



CATSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Catsfield Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 19th February 2026 at 19:00 in Hermon Cottage, Church Road, Catsfield, TN33 9DP

CLLrs in attendance: Cllr Des Christian (Vice Chair), Cllr Sarah Jacques, Cllr Diane Wilson and Cllr Sharon Harris.

Also in attendance: Mrs Vicki Rutt (Clerk), Cllr Kathryn Field (ESCC), Cllr Nicola McLaren (RDC) and one member of the public.

Clerk & RFO:
Mrs Vicki Rutt
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TN33 9DP
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	PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
1.	To receive apologies for absence Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Keith Robertson.
2.	To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 15th January 2026 RESOLVED: The minutes were approved and signed.
3.	To receive declarations of interest on agenda items No declarations were received.
4.	Public Questions None.
5.	To receive reports from County Cllr Kathryn Field (ESCC) & District Cllr Nicola McLaren (RDC) ESCC – Cllr Field reported that the County Council elections are back on in May 2026 for them to hold office for one year. County have set a budget; Council Tax is going up by 4.99%. They are £55m short so the Government have asked for extra support, which is a loan, they have asked for £70m. Interest is £6m a year. SEND budget, autumn white paper is due imminently. SEND should be paid for by centrally; it has been raised that the Government might pay off SEND debt. RDC – Cllr McLaren reported that the local plan draft is out for consultation which ends on the 23 rd March. Public exhibitions are being held and dates have been published and are listed below: • Tuesday 3rd March, 3pm–7pm - The Pelham Community Hub, Holliers Hill, Bexhill-on-Sea TN40 2DD • Tuesday 10th March, 3pm–7pm – Battle Memorial Hall, 81 High Street, Battle, TN33 0AQ • Thursday 12th March, 3pm–7pm – St Marks Church Hall (Little Common), Green Lane, Bexhill-on-Sea TN39 4B7. The Local Plan is stating 932 homes per annum, Catsfield target is 85 homes. On the 12 th Feb, the Planning Committee approved a development of a new Aldi on the edge of Rye. The new National Planning Policy Framework was discussed and information sent to Cllrs. The 2026/27 budget is going to Full Council for approval; proposal is a Council Tax increase of 2.99%. Food waste leaflets and caddies have been delivered to households ready for the service to commence on the 1 st April 2026.
6.	Planning and Enforcement
6.1	RR/2025/1284/P for Catsfield Christmas Tree Farm, The Stream, Catsfield, Battle, East Sussex, TN33 9BB Erection of a 99.9MW Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) comprising primary substation, BESS units, power conversion system units, telecommunications tower, storage containers, security fencing and CCTV, access, internal tracks, and associated infrastructure, together with landscape and biodiversity enhancement. Construction of a temporary construction compound. <i>PC commented: No objections but ensure the lighting does not breach dark skies.</i>
6.2	Discuss how to respond to the Rother Local Plan consultation (deadline 23rd March 2026) It was agreed that Cllrs would meet to discuss a response which will come to the March meeting for final approval and submission. Clerk to arrange a meeting for Cllrs to meet to discuss. Action 1.
7.	Clerks & Admin Matters
7.1	To receive and consider the Clerk's action log The Clerk updated the action log with all outstanding actions and provided status updates.
7.2	To discuss the Parish Council newsletter Cllr Wilson raised concerns that the newsletter was too lengthy, information heavy and her part was at the bottom. Clerk explained that it is put in the newsletter in order of receipt and this quarter it was information heavy due to the Parish Survey and devolution update. All Cllrs do receive the newsletter in draft format prior to it being published to make comments. Cllrs to send Clerk any thoughts ahead of the next issue. Action 2.

