

VIGO PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Full Parish Council Meeting
held in Vigo Village Hall on Monday 16th February 2026 at 8.00pm

Present	Cllr Jim Haslem (in the Chair); Cllr Simon Chaplin; Cllr Dave Hawkins; Cllr Elliott Hulf; Cllr Olivia Meader; Cllr Freya Newman-Prince; Cllr Alan White; Cllr Andy Woolway. Mrs Joanne Glass (Clerk); Ms Clare Collings (Assistant Clerk)
In Attendance	None.

1] To receive apologies for absence

921. Cllr Sharon Cottam (VPC); Mr Tony Neild (VPC Tree Warden).

2] To receive declarations of interest from members (if any)

922. Cllr White declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Item 10 (planning – local authority tree preservation application 20260171) as the owner of the property concerned. Cllr White took no part in the discussion or vote.

3] To note resignation of Cllr Cottam

923. Cllr Cottam had written to Cllr Haslem and the Clerk to tender her resignation. This had been forwarded onto Electoral Services at Gravesham Borough Council, and a Notice of Vacancy had been produced. The Clerk would advertise this on the noticeboard as well as the Parish website and Facebook pages.

If no request for an election was made within 14 days (2nd March) (ten electors required to call an election) then the vacancy could be filled by co-option.

Cllr Haslem and the Clerk had both responded to Cllr Cottam to thank her for her time and commitment to the Parish Council during her 3.5 year term.

[Action: Clerk]

4] Questions from the press & public

924. None.

5] Borough & County Councillor representative reports

925. None.

6] Reports from Kent Police

926. None.

927. The Clerk reported that there had been an incident of antisocial behaviour in Churchside (window broken by a stone from a catapult). The Clerk had encouraged the resident to report this matter to the police.

7] To approve the minutes of the Full Parish Council Meeting held on 19th January 2026

928. The minutes from the Full Parish Council Meeting held on 19th January 2026 were noted and agreed, then signed by Cllr Haslem (as Chair) having been accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

8] To discuss matters arising from previous minutes not otherwise on the agenda

- 929.** 862: GAS MAINS REPLACEMENT WORK IN CROFTSIDE. It had been confirmed that the works still needed to be completed, however it was not currently programmed in. As soon as the works were planned, SGN would be in touch.
- 930.** 879: BUS SURVEY: The Clerk had written to Dr Lauren Sullivan MP as agreed. No response had been received as yet.
- 931.** 884: SNOW / ICY SURFACES: Cllr Hulf had spoken to the school regarding this issue at a recent Governors meeting. The school stated that they ensured land they were responsible for was cleared as necessary. They did not clear any other areas due to concerns for liability should there be an accident.

The Clerk would email the headteacher to see if they would be willing to enter into a discussion with the Parish Council regarding this matter.

[Action: Clerk]

9] Services

Grounds maintenance

- 932.** The grounds work sheet for January 2026 had been sent to all Members.

Grass cutting

- 933.** Nothing to report.

Trees

- 934.** 866: TREES ON HARVEL ROAD TO THE REAR OF HIGHVIEW. Two further days of work would be carried out on 9th / 10th March (weather dependent).

[Action: ongoing]

- 935.** 867: DEAD HORNBEAM (ERSKINE ROAD opposite the pub car park). A cherry picker had been booked; it was intended that this tree work would be carried out between 24th and 26th February (tree to be pollarded and left at 6 or 7m high).

[Action: ongoing]

- 936.** 868: 4 BRAMBLEBANK: Damaged fence and shed (due to falling tree). The fence panel had now been replaced. The Clerk had asked Highview Services to provide a receipt so they could be reimbursed. The resident had confirmed that they had repaired the shed and would not be claiming the cost of a roll of roofing felt as previously agreed – as it was not required.

- 937.** 869: HIGHVIEW: Damaged footpath (due to failure of Parish tree). Highways reference 928215. This was marked online as "enquiry under investigation".

[Action: ongoing]

- 938.** 870: CHURCHSIDE: Fallen Tree. Cllr Haslem had met with the resident (along with the Grounds Maintenance contractor) on 23rd January as agreed. Notes from the site meeting had been circulated to all Members. It was agreed to pollard 1 x Sweet Chestnut and 2 x Ash trees (all to be left at 6m). It was also agreed to remove overhanging branches on another Sweet Chestnut at a future date.

The cherry picker to carry out this pollarding work had been booked for 24th – 26th February 2026.

[Action: ongoing]

Gardening

939. 1,400 bulbs had been planted in the Autumn and should soon be showing (mostly along Erskine Road).
940. No leaf clearance had been carried out in the Autumn as it had not been needed. The gardener had checked regularly but no large accumulation of leaves had been seen. It was thought that this was due to more regular road sweeping by the Borough Council and / or the reduction of the sweet chestnut trees at the end of Downswood.
941. The gardener had offered to clean the road signs and street signs throughout the village. This was the responsibility of Kent Highways and Gravesham Borough Council but did not happen regularly. In the past Highview Services had cleaned the signs. The Parish Council were happy for the gardener to undertake this work.
942. The Gardener would install the updated stickers on the No Parking Signs in Waterlow Road.

