



VERNHAM DEAN PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Cllr John Hale

Clerk: Mrs Miriam Edwards

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MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 10th November 2025 at 7.30pm, held at the Millennium Hall, Vernham Dean.

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Councillors present:

Cllr John Hale (Chairman)

Cllr Glynn Seymour

Cllr Julie Drury (Vice Chairman)

Cllr David Christy

Cllr Nigel Palmer

Clerk

Cllr Haydn Watkins

42. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

42.1 Apologies were received from Cllrs Adrian Butt, Glenn Tollett, County & Borough Councillors North.

43. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

43.1 There were no declarations of interests relating to items on the agenda, or requests for dispensations, in accordance with the Council's code of conduct.

44. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

44.1 Councillors agreed and approved the minutes of the parish council meeting which was held on 8th September 2025, and which were signed by the Chairman.

45. ACTIONS ARISING

45.1 Footpath from Hen Barn Corner, Upton to Upton Manor – the whole path was proving impassible especially as the summer growth continued. The owner of the grass field to the left was Upton Manor. Cllr Christy updated that it appeared that some work had been done but it was naturally dying back into the winter. The arable path on right belonged to Millers in Upton as a tree was cut down across it about a fortnight previously. *Cllr Palmer to continue enquiries to confirm landowners' clearing responsibilities, ahead of the spring.*

45.2 Cllr Watkins raised FP2 (Vernham Street by Fowlers Farm) and the replacement of three stiles with gates. Details of the footpath walked by the clerk and ranger had been shared but the Ranger had subsequently resigned. Gateways were likely to be unsuitable for a metal kissing gate as large as the example at the Church Path end owing to terrain. The PC would have to fund the materials as there was no more HCC funding and volunteer support for labour was unlikely to be progressed until replacement ranger was in place. Cllr Drury had spoken to the owner of Fowlers Farm, whose preference was to leave it as it was but would prefer wooden kissing gates and to have further conversation with the Parish Council about the project. CIL money could possibly be available. *Cllr Watkins and clerk to pursue grant funding and perhaps look at a bigger project to enable CIL funding to be released. Cllr Drury to keep the owner updated.*

Vernham Dean Parish Council Minutes - May 2025 to April 2026

Copies of Parish Council Minutes may be accessed at www.vernhamdean-pc.gov.uk

Signed

Date



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- 45.3 The condition of the noticeboard at the Bury Dene was raised, requiring some attention and repainting. *Cllr Hale had been unable to repaint owing to an injury but would deal in due course.*
- 45.4 Cutting of the drainage mound, Bury Dene – it was still hoped that HCC would take financial responsibility for this as it had to be cut with light in-hand mowing machinery to prevent damage.
- 45.5 Flooding Hen Barn Corner – Cllr Palmer had contacted Kirsty North who would hopefully be able to continue asking the engineers to look at the issue. It was hoped she would attend the January meeting.

46. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- 46.1 There were 4 members of the public at the meeting.
- 46.2 The next AGM of the Millennium Hall committee was set for 5th January for information,

47. PLANNING

- 47.1 **25/02477/FULLN** | Replacement single storey front extension with balcony above, alterations to fenestration | **Rowans 8 Haydown Leas Vernham Dean** – Cllr Drury felt it was in keeping with what was already in place. No comment.
- 47.2 **25/02340/TREEN** | Pear tree – Fell | **Upton Farm Upton Road Linkenholt**. No comment, tree being replaced with new planting.
- 47.3 **25/02031/LBWN** | Retention of replacement timber windows with wood effect UPVC windows | **Church Cottage Vernham Street** – Cllr Drury agreed with the conservation officer that the windows were not in keeping with the listed building. No comment rather than an objection, as the Conservation Officer would deal.
- 47.4 **25/02015/FULLN** | Demolition of dwelling and erection of replacement dwelling with associated access, parking, landscaping and private amenity space | **Little Down Cottage Little Down Lane Little Down**. Councillors agreed with the access issue and hours of construction, but no issue with the build itself. PC to comment.
- 47.5 **25/02600/DDTPO** | Fell dangerous mature Beech (TPO.TVBC.0051) due to advanced Kretzschmaria, sited south west of the property | **Vernham House High Street Vernham Dean**. There was no cure for the fungus issue and therefore no alternative. No comment.

48. COUNCILLORS' UPDATES

- 48.1 Cllr Watkins updated that the phone box by the pond had been repainted and looked very smart. He mentioned that it was the 90th year of the K6 telephone box, and the box in Vernham Dean was installed on 10th June 1937.
- 48.2 Cllr Seymour advised that the grass area on Haydown Leas had still not been cut. Clerk to advise TVBC.
- 48.3 Cllr Palmer reported that the Upton quiz night on 14th November had been well supported.
- 48.4 Cllr Palmer enquired as to when the Hurstbourne Tarrant Parish Council noticeboard in Upton would be returning. *Clerk to chase the manufacturers.*
- 48.5 Cllr Palmer updated that there was still no further word on the current status of the empty Crown Public House.



