discuss options to improve the provision of playground equipment on the recreation ground. A follow up meeting with an original playground equipment contactor was planned for October to discuss ideas for a more diverse range of activities in the playground.
BDBC would then be able to tender for the project based on the S106 funds available together with funds raised by the Parish Council to improve the playground provision.

Whilst the number of responses to the recent Residents' Survey may have appeared disappointing, a 10% response to a direct mail campaign was considered very good and the quality of the responses had also been very good. However, it was important to have included the survey's results as part of the Parish Council's Stage 2 Community Infrastructure Fund application.

The Chair reported that several key members of the organising committee for the annual May Fair would no longer be available, but she would be working in tandem with a parishioner to organise the fair next year. However, the Chair expressed her concern over the future of the May Fair insofar as encouraging other residents to become involved in its organisation in future years if it is to continue as a successful annual event.

The Chair was appreciative of the Clerk's efforts to improve the perimeter hedging around the recreation ground as a result of the contractor now carrying out the correct work as per their contractual specification.
Costings had been sought to improve other aspects of the perimeter hedging to be considered in the future when funding allowed as part of a programme of improvement for the recreation ground.

Parish Councillors' Reports

Cllr Chapman and the Clerk were working on several initiatives to improve the maintenance of certain public parts of Tufton which included footpath maintenance, verge clearance, tree management as well as dilapidated fencing which was the responsibility of landowners. The targeted use of the Lengthman's scheme in conjunction with contractors was proving to be effective.

Cllr Phil Luckett reported that the Acoustic Noise Survey by ACCON UK, the contractor appointed by BDBC, is still awaiting completion. A date for the survey has not yet been confirmed, preventing the Parish Council from providing ACCON UK with a list of properties willing to assist.
Cllr Phil Luckett reported that Southern Water tankers and traffic-light restrictions have returned to the Hurstbourne Viaduct, continuing to cause inconvenience and disruption for residents. The tankers and partial road closures are understood to relate to Southern Water works at Barton Stacey, which were due to be completed within three weeks but had overrun.
Cllr Phil Luckett noted the responses to the recent residents' survey and suggested categorising them to clarify residents' priorities. The principle themes included road safety, recreation and the playground, pavilion refurbishment, and social and community events and gatherings. The Chair reported that the Clerk would review the survey results in detail and report back at a later date. As an example of a new social and community event, it was reported that St Andrews Church would advertise a Burns Night, to be held in January 2027, in the next issue of Hill and Valley. The Chair noted that Hill and Valley should also report on activities and work undertaken by the Parish Council, so that parishioners are better informed about routine tasks such as playground safety audits and hedge trimming. Cllr Phil Luckett agreed to request that these updates be included in future Hurstbourne Priors pages.

Cllr Smail would be retiring from the Office of Councillor in May 2027 after 26 years of service as Chairman and Councillor of the Parish Council.

The Vice Chair queried the arrangements in place for the emptying of the bins on the recreation ground. *

Cllr Wyatt-Tilby requested that the appreciation of the Parish Council be minuted as far as the new Clerk's hard work and diligence regarding not only successful fund raising for the refurbishment of the Pavilion and the improvements on the recreation ground but also for the work he had undertaken with the writing and updating of policies and procedures for the Parish Council.

Clerk to the Council

In the absence of the Clerk, the Chair read out a prepared report on behalf of the Clerk.

"**New Parish Council Website**
The new 'draft' website will soon be available for Councillors to provide any feedback before it goes 'live' in November 2026.

New Parish Council Policies & Procedures
Together with the Fire Risk Assessment for the Pavilion, the Clerk is currently writing further priority policies, in addition to the ones being adopted at today's meeting, which will include Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

Licence to manage land at Tufton

- Land adjoining Rivers Edge Barn, Tufton, Whitchurch, RG28 7RJ
- The fee of £238 had been paid and an application form completed for the licence which will last for 3 years and is renewable

Pavilion Refurbishment Project

- Total funds, projected to be available to the Pavilion Refurbishment Project, from guaranteed income strands, currently stands at £36,644 which includes Councillor grants of £1500, a Vitacress grant of £1000, a Greenham Trust grant of £500 and a National Lottery Community Fund grant of £19,500

- The Parish Council was invited to present its Stage 2 Application for a Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF) grant from the Borough Council after its Stage 1 application was approved – the application had now been presented along with the results of the recent 'Residents Survey' – a decision regarding the grant woud be made in late October 2026

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Whilst sufficient funds are available currently to undertake the renewal of the thatch on the Pavilion, the Clerk's advice is to delay that until a decision is made on the CIF grant – the reasoning being that the thrust of the application's evidence was based on several priorities but the primary priority being the new thatch as the primary priority and therefore, if a grant is awarded, the designation will be for the replacement of the thatch. Whilst the National Lottery Community Fund grant is a contribution to the whole cost of the project without any designation request.

