

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held at 7.30pm on
Tuesday 20th May 2025
at the John Clements Sports & Community Centre, Codicote**

PRESENT: Cllr Mike Kane (Chair), Cllr Colin Argent, Cllr Jim Bundy, Cllr Robert Walker, Cllr Georgia Gilbert, Cllr Russell Green and Cllr Mark Walby.

OFFICER IN ATTENDANCE: Simon Crosier

IN ATTENDANCE: Three members of the public.

2025/26/024 TO ELECT A CHAIR FOR THE ENSUING COUNCIL YEAR

Cllr Walker proposed Cllr Kane continue as chair. Council voted unanimously to elect Cllr Mike Kane as chair. Cllr Kane signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2025/26/025 TO ELECT A VICE CHAIR FOR THE ENSUING COUNCIL YEAR

Cllr Kane proposed Cllr Argent continue as vice-chair; this was seconded by Cllr Walker. Council voted unanimously to elect Cllr Colin Argent as vice-chair.

2025/26/026 CHAIRS REMARKS

The chair congratulated Ralph Muncer on his appointment as the new County Councillor for Codicote. The chair also updated Councillors on the health of former Councillor Caroline Mayger and offered the Council's support in whatever way is required.

2025/26/027 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND APPROVE THE REASONS FOR ABSENCE

None.

2025/26/028 PRESENTATIONS BY AND QUESTIONS TO DISTRICT AND COUNTY MEMBERS

028.1 County Councillor Ralph Muncer was asked to take up the mantle of finding out whether the currently implemented 20mph zone matches the agreed plan. Cllr Kane also asked Cllr Muncer to speak to his Highways Officer to arrange for a visit to a Parish Council meeting to address Council on the latest with the Twenty's Plan construction phase. Cllr Muncer did confirm that a speed table still needs to be installed along Bury Lane, and this is likely to be done in July during the overnight period. Cllr Muncer also confirmed that should the construction phase run out of funding there will not be any further funds available from the locality budget until 2026-27.

Cllr Muncer will also pursue the weight restriction sign being put back in place along Cowards Lane.

028.2 Cllr Kane asked Cllr Muncer to call-in the land to the west of St Albans Road planning application. Cllr Muncer asked the clerk to write to the case officer confirming this along with the reasons for the request and copy him into the correspondence. **Action:** - The clerk will write to the case officer and copy Cllr Muncer into the correspondence.

Cllr Walker addressed Cllr Muncer concerning the excessive number of signs added to street furniture promoting the Croudace and Taylor Wimpey developments. The total signage stands at 21 and counting and one sign is on the Give Way sign at the Green, which is a clear distraction to road users.

Cllr Muncer updated Council with progress on the Local Plan. The Regulation 18 document will be consulted on at the end of 2025. The Regulation 19 draft Local Plan will be consulted upon at the end of 2026 with the public examination stage earmarked to take place in the summer/autumn of 2027 and the plan is then to be adopted at the end of 2027.

2025/26/029 TO FILL TWO CASUAL VACANCIES BY CO-OPTION

029.1 To resolve to proceed with the co-option process to fill two casual vacancies.

Council **resolved** to proceed with the co-option process. Councillors then had the opportunity to interview the candidates.

029.2 To obtain nominations for the candidate(s) and carry out a vote.

The candidates received the appropriate nomination, and a vote was carried out. Mr Charlie Unwin and Mr Paul Grey were duly co-opted as the new parish councillors for Codicote Parish Council with immediate effect.

029.3 The appointed Councillors to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office in front of the Proper Officer to take up their seat on Codicote Parish Council.

Mr Unwin and Mr Grey signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office in front of the Proper Officer and duly took their seats. **Action:** - The clerk will inform the Monitoring Officer at North Herts Council of Mr Unwin's and Mr Grey's co-options and add Mr Unwin's and Mr Grey's details to the Parish Council website.

029.4 The appointed Councillors to complete the Register of Member's Interests form and return to the Proper Officer.

The clerk passed the form to Cllrs Unwin and Grey and asked that this be completed and returned to him as soon as possible.

029.5 The appointed Councillors to sign the consent form for receiving the meeting summons and agenda in electronic form, should they so wish, and return it to the Proper Officer.

The clerk passed the form to Cllrs Unwin and Grey, who completed the form and returned it.

2025/26/030 TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES

030.1 Environment and Recreation Committee. This will be made up of all councillors and was unanimously **approved** by Council.

