



HASLEMERE TOWN COUNCIL

Town Hall, High Street, Haslemere, Surrey GU27 2HG
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Minutes of the Haslemere Town Council Meeting held at 7pm on Thursday 20th November 2025.
The meeting was held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, High Street, Haslemere, GU27 2HG.

Mayor	*Cllr Arrick
Deputy Mayor	*Cllr Keen
Councillors	Aslam, *Austin, Banfield, *Bayliss, *Bridge, *Carroll, *Carter, *Davidson, *Keen, *Leach *Matthes, *Miller, *Nicholson, Robini, *Waters, *Weatherburn, *Weldon

* present

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Arrick, clerked by the Town Clerk, Lisa O’Sullivan and minuted by Jo Cork. One member of the public was in attendance. One member of the public attended via Zoom.

95/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED: Apologies are accepted from Cllrs Robini and Banfield (unwell), and Cllr Aslam (work commitments).

96/25 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Cllr Arrick declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 10 as a Scout Leader, and confirmed that she would abstain from voting on this item.

97/25 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held 11th September 2025 are adopted as a true record and signed by the Mayor.

98/25 REPRESENTATION BY THE PUBLIC

None.

99/25 UPDATES FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Surrey County Council: Cllr Keen reported on behalf of Cllr Robini that Petworth Road and Lower Street have now been re-surfaced. Works to the junction of Hindhead Road and Critchmere lane are due to commence.

Cllr Nicholson confirmed that a number of new car parking machines have been installed in Waverley owned car parks which take cash as well as card payments.

100/25 MAYOR’S UPDATE

The Mayor confirmed dates for forthcoming Christmas events;

11th December - Christmas Carols , Haslemere Museum Gardens, 6:30pm

19th December - Mayor’s Christmas Drinks, Town Hall, 5:30pm

The Mayor stated that she hoped Cllrs would attend these events, please RSVP to these invites.

101/25 CLERK’S UPDATE

Update & Participate:

The Clerk confirmed that the revised date for the *Update & Participate* session will be Monday, 19th January 2026. It is hoped that all Councillors will be able to attend. Neil Francis from The Woolmer Hill Sports Association has confirmed his attendance and will present their proposal regarding the management of the sports grounds.

Cllr Leach stated that this would be a valuable opportunity to review the Council's Strategy and Objectives for the remainder of the financial year.

Waitrose Temporary Closure:

Cllr Bayliss enquired whether any winter events were being planned to help attract footfall to the town during the temporary closure of Waitrose. Cllr Bridge suggested that consideration be given to reinstating the previously cancelled Food Festival, potentially to be held in the car park.

It was noted that the Clerk had facilitated a meeting between Waverley Borough Council Economic Development team and the Chamber of Trade, Cllr Leach will act as town council representative.

102/25 FINANCIAL MATTERS

RESOLVED: That the schedule of payments as detailed in the Cashbook printouts for months 6 & 7 and any variances in the Council's accounts and any reported overspends and virements are approved.

103/25 BUDGET

Cllr Waters provided an overview of the draft budget ahead of the final version being presented to Full Council in January 2026.

The draft budget reflects an increase in the precept of 18.2%, primarily due to the proposed transfer of assets from Waverley Borough Council to Haslemere Town Council. It was agreed that reserves should not be used to reduce the precept increase for 2026–27. This rise remains significantly below national and local comparators.

A proposal was also noted for the acquisition of an electric vehicle to support grounds maintenance operations, with associated running costs to be included within core expenditure in future years.

Cllr Carroll expressed concern regarding the 18.2% increase in the precept, particularly given the presence of unspent Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds, and queried the potential risks of reducing the budget.

In response, Cllr Waters confirmed that the budget had already been reduced where possible and emphasised that adequate funding is essential to enable the proposed land transfers to proceed.

The Town Clerk advised that, historically, the Council's budget has been supported by drawing down reserves, but this approach is not sustainable going forward.

Cllr Leach thanked Cllr Water for all his hard work in producing such a comprehensive report and making some difficult decisions.

RESOLVED:

- i. Council agrees in principle the budget for 2025-26, the budget working party will bring the draft budget to January Full Council meeting for formal approval.
- ii. The Clerk is instructed to order a VW Buzz from Select Vehicle Leasing before the end of November to secure delivery in April 2026.

104/25 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Committees with delegated decision making:

- Planning and Highways – 16th October & 13th November
- Finance and Governance committee – 21st October

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings, where committees hold delegated decision-making powers, are noted.

Committees with no or limited decision making:

- CIL and Amenities – 6th November
- CBEC committee – 7th November

RESOLVED:

- I. That the minutes of the meetings where committees do not hold delegated decision-making powers are approved.

