

PARISH OF HEMPSTEAD

Minutes of the Meeting of Hempstead Parish Council held on Thursday, 18th June 2026

Present: Nick Turkentine (Chair), Paul Frainer, Caroline Hughes, James Nicholson, Emma Tarry, Mark Welbourn and the Clerk.

The Parish Council meeting started at 8:01pm.

26/027 Apologies for Absence Diana Frost

26/028 Public Forum

26/029 Declarations of Interest All Councillors present confirmed that their Register of Interests were up to date. The Clerk to follow up with Diana Frost.

26/030 Reports from District and/or County Councillors

Apologies were sent by District Councillor Mike Tayler and a written report circulated.

County Councillor Bo Harris had been invited to the meeting, but had not replied/sent apologies.

26/031 Minutes of Previous Meeting of Thursday, 6th May 2026 and Annual Parish Meeting of Friday, 15th May 2026, and Matters Arising were approved as correct records and signed by the Chair

26/032 Finance and Parish Council Documentation

Item 1 – Financial update from the Clerk.

Current Account Balance: £8721.31

Date	Payee	Description	Amount	Balance
08-May-26	B/P to: Outdoor Jack	Grass cutting	-565.77	9356.04
08-May-26	B/P to: Outdoor Jack	Grass cutting	-260.35	9095.69
20-May-26	S/O to: COX R	Salary	-293.98	8801.71
20-May-26	S/O to: HMRC	PAYE	-73.4	8728.31
31-May-26	Unity Trust	Service Charge	-7	8721.31

Reserve Account Balance: £12,854.79

Item 2 – Ross Midgley has completed his internal audit/governance review and passed the Council without recommendations. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) documents were approved and signed by the Chair and Clerk where required.

Item 3 – RCCE membership: £63.90 Mark Welbourn proposed, seconded by Caroline Hughes and unanimously agreed by all councillors, not to renew RCCE membership this year, and to review next year. The following invoices were approved and signed by the Chair: £413.06 to Outdoor Jack for grass cutting, £7 to the Clerk for expenses (printer paper) and £165.23 to the EALC for membership.

Speed Indicator Device (SID) – consideration of the following quotes received by the Clerk: £5,274 from Westcotec (1 device); £4,257.60 from Messagemaker (1 device); and £5,614.76 from ElanCity (2 devices). After discussion James Nicholson proposed that the Parish Council purchase 2 SIDs from ElanCity, which was seconded by Mark Welbourn and unanimously passed.

26/033 Planning

The Willows: UTT/26/0952/HHF. Approved.

Hempstead Parish Council's responsibilities once planning permission has been approved and development/work commenced: Councillors agreed that if a resident were to approach the Council regarding concerns, then the council would advise that any concerns should be raised with the planning authority directly.

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26/034 Correspondence The Clerk had received an email from a former Steeple Bumpstead resident about Hempstead Wood and whether there was a local group working towards safeguarding it for the future. The Clerk to reply.

26/035 Artificial intelligence and the Parish Council The Chair raised that Parish Council ought to have a policy on how it might use artificial intelligence. Councillors agreed that there should be a policy. Mark Welboun to draft and circulate an initial version prior to the next meeting.

26/036 Reports from Councillors

Highways and Rights of Way

No updates on road resurfacing. Reform have announced a £7m pothole fund for Essex, but this requires approval (promised a 90-day fix for all reported potholes), and increased repair teams in the County. Paul Frainer will try and get a meeting with the new cabinet member for Highways and Infrastructure, County Councillor Mark Webster.

Local Highways Panel – new representatives but still a lack of money to move forward on projects.

Flooding No update required.

Policing and Neighbourhood Watch No update required.

Health & Wellbeing and Buses No update required.

Environment Diana Frost had sent a written report, which included decisions that needed to be made regarding trees on Parish Council land by Wellyard. There was concern regarding the safety of an ash tree, adjacent to Wellyard and Brookside Cottage. The tree has been surveyed by a tree surgeon and the Clerk is awaiting the report and quote for work suggested. All Councillors agreed that as long as the footpath on this piece of land is kept clear and accessible, then the rest of the area doesn't require any maintenance. The area will continue to be included in the tree surveys of Parish Council land.

Bus shelter refurbishment – Councillors approved the £700 quote from David Cox, which includes toughened glass replacement windows.

Ring 'O Trees – confirmed that the work can go ahead, as it is budgeted for, and the Clerk will inform the Council when news on The Hundred Parishes grant when received.

Communications Village website – Emma Tarry had circulated a PowerPoint on the structure of the website as a proposal based on discussion of the last meeting. Councillors to consider the following: Purpose of the website? PC? Hempstead Village? More than that? What do we want to include or not include? Who are the main benefactors of the website?

Village Hall No update required.

26/037 Matters Arising requiring decisions, to be included on the next Agenda Village Website.

26/038 Upcoming Meeting Dates: 16th July, 20th August and 10th September. Councillors agreed to move the October meeting, due to a clash with HDS rehearsal, to 8pm on Wednesday, 7th October.

The meeting ended at 9:38pm