030.2 Planning Committee. This will be made up of Cllr Walker (chair), Cllr Green (temporary), Cllr Kane, Cllr Walby and Cllr Gilbert initially and was **approved** by Council. Both Cllr Kane and Gilbert would like to step back from this committee at an appropriate time in the year. Cllr Walker will consider the make-up of the committee as the year progresses.

030.3 Policy & Resources Committee. This will be made up of Cllrs Argent (chair), Cllr Bundy, Cllr Kane, and Cllr Gilbert and was **approved** by Council. A 5th member of the committee will be appointed during the year.

030.4 Employment Committee. The makeup of this committee will be considered later in the year.

2025/26/031 TO CONSIDER, REVIEW AND AGREE COUNCIL POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS:

031.1 Standing Orders. The clerk confirmed to Council that the Model Standing Orders from NALC have received some minor amendments, mostly to reflect Code of Conduct requirements. Council unanimously **approved** the latest 2025 version of the Standing Orders. **Action:** - The clerk will add the newly adopted Standing Orders document to the Parish Council website.

031.2 Financial Regulations. The clerk stated that these were adopted in November 2024. The clerk recommended that these be reviewed by the Policy & Resources Committee on an annual basis. Council unanimously **approved** the existing Financial Regulations.

District and County Councillor Ralph Muncer left the meeting.

2025/26/032 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public had registered to speak.

2025/26/033 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S CODE OF CONDUCT

None.

2025/26/034 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29th April 2025

The minutes were unanimously **approved** by council and signed by the chair.

2025/26/035 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE

None.

2025/26/036 CLERK'S REPORT

The report is available under the supporting documents section of the website. Concerning the Neighbourhood Plan, Cllr Walker asked to whom the report from the Examiner had been sent. The clerk advised that the report been sent only to Jacqueline Veater of GovResources, but with the clerk copied in.

2025/26/037 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM WORKING PARTIES

037.1 Neighbourhood Plan. It is hoped that there will be further information available at the June full Council meeting. **Action:** - The clerk will ask Jacqueline Veater to provide an update in time for the June full Council meeting.

037.2 Pavilion project. An update from Cllrs Bundy and Argent.

Cllr Bundy confirmed that quotes had been obtained for an upgraded heating system, rewiring, extra plumbing works and a new kitchen in the pavilion. The clerk confirmed that the quotes would be discussed at the Environment and Recreation Committee meeting in June and the work prioritised. Council unanimously **agreed** that this should be an item for discussion at the next Environment and Recreation Committee meeting to be held in June. **Action:** - The clerk will add this as an item for discussion to the agenda for the June meeting of the Environment and Recreation Committee.

037.3 Scout hut. An update from Cllr Kane, including actions for Council to consider and approve.

Cllr Kane stated that he had met with Tina Salmon and April Schofield and to push the project forward the working party asked Council to consider the following: -

- To set up a joint working party for the Scout hut.
- To set up a meeting with North Herts Council.
- To prepare questions for that meeting.
- To select working party members who will attend the meeting.
- To arrange the meeting for June or early July.
- That the pre-school is represented at the meeting with North Herts Council.

Council considered the request and unanimously **resolved** that the working party can carry out the actions requested. **Action:** - The clerk will confirm Council's decision to the working party.

2025/26/038 TO DISCUSS THE PARISH MAGAZINE ARTICLE FOR July 2025 AND AGREE ANY ACTIONS

Members of Council suggested that the co-option of two new Councillors, a report on the VE-Day commemoration, the recent allotment clearance and the Annual Parish meeting should form the article. Council considered the ideas and unanimously **resolved** that the clerk should compile the article as suggested. **Action:** - The clerk will submit the article as prescribed by Council to the Parish Magazine by 12th June 2025.

2025/26/039 TO DISCUSS WAYS IN WHICH THE PARISH COUNCIL CAN IMPROVE COMMUNICATION WITH RESIDENTS AND APPROVE ANY ACTIONS. Cllr Walby and Cllr Argent TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE.

Cllr Walby has embarked on a series of training courses that he hopes to complete in early August. Once completed a strategy on communication can be drawn up and brought before Council at the September meeting. An update on progress will be forthcoming via an agenda item at future Council meetings.