- In the interim period, work related to the refurbishment project could proceed and had proceeded with the installation of independent water heaters for the kitchen and the toilets
- Works on the trimming of the adjacent trees were to proceed once planning permission had been granted
- The 5-year electrical testing required for a public building had been completed and had identified a new consumer unit is required to meet modern standards and new additions
- The ongoing compilation of a Fire Risk Assessment which will include the need for new fire doors that open outwards for the purposes of emergency evacuations "

7. **Footpaths & Highways issues**

It was reported that all footpaths were open and walkable.

As the residents' survey responses demonstrated, there was a lot of concern from residents about the speed of vehicles through the village. The Harroway Chapmansford crossroads being an ongoing concern, with accidents predicted once the traffic control lights are removed and the weather conditions deteriorate.

The Chair asked everyone to take note of road traffic accidents that they witness or are made aware of as not all accidents are reported to the police authority.

8. **Planning Applications**

There were no objections to the following planning applications;

26/01671/HSE – 48 Stoke Lane, HP

- Erection of a garden room to rear elevation to replace existing
- Relocation of existing access gates

26/01673/FUL – 2-9 Drury Close, HP

- Replacement of roof coverings and associated rainwater goods and fascia boards

T/00420/26/TCA – Riverside Cottage, Manor Farm Lane, Tufton

- Poplar to be re-pollarded back to previous points

T/00422/26/TCA – 48 Stoke Lane, HP

- T1 Cypress: reduce to hedge height (min.2m)
- T2 Cypress: fell to near ground level

26/01904/ROC – Land south of Micheldever Road, Whitchurch

- Variation of condition 1 to existing permission

T/00451/26/TCA - Willow Barn Tufton

- Various tree surgeries

9. **Projected Financial statement - August/September 2026**

Opening Balance 01/08/2026 = £42,350.63

+ Income = £41,469.00

- Precept – 2nd instalment - £17,500
- Village Hall website payment - £300
- Southern Water refund - £802
- Borough Councillor grant - £1000
- Vitacress grant - £1000
- County Councillor grant - £500
- Greenham Trust - £500
- National Lottery Community Fund - £19500

VAT refund – £367

Less Expenditure = £16,297

= Account balance = £67,523

Working balance £24,685
General reserves £5,000
Playground equipment £1,194
Pavilion Refurbishment Fund £36,644

Totals = £67,523

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10. **Accounts for approval & payment – August – October 2026**

Mr S Marshall - Clerk's salary August - October 2026 & allowances - £4538.94
Mr M Bailey – Cleaner & Handyman - £328.00
Information Commissioner's Office – Data Protection Certification - £52.00
Social Engine – Residents' Survey production and analysis - £240.00
Lloyds Bank – Service charges – SO - £11.75
Test Valley Borough Council – Grounds maintenance – SO - £504.78
Hiscox Insurance – Parish Council insurances – SO - £236.60
Eon Electricity – Pavilion electricity supply – SO - £68.62
Bramley Business Services Ltd – PAYE/HMRC Employee tax - £940.40
& PAYE Administration - £75.00
BDO LLP – External audit fee - £252.00
KT Design – 2nd 50% payment for new website design - £900.00
Electric Workz – 2nd 50% payment for new water systems in Pavilion - £611.40
Origin Amenity Solutions – HPCC – Seed & loam - £498.56

11. **Adoption of Parish Council policies**

The Parish Council voted in favour of the adoption of the following policies which had previously been circulated to Councillors for scrutiny and amendment;

- Safeguarding Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Personal Data Policy
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Reserves & Precept Policy

12. **Date of the next meeting**

Thursday 26 November 2026

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.35pm.

* Denotes an action point

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