7.3	To discuss the Parish Council website Cllr Wilson raised concerns about the Parish Council website. The Clerk updated that the new one is nearly finished and will be easier to navigate. It needs to be ready for 1st April 2026 to be compliant for audit.
8.	Finance, Audit and Legal
8.1	To approve the payments list to 19th February 2026 RESOLVED: The payments to 19th February 2026 were reviewed and approved as shown in Appendix A. They were signed and online payment approved by Cllr Christian.
8.2	To receive and approve the bank statement, reconciliation, balance sheet and Income v Expenditure report to 31st January 2026 RESOLVED: The bank statement, reconciliations, balance sheet and IvE report to 31st January 2026 was reviewed and approved.
8.3	To discuss an email from the Village Hall regarding a request for additional funds for the air conditioning project Cllr Christian updated that a further request for funds has come in from the Village Hall for the air conditioning project. A member of the Village Hall Committee attended to explain why the price has increased. Cllrs discussed and confirmed that there is £12k allocated to the Village Hall already which was increased recently from £9k. They were unable to agree an additional £1,875 as this would have to come out of another pot allocated to another project. It was agreed that the Village Hall could do it as a phase 1 approach for the Hall and then Hermon Cottage another time or if they could cover the difference, the whole project could take place as planned. The Village Hall will confirm with the company and copy in the Clerk so the project can start and be progressed.
9.	Recreation Ground (Playing Field, Playground and Community Pavilion)
9.1	To receive the summary of recreation ground inspections through February 2026 Nothing to report.
9.2	To receive an update on the decarbonising project at the Pavilion Cllr Wilson explained that it was very positive to meet with heating engineers at the Pavilion for them to give practical information and state what can be done. It was agreed that a separate meeting is needed for Cllrs to review the reports and discuss next steps. Clerk to arrange a meeting for Cllrs. Action 3.
10.	Community Engagement
10.1	To receive an update on strategic aims There is no further update, but Clerk will recirculate the document for Cllrs to review and possibly make some additions following recent discussions. Action 4.
10.2	To receive an update on the Parish Priority Statement questionnaire The Clerk reported that the Parish Priority Statement has been published on the PC noticeboard, PC website, social media, posters and the email communications list. The link for the questionnaire can be found here: https://forms.gle/AttHFtJZHm4t8vFi7 The deadline is the 27th February 2026. A discussion was held around whether it could be extended by a week or two as some local events are coming up where the survey could be promoted. Clerk to liaise with Cllrs outside of the meeting. Action 5.
10.3	To update on recent Dark Skies meeting Cllrs Harris and Wilson recently attended this meeting. They reported that Catsfield are very far behind and are not likely to be ready to complete an enquiry form for any award. It was agreed that more information is needed so Cllr Wilson agreed to draft a plan to raise awareness and provide an update in each newsletter. It will also be raised at the Parish Assembly. Action 6.
10.4	To receive an update on the Parish Climate and Ecology Group Cllr Wilson updated on the Weald to Wave project, which is a 100-mile project to support wildlife conservation. Cllr Wilson is the rep for Catsfield at the Parish meeting which is a really useful meeting to obtain ideas, information and good sharing opportunities. Cllr Wilson will update on further information as and when appropriate.
11.	Road safety and Policing
11.1	To receive an update on the request for speed limit charges to the North of the village Nothing new to update, still waiting for the design document to be sent.
12.	Open Spaces
12.1	To receive an update on car park signage Clerk updated that the sign has been received and delivered to Cllr Robertson today who will arrange for it to be installed in due course.
13.	Items for referral to next agenda / reports / future agenda items / correspondence. • Legionnaires process update • Discuss Catsfield archives

- Parish Assembly logistics
- Speedwatch sessions

Meeting ended at 20:25

The next Parish Council meeting is Thursday 19th March 2026 at 19:00.

Signed:

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Chairman

Appendix A

Finance report for 19th February 2026 PC meeting

<u>Payments by Debit Card paid pending authorisation</u>			
Payment Date	Payee	Payment Details	Amount
None			
<u>Payments by Bank Transfer paid pending authorisation</u>			
Payment Date	Payee	Payment Details	Amount
None			
<u>Payments by Bank Transfer pending authorisation</u>			
Payment Date	Payee	Payment Details	Amount
19.02.26	Vicki Rutt	Salary for February 2026	£1,092.53
19.02.26	HMRC	Tax and NI for February 2026	£474.94
19.02.26	Victoria Robertson	Pav clean Feb 2026	£50.00
19.02.26	Uniserve	IT charges for Feb 2026	£47.64
19.02.26	Streetlights	Streetlighting repairs	£1,386.00
19.02.26	Keith Robertson	Reimbursement for key cutting	£12.50
19.02.26	Signs of Style	Car park sign	£245.00
<u>Payments by direct debit for authorisation</u>			
Date	Payee	Payment Details	Amount
19.01.26	NEST	Pension for Jan 2026	£100.87
21.01.26	eon Next	Pav electricity Dec 2025	£144.41
26.01.26	O2 business	Clerk phone Jan 2026	£34.20
28.01.26	JM Waste Management	Waste Dec 2025 + add weight	£81.72
29.01.26	Npower	Streetlights Dec 2025	£41.16
02.02.26	Rother District Council	Monthly car park charge	£51.00
<u>Acknowledge receipt of monies</u>			
19.01.26	Catsfield Ukuelle	Pav booking June 2025	£100.00
03.02.26	CCLA	Interest	£241.98