2025/26/040 PLANNING COMMITTEE ITEMS

040.1. To consider planning applications referred from the LPA:

Planning Applications – Made to North Herts Council

**Planning Applications
ADDITIONS since 30th April 2025**

APPLICATION	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	Comments
25/00997/FPH	168 High Street, Codicote, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 8UB	Full Permission Householder: Single storey rear extension.	Comments by 22 nd May
25/00974/FP	55 Codicote Road, Codicote, Welwyn, Hertfordshire, AL6 9TY	Full Planning Permission: Erection of one self-build detached 4-bed dwelling following demolition of existing car port including parking and creation of vehicular access off Codicote Road and existing vehicular access off Rollswood Road permanently made redundant.	Comments by 22 nd May
25/00979/FP	Land To the West Of, St Albans Road, Codicote, Hertfordshire	Full Planning Permission: Use of land for residential caravan site for 8 gypsy families including hardstanding and existing lights	Comments by 23 rd May

		(development already carried out).	
25/01045/FPH	95 Codicote Road, Codicote, Welwyn, Hertfordshire, AL6 9TY	Full Permission Householder: Single storey rear orangery following demolition of existing conservatory	Comments by 24 th May
25/01177/LBC	Chapel Barn, Rabley Heath Road, Codicote, Welwyn, Hertfordshire, AL6 9UA	Listed Building Consent: Internal and external refurbishment and adaption of existing listed dwelling including infill extension to create new principal front entrance, staircase to mezzanine levels, installation of conservation roof- lights, and alterations to existing fenestration to include replacing existing front elevation doors with windows. Landscaping to include replacing existing formation of walls, replacing materials and replace existing external timber staircase with a metal staircase. Re-cladding, re- roofing	Comments by 6 th June
25/01176/FPH	Chapel Barn, Rabley Heath Road, Codicote, Welwyn, Hertfordshire, AL6 9UA	Full Permission Householder: Infill extension to create principal front entrance, insertion of rooflights, alterations to fenestration arrangement and replacement windows and doors throughout. Installation of external metal staircase following removal of existing timber staircase. Re- cladding, re-roofing and internal alterations.	Comments by 6 th June

Planning Decisions – Made by North Herts Council

25/00937/TCA	Land Outside 6 And 8, St Albans Road, Codicote, Hertfordshire, SG4 8UT	Walnut - Reduce crown by 1m overall. Raised to give 3m clearance over adjoining	Permission Granted
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040.2. To note LPA decisions – See above.

040.3. To note updates on appeals – See above.

2025/26/041 ENVIRONMENT/RECREATION COMMITTEE ITEMS

041.1. Chair to provide an update on relevant items.

The next meeting of the Environment and Recreation Committee is on Tuesday 3rd June at the JC. Cllr Argent confirmed that as a result of the complaints concerning the allotment plot clearance, that a meeting is to be arranged with those people to discuss any issues and note any lessons for future allotment clearances.

2025/26/042 FINANCE AND RISK

042.1. To note payments made and due under contract and to approve other payments:

Payments made and due under contract were noted, along with the bank reconciliation and **approved** unanimously.

042.2. To approve the annual accounts for 2024-25. The annual accounts were unanimously **approved** by Council.

042.3. To approve the Internal Auditor's Report for 2024-25 and approve any actions. The report was unanimously **approved**, and Council were satisfied that all notifications had now been addressed.

042.4. To approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2024-25. The Annual Governance Statement was unanimously **approved** by Council.

042.5. To approve the Accounting Statement for 2024-25. The Accounting Statement was unanimously **approved** by Council.

042.6. To agree the dates for the public rights period for the 2024-25 accounts. The public rights period was set between Monday 7th July and Friday 15th August 2025. The dates were unanimously **approved** by Council.

042.7. To consider the addition of cyber claims and losses to the Parish Council insurance cover. The clerk stated that HAPTC had advised Councils to check whether they had the necessary cover in place, and if not, to consider adding this to the policy. This covers data theft from both the Parish Council website and email accounts. Council considered the risks and unanimously **resolved** that this cover should be added to the insurance policy, providing the cost is under £300. **Action:** - The clerk will carry out the action prescribed by Council and report back to Councillors via email on the outcome.

2025/26/043 MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AT FUTURE MEETINGS

Cllr Kane stated that the June full Council meeting will have an agenda item concerning the make-up of existing working parties and the creation of new ones. Cllr Kane asked Councillors to consider working parties for the Scout hut project, Pavilion project, Twenty's Plenty project, Allotments, Communication and Maintenance.

This was discussed after item 7.4 on the agenda.

2025/26/044 AOB

Cllr Kane confirmed that the Annual Parish Meeting takes place on Tuesday 27th May and encouraged Councillors to attend. The clerk asked Cllr Bundy to return the Jane Brown trophy to Cllr Kane in time for the APM.

Meeting closed at 21.14pm

The date of the next full council meeting is Tuesday 24th June 2025

Signed.......... Date: 20th May 2025