II. That the recommendations in the additional Town Meadow report at Appendix 14 are approved. As follows:

a. Appointment of Playground Supplier

That the Council approves the recommendation of the Amenities & CIL committee and awards the playground contract to Eibe.

b. Delegated Authority for Additional Payments

That the Chair of the CIL & Amenities Committee and the Clerk be granted delegated authority to authorise additional expenditure up to a total of £2,500, should it be required, with such expenditure to be reported to the next meeting of the Council.

c. Delegated Authority for Scheme Amendments

That the Chair of the CIL and Amenities Committee and the Clerk, in consultation with the working party, be authorised to approve minor amendments to the agreed scheme where these are necessary to achieve the most fit-for-purpose installation.

105/25 DISSOLUTION OF THE CLIMATE AND BIODIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Since its establishment, the Committee has successfully completed the Carbon Roadmap and implemented the Green Grants initiative. The third objective — community support and engagement — is now largely being led by well-established local organisations, including Love Haslemere Hate Waste, Transition Haslemere, and Active Travel Haslemere, with the Council continuing to participate as appropriate.

It was therefore considered timely to rationalise the Council's approach to climate and biodiversity matters, ensuring that such considerations are embedded throughout all Council activities rather than treated as a stand-alone area of work.

RESOLVED:

I. That the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency Committee be dissolved with effect from the date of this meeting.

II. That a Climate and Biodiversity Sub-Committee of the Amenities & CIL Committee be established, with membership drawn from the former CBEC members.

III. That the Terms of Reference of the Sub-Committee be presented to the next Full Council meeting for approval. These will not include a recommendation for a member of the new sub-committee to sit on each standing committee.

IV. That the Finance & Governance Committee assume responsibility for the Green Grants Scheme.

20:15 Cllr Austin left the meeting.

106/25 COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER UPDATE

The Clerk reported that the following are still under consideration:

Haslemere War Memorial Recreation Ground – going to the Executive for a decision on 9th December.

Woolmer Hill Recreation Ground (Feb Executive)

Athletics Track

Artificial Pitch

Recreation Ground

Pavilion

High Lane Community Centre & recreation ground (Feb Executive)

Locality Office, Lion Lane has been removed from the list as there was no possibility of using the building in the near future.

The Clerk reported that the Town Council is now the sole trustee of the charity which has responsibility for Beacon Hill Recreation Ground.

Cllr Matthes gave an overview of the form she had submitted to request that land beside the railway at Church Lane is added to the council's expression of interest, with a view to taking over the freehold.

The Clerk reported that, at a conference she had attended the day before, it was suggested that councils taking over new land / buildings and assets should ensure that they are accounting for VAT in the correct way. It is time that the council reviewed its VAT position.

RESOLVED:

- i. The Town clerk should now write to Waverley Borough Council to instruct them, on behalf of the charity, to register the land at the recreation ground as belonging to Haslemere Town Council.
- ii. The Clerk is also authorised to liaise with WBC to manage the handover of the general running and maintenance of the land to Haslemere TC.
- iii. The Town Clerk is authorised to submit an expression of interest in taking over the freehold of the plot of land next to the railway at Church Lane, as per Cllr Matthes' report.
- iv. The Clerk is authorised to seek advice in relation to the council's accounting for VAT from a VAT specialist who deals with town and parish accounts.

107/25 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY UPDATE

It was noted that there remains over £1 million in Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds available for allocation to suitable projects.

Cllr Leach requested that Councillors bring forward project ideas for consideration at the forthcoming Update & Participate session on 19th January 2026.

108/25 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES

The Council thanked Cllr Austin for her report on Love Haslemere Hate Waste.

Cllr Leach requested that a letter of thanks be sent from the Mayor to the organisation, acknowledging their innovative approach and the success achieved since implementation.

109/25 WAVERLEY LOCAL PLAN ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION

The initial consultation contained 70 questions. Cllr Weldon advised that, following the approach taken by Godalming Town Council, he had prepared a draft response on behalf of Haslemere Town Council (HTC) addressing the following key areas:

- Legal obligations
- Protection of green spaces
- Provision of sites for dwellings
- Protection of the town's character

There was some debate relating to the density of development in the town versus building on previously undeveloped land.

RESOLVED:

That Cllr Weldon's draft be adopted as HTC's response, subject to any further comments from Councillors. These must be sent directly to Cllr Weldon by 28th November 2025, to allow time for him to complete the response and send the final version to the Town Clerk for forwarding to Waverley Borough Council by the deadline of 8th December 2025.

Meeting finished at 20:40

Signed.....
Chairman of Meeting

Date.....