

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH
COUNCIL ON
MONDAY 1st JUNE 2026 IN THE HALL, ELHAM VILLAGE HALL
STARTING AT 7.30pm.

101.26 Those Present: Councillors: K Lamb (Chair), C Chapman (Vice Chair) B Swan, G Clements, J Osbourne, C Francis, K Allen and four members of the public.

Apologies: S Jacob

102.26 To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI), Other significant interests (OSI's) or a voluntary interest relating to items on the agenda.

Cllr Osbourne declared a voluntary interest in relation to planning applications 26/0622/FH & 26/0706/FH

103.26 Public Contribution

Refurbishment of the Pavilion and Containers

It was previously proposed that the containers be timber-clad to align visually with the pavilion; however, this option has proven financially unviable. Consequently, it has been agreed that the containers will instead be repainted, with works scheduled to commence in June/July.

The containers remain classified as “temporary” structures while funding is sought to deliver the scheme outlined in the planning permission granted approximately two years ago. The Parish Council intends to re-engage with the Football Association regarding potential funding, noting that the estimated project cost is in the region of £160,000. Current facilities fall below FA standards, hence the need for interim refurbishment. Securing FA funding requires a viable team to be in place. Football provision remains central to the lease and long-term sustainability of The Gore, and maintaining an active team on site is therefore essential. It was also confirmed that details of the approved planning scheme are available on the Folkestone & Hythe District Council website and are displayed within the pavilion.

The Well Noticeboard

It was clarified that this is not a Parish Council initiative but is being led by the Elham Historical Society, who wish to install interpretative material providing historical context to The Well. Councillor Francis will follow up on this matter.

Strimming at The Gore

The Community Payback Team, having previously undertaken work at the Village Hall, are now working in partnership with the Parish Council to support initial site preparation works. The area behind the containers had become a health and safety concern due to abandoned items, including bicycles; these have now been cleared, along with addressing previous issues of vandalism, improving visibility across the site.

The team comprises a supervisor and typically 4–6 individuals undertaking work at no cost, representing a significant saving. While clear instructions have been provided, an instance of

unnecessary hedge trimming occurred; this has since been raised and addressed with the supervisor.

Recruitment of Clerk/RFO

The Parish Council is currently reviewing the Clerk/RFO role and exploring a range of options, including the potential appointment of a bookkeeper supported by a cloud-based accounting platform, alongside the recruitment of a Clerk to undertake administrative duties. Councillor Jacob is leading this review and will present a proposal in due course. A training budget is available and may be utilised to support a prospective candidate. The Parish Council will also consider opportunities to streamline administrative processes, including the use of AI tools for recording and transcribing minutes. It was noted that there had been a misunderstanding by a member of the public regarding the previous Clerk's salary, which the Chair clarified as being inaccurate.

104.26 Minutes

1. The Annual Parish Meeting held on 11th May 2026 at 6.30pm were **approved** and signed as a true record by the Chair of meeting.
2. The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 11th May 2026 at 7.30pm were **approved** and signed as a true record by the Chair of the Meeting.

105.26 Chairman's Report - *(Please note, no decisions can be made on items under this heading).*

No report, as all topics to be covered by Agenda items

106.26 Finance

1. The Accounts from May 2026 were **agreed** as true record and were signed by the Chairman of the meeting.
2. The Bank Reconciliation from May 2026 was **agreed** as true record and was signed by the Chairman of the meeting.
3. The May 2026 invoices were **agreed**, and payments were approved. *Please see appendix 1.*

107.26 Committees

1. The following councillors were appointed to the below committees.
 - a) **Staffing Committee** – Cllr Lamb, Cllr Chapman & Cllr Swan
 - b) **C&A Committee** – Cllr Lamb, Cllr Swan, Cllr Clements & Cllr Osbourne
 - c) **Wellbeing Advisory Committee** – Cllr Chapman & Cllr Jacob
2. It was **agreed** that Cllr Allen & Cllr Francis would be the Highway representatives.
3. It was **agreed** that Cllr Francis would be the representative for the Environmental Working Group
4. It was **agreed** that Cllr Clements would continue as the Tree Warden

Outside Bodies

The following Councillors were appointed as representatives on outside bodies.

- a) **KALC Shepway Area Committee** – Cllr Lamb & Cllr Clements
- b) **Folkestone & Hythe District Planning User Group** – Cllr Chapman & Cllr Swan
- c) **Elham Community Trust** – Cllr Jacob
- d) **Elham & Acrise Samaritan Fund** – Cllr Clements
- e) **Elham Village Hall** – Cllr Francis
- f) **Play for Elham** – Cllr Jacob
- g) **Assistant Flood Warden** – Cllr Francis
- h) **Little Stour and Nailbourne River Group** – Cllr Swan & Cllr Allen
- i) **Twinning** – Cllr Chapman
- j) **Sir John Williams Trust** – Cllr Lamb

108.26 Planning

1. The following applications were considered and comments agreed:

26/0622/FH – 2 Railway Cottages, Duck Street, Elham CT4 6TP – Lawful development certificate(proposed) for garage conversion to habitable room, alterations to fenestration & demolish of porch and relocation of front door – **No Objection**