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- 48.6 Cllr Christy reported that there was still no dog flap on Footpath 7 in Vernahm Street. The clerk had spoken to the landowner who had agreed to fix the stile in the first instance. *Clerk to speak to landowner again.*
- 48.7 Cllr Christy reported that he had an interested contractor for the grass cutting quote for 2026/27.
- 48.8 Cllr Christy asked about the lockable bollards on the Bury Dene. These were due to be returned now the grass cutting season had finished.
- 48.9 Cllr Christy reported on the recent crash at the school gates. A discussion was had regarding possible traffic calming options including community funded initiatives via HCC. *Cllr Christy to liaise with Cllr Hedger at HBT* who had accessed this funding, and which entailed an HCC surveyor to attend to look at the village as a whole and give advice as to what options would be viable, and what funding would be available. County Cllr North would be asked to support when the project was a little further forward. The school should be asked for their views and also whether access could be moved from the front, or if bollards would be more effective.
- 48.10 Cllr Hale updated ref the playing fields:
- the tennis net had been repaired but a new one would be needed in the spring. The posts looked like they had moved in the ground
 - a new child's swing seat had been installed and another was on order
 - there were some replacement dragons teeth around the field, meaning the only access for cars and larger vehicles was via the locked gate or locked bollards,
 - the clock on the pavilion had been vandalised in September, the hands having been bent upwards. Cllr Hale would research someone to repair it.
 - more tables for inside the pavilion were to be ordered using the profit from the summer fete
 - the MUGA surface had been cleaned and treated as it had been suffering from algae where it was in the shade. This should be done on a more regular basis.
- 48.11 Cllr Hale reported that he had attended a resilience meeting in October where TVBC parishes shared experiences. There were grants available for energy saving projects via Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks. This could be useful for the Millennium Hall solar panels.

49. CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

- 49.1 The clerk had received the annual application for a grant of £1800 from the Millennium Hall. All agreed that the hall was important as a place of refuge if there was ever an emergency in the village. **RESOLVED:** Agreed to grant £1850, including £50 for the annual Christmas tree in the village.
- 49.2 The clerk wished to minute that she had submitted her resignation, and the one month's notice period had expired but she was willing to remain until the end of the financial year if no replacement could be found.
- 49.4 The matter of the request from the church for assistance with churchyard mowing was raised and a discussion was had. The numbers were dwindling and the age increasing, of the volunteers in the working party. It was generally felt that although it was a village asset and part of the infrastructure, and residents were entitled to be buried in the churchyard, church attendance was low so to add the additional area to be mowed (the parish council already paid for part of it within the annual contract), further debate with the community would be needed before this could be



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agreed. A member of the public present at the meeting volunteered to assist with mowing next season and was duly thanked for his kind offer.

50 POLICIES FOR ANNUAL REVIEW

50.1 Councillors reviewed the following policies which had not changed since the last review: Standing Orders ; Grant Awarding Policy ; Complaints Policy ; Freedom of Information Policy ; Financial Risk Assessment ; Financial Regulations
RESOLVED: All policies were accepted with no further changes.

Cllr Hale mentioned that policies were important, with various points to remember, such as rules to follow when contracts are sought, forms to be obtained for grant awarding, ensuring GDPR was not being breached, etc.

51. FINANCE

51.1 Q2 PERFORMANCE MONITORING. Councillors reviewed the financial reports for Q2 2025/26. RESOLVED: no actions required

51.2 Councillors discussed the first draft budget for 2026/27, taking into consideration any anticipated projects which may require funding from the precept. Cllr Hale raised the point that with the impending national budget from the government, it was likely that the precept would need to increase again, as well as having to factor in tasks which HCC may no longer prioritise when the reorganisation came into force in 2027. Cllr Christy mentioned that the council should be mindful of keeping the community on side, as there had been increases over the last two years. These increases had been necessary as the precept had not been raised for very many years before. Carried forward to January for final decision.

51.3 Councillor noted the annual pay increase by the National Joint Council which would equate to 46p per hour for the clerk and be accounted for in the budget. This included back pay to April 2025.

51.4 On the day of the meeting, the bank balances stood at £52,643.60 with reserves of £44,714.25

51.5 The clerk had circulated the payments made since the last meeting. Cllr Hale agreed them as an accurate record.

TYPE	DATE	PAYEE	AMOUNT	REMARKS
BACS	15/9/25	Kelly Lowth	32.00	Pavilion Cleaning
FP	16/9/25	Lloyds	4.25	Bank charges (PFA a/c)
BACS	6/10/25	Kelly Lowth	32.00	Pavilion Cleaning
BACS	6/10/25	Scofell	667.99	Grass cutting
BACS	7/10/25	HMRC	62.20	PAYE
BACS	7/10/25	Mrs M Edwards	248.93	Clerk's salary
BACS	20/10/25	Tangley PC	159.54	SLR quarter share maint.



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FP	20/10/25	Lloyds	4.25	Bank charges (PFA a/c)
BACS	3/11/25	Reliance Appliancee	54.00	PAT testing
BACS	3/11/25	Scofell	667.99	Grass cutting
BACS	3/11/25	Farm Waste Solutions	960.00	MUGA cleaning & treatment
BACS	5/11/25	Kelly Lowth	32.00	Pavilion Cleaning
BACS	10/11/25	Business Stream	45.47	Pavilion water
BACS	10/11/25	HMRC	62.40	PAYE
BACS	10/11/25	Mrs M Edwards	248.73	Clerk's salary

52. NEXT MEETING

52.1 The next ordinary meeting of the Parish Council was due to be held on Monday 12th January 2026.

The meeting concluded at 20.28 hrs.

Signed Chairman