2. The following application was received since the agenda was issued, comments agreed:

26/0804/FH – Weavers, Exted Hill, Elham CT4 6YG – Single Storey detached outbuilding – **resubmission – No Objection**

26/0706/FH – 2 Railway Cottages, Duck Street, Elham CT4 6TP – addition of a pitched roof to replace current flat roof – **No Objection**

26/0371/FH – 3 New Inn Cottages, High Street, Elham, CT4 6TD – Retrospective application for a replacement garden building – **resubmission - Objection**

3. To **note** any decisions made by Folkestone and Hythe District Council

26/0296/FH – Weavers, Exted Hill, Elham CT4 6YG – Single Storey detached outbuilding. **FHDC Decision – Refused**

26/0332/FH – The Laynes, Lickpot Hill, Elham CT4 6TY – Two storey side extension including Juliet balconies, single storey front extension with balcony above, two front dormer windows. **FHDC Decision – Refused.**

109.26 Highways – correspondence has been received in relation to parking in The Square. A meeting has been organised on 2nd June 2026 between KCC Safety Highways Officer and Cllrs Lamb, Francis, and Allen to discuss this issue. Also, for discussion will be a KCC Highways Improvement Plan which will start the process for a general survey along with highway requirement within the village.

It was **agreed** to purchase 2 x replacement batteries for the speed camera situated on entering the village by The Triangle, at a cost of £45.11 + vat each.

110.26 Defibrillator – Elham Primary School has approached the Parish Council to enquire whether it would consider assuming responsibility for the defibrillator located at the school entrance. As the equipment was originally funded through a grant, Councillor Swan will write to the Headteacher to clarify the implications of any transfer of ownership or responsibility and will report back at the next meeting.

In addition, a survey will be requested from the Council's current supplier, Hopkins, to assess potential opportunities for expanding defibrillator coverage within the village.

111.26 War Memorial – Councillors Lamb and Osbourne have met with a local contractor to discuss the necessary repairs to the area surrounding the memorial. The condition of the current surface presents a health and safety concern, and excavation will be required to determine the extent of remedial work needed. The kerbstones will also require repair.

The Parish Council will liaise with the Royal British Legion and Kent Highways to ensure that all works are coordinated and completed efficiently and within appropriate time limits.

112.26 Insurance – Councillors Lamb and Francis continue discussions with both Zurich and Gallagher regarding insurance premiums. A detailed conversation took place concerning the insurance of the church wall and whether the Parish Council holds responsibility for its cover. Councillor Francis has contacted the Diocese and the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and is awaiting their response.

The Asset register has been reviewed in relation to the value of the church wall and KGV play equipment, considering depreciation costs.

113.26 Community Orchard – it had been previously decided to have individual labelling for the trees. We need to approach the Community Shed again regarding costs of supplying tree identification labels.

The current stakes on individual trees need replacing and it was **agreed** to purchased 30 new stakes.

114.26 Woodland – It was discussed and agreed that the Parish Council will proceed with the engagement of Boys and Maughan Solicitors to undertake the legal transfer of the land bequeathed to the Parish Council. The estimated cost for this work is £3,756 + VAT.

The land in question is currently in need of tree works and other maintenance.

Councillor Scoffham advised that funding may be available through the Green Grants programme, which supports biodiversity enhancement projects with awards of up to £10,000. Applications must be submitted by 17 July 2026.

115.26 King George V (C&A) – deferred to next meeting as waiting for comparable quotes to works required for roadside trees.

116.26 The Gore (C&A) – as discussed in 103.26 Public Contribution – Community Payback Team will continue the works at the Pavillon/ Containers. The Kings Arms and the football team raised £3k from a charity football match and this will cover the cost of replacement doors and additional works.

The roof on the pavilion (shingles) needs repairing, we are awaiting quotes for some minor repairs from local contractors.

117.26 Environmental Group (C&A) – discussed was the PC’s strategy/plan for hedge trimming within the village. The current contractors follow cutting instructions issued by the PC, at the appropriate time. The next hedge cutting will be at the end of the season.

The Environment group will report back to the PC on a “Management Plan” for hedges/trees. Budget is available for the Environment group.

118.26 Exercise of Public Rights – The Chair outlined the statutory process for the Exercise of Public Rights, during which parishioners are entitled to inspect the Council’s accounting records. In accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Council has published the required 30-working-day inspection period, running from 3 June 2026 to 14 July 2026.

Following completion of the Internal Audit, the accounting statements for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 have been made available on the Parish Council website and displayed on the parish noticeboard.

A formal request has been received from three parishioners to inspect the accounts. To facilitate this, the Council will be required to hire an appropriate venue and engage a locum auditor to oversee the session and ensure compliance with GDPR requirements. The estimated cost to the Council for these arrangements is approximately £200.

To ensure that we can provide the documentation as swiftly as possible **to view**, in order to keep the costs to the parish to a minimum, the parishioner in question will email the Chair with a list of the financial documents he wishes to inspect and what he wishes to get out of the visit.

119.26 To hear verbal reports from

County Councillor – C Hespe – no report available at time of meeting.

District Councillor - J Butcher, S Scoffham – see below.

Report from District Council Cllr Stephen Scoffham and Cllr James Butcher F&HDC

Love your beach.

With the summer season approaching we are again preparing to cope with an influx of visitors to the beaches across the district. Five new ‘big belly’ bins are being installed along the seashore to augment existing capacity. These solar powered bins crush the rubbish and have much more capacity than traditional bins. The beach will also be patrolled by two electronic bikes that can access hard to reach places. As in previous years, the ‘love your beach’ campaign will encourage people use the beach responsibly and respect other people and the environment. Meanwhile, those of you who catch the bus may have seen the adverts about recycling on local bus stops. From now on juice cartons and tetra-packs can now be recycled and put in the purple recycling bins.

Drainage and bathing water

Problems to do with bathing water and the drainage system are on-going issues across the district which impact on us all. As we all know, Southern Water now has resort to

tankering operations on a regular basis in around the Elham Valley when there is a wet winter. This has caused misery for local residents and damaged local roads. Pollution levels on our beaches, especially around Romney Marsh are another concern with huge implications.

Although it has no direct powers, the Council has been doing its best to hold Southern Water to account. We have also taken the view that we need to engage constructively and work together to achieve results. The Folkestone MP, Tony Vaughan, has taken a lead supporting this campaign. Together, we appear to have achieved results. The latest news is that Southern Water has massively increased its planned investment in our area from around £11 million to £42 million. They have allocated £7.5 million to the 'upper Nailbourne villages'. This will be spent sealing sewers to prevent groundwater from fields infiltrating the network that serves Elham, Lyminge, Peane and other settlements. Let us hope the work which is scheduled for 2026-30 achieves the desired results. This has to be good news, even if it causes disruption.

Ward grants

Another piece of good news is that ward grants for district councillors have been increased from £3000 to £5000 for this financial year. Applications can be made between now and the end of February/early March next year, but it is best to apply as soon as you can. To find out more go to [Ward budget scheme | Folkestone & Hythe District Council](#) or simply put Folkestone-Hythe ward grants into a google search. If you are interested, we suggest you discuss your proposal with a ward councillor (myself, James Butcher or David Godfrey represent North Downs East) before applying.

North Downs Forum

The North Downs Forum brings together community groups, local councillors, small businesses, and interested individuals, sharing ideas and expertise, and getting a stronger voice for our rural and town communities at the District Council. Previous meetings have focused on the local economy, tourism, local food production and biodiversity, social isolation & local health services, and community energy projects. Anyone is welcome to join, so if you think you might be interested, do get in touch. Our upcoming dates are:

- 11 June 2026 - Elham Village Hall
- 24 September 2026 - Knowler Farm, Stelling Minnis
- 12 November 2026 - Hawkinge Community Centre
- 11 February 2027 - venue TBC
- 08 April 2027 - venue TBC

The local economy

Growing the local economy is one of the central themes of the District Council's new corporate plan, and F&HDC has commissioned an appraisal of the economic opportunities and challenges across the different areas of the district – including the North Downs. As part of the process, we held a meeting at the Hawkinge Community Centre to capture ideas about the particular issues in our part of the district (e.g. public transport). The report is due to be published shortly.

Last year the District Council launched a programme to support high street and rural businesses with the challenges of the 21st century retail environment, with about fifty businesses across the district participating. And once the Folkestone – a Brighter Future works are completed at the end of the summer, the focus will shift to bringing more life and activity to the town centre, with the recruitment of a town centre manager who will oversee a year-round programme of markets and live events.

Tourism

Tourism is one of the significant economic sectors for our district: millions of people visit each year, spending £269m locally, which supports about 5,000 jobs. We work with local tourism businesses through the District Tourism Board to make sure we focus our limited resources on what matters to them – recently we ran a “shoulder season” campaign to attract people to the district in the quieter months of the year.

A North Downs tourism map has just been published highlighting visitor attractions in this part of the district, and the council continues to develop folkestoneandhythe.co.uk – the district’s tourism website.

Green grants scheme.

One final piece of news. The green grants scheme which supports climate change, environment and community action has now been renewed. Last year we received over fifty applications for projects ranging from school clubs to energy saving schemes. We are expecting even more interest this year and have allocated £250,000 to this scheme which is designed to help local groups and communities initiate and develop the projects that they know they want. For further details go to [Green Grant Programme 2026 \(New\) - Folkestone Works](#). There are four main categories, including micro-grants of up to £2000 which can receive 100% funding.

120.26 Correspondence

All correspondence received covered within the agenda items.

121.26 Date of next meeting and Close - The next meeting will be the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish on 6th July 2026 at 7.30pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.12pm.

Appendix 1 – Approved Invoices and Payments

May 2026 invoices approved on June26 meeting

Payee	Cheque No.	Amount	VAT	Net	Comments
Reliable Networks	ONLINE	£55.68	£9.28	£46.40	Microsoft License
Viking	ONLINE	£130.73	£21.79	£108.94	Stationary
Howdens	ONLINE	£1400.00	£280.00	£1120.00	Maintenance
	TOTAL	£1586.41	£311.07	£1275.34	