10]

Planning

Local authority tree preservation applications

943. 20260171: 136 Timberbank: 1 x Oak (removal). Cllr White declared an interest in this matter, as the owner of the property in question, and left the room whilst discussions and a decision took place. The Parish Council felt that the application should be withdrawn as it was inaccurate – it said that the Oak tree was suffering from Ash Die Back which was impossible. The Parish Council would not wish to see any Oak Tree removed unless there was absolutely no alternative and would want to see firm evidence as justification for removal. Clerk to speak to Gravesham Borough Council and lodge a formal objection to the application.

[Action: Clerk]

Full planning applications

944. None.

Covenant applications

945. Timberbank: installation of driveway. The Parish Council had given permission for this in December 2022, but the resident had not been in a position to carry out the work until now. The resident had written to ask if the permission was still valid, which the Council confirmed it was. There was no need to issue a new permission letter, the Clerk would email to explain that the original was still valid.

[Action: Clerk]

Other Planning Matters (to include enforcement issues)

946. None.

11] Covenant breaches & enforcement of restrictive covenants & properties in disrepair

947. 876: Timberbank: Large composite shed in front garden. It was noted that this shed was still in place, and the Clerk reported that she had received two complaints regarding the matter. It was agreed to write to the resident to explain this was a covenant breach and to ask if the situation was temporary.

[Action: Clerk]

12] To note provisional covenant survey results and agree to refer the results to the Covenant Working Party for an interim report.

948. 915: COVENANT SURVEY: Two copies of the survey had been delivered to every property in the village.
949. As of 15th February 264 responses had been received. This included those that had been submitted online, and those that had been completed manually (and subsequently entered online). Another 50 or so manually completed surveys had been received and had not been input yet.
950. An interim summary of the survey results was noted by Council Members. Chat GPT had been used to summarise the large number of comments received. The survey results, and comments would now be reviewed by the Covenant Working Party, with a formal report and recommendation to go to Council at a future date.

[Action: Covenant Working Party]

951. One resident had emailed the Clerk to ask why the survey had been undertaken, and to express concern as to whether a statistically small number of completed surveys would be considered to represent the majority of the village population; had any thresholds for action on the returns been set. This would be something for the covenant working party to consider.
952. Two residents had replied on a Facebook post to state they had not received a survey. The Clerk had asked them to contact the office so that this could be looked into.
953. The Clerk was aware that at least one resident may have completed the survey manually and online in error. It was agreed that the response names and addresses should be cross checked against the electoral roll.

[Action: Clerk]

13] To discuss requests from and matters regarding residents

954. 877: ADMERS WOOD PARKING: No update. *Post meeting note, the Clerk had emailed all Councillors to advise that the Parish Council had no legal power to install white lines on the public highway and as such had advised that no further action could be taken on this matter.
955. 878: Highview: The Clerk had responded to the resident as agreed.
956. A resident had written with regard to who had responsibility for the fences which bordered the rear access pathway to the back of their property. The Clerk was not sure about this but would liaise with Cllr Haslem to look into this matter further, and report back to the next meeting.

[Action: Clerk]

957. An Admers Wood resident was experiencing issues with vehicles parking inconsiderately and blocking access to the car parking / garage area. The Clerk advised the resident to report any obstructions to the police.
958. A resident had complained about some properties in Highview that had rubbish and debris (including mattresses) stacked in their front garden. The Assistant Clerk confirmed that she had seen the same when delivering the covenant survey. It was agreed that the Parish Council would write to the properties in question.

[Action: Clerk]

14] To discuss issues with leasehold parking spaces and sale of properties

959. The Clerk had been approached by a resident who had lost the buyer for their property due to an issue with the lease for the car park space associated with the property. The freehold for the spaces had reverted to The Crown and the remaining term on the leases were less than 50 years which many mortgage providers were not comfortable with.

The Clerk was aware that many people had had similar issues, but was not aware of what the resolution was. The Clerk had put a post on Facebook asking if anyone who had any advice / who had dealt with a similar issue, would be willing to share with the Parish Council (confidentially / anonymously) so that useful information could be passed onto others in the same situation.

Some people had answered the Facebook post, but not emailed the Clerk with details. One email response had been received, to state that they had resolved the situation by taking out an indemnity policy.

Cllr Chaplin had dealt with indemnity policies before and would try to find out what the cost of such a policy might be.

[Action: Cllr Chaplin]

960. Cllr White thought that an alternative to be looked into in the future was for the Parish Council to take over the freehold. Cllr White thought he had some information on this and would look into it and report back to the Council if he did.

[Action: Cllr White]

15] The Bay

961. 880: Vigo Café: Cllr Meader had contacted the owner on more than one occasion to discuss ways in which the Parish Council could assist with increasing the footfall to the café, but no response had been received as yet.
962. Cllr Meader had spoken to all shop owners about writing a short article for the Annual Report. Three of the shops had supplied an article (Pharmacy, Pilates Studio, Kebab Shop). Cllr Meader would chase the rest of the shops up. Cllr Meader would try to get some photographs to go with the article. The copy deadline for the Annual Report was expected to be the end of March (latest).

[Action: Cllr Meader]

16] To discuss any Gravesham Borough Council issues and / or Kent Highways issues

- 963.** 881: Highview resident parking on driveway without a dropped kerb. The Clerk had been advised to report this on the online portal again and had done so (reference 944779).
- 964.** 882: Gravesham Borough Council (James Young) had contacted the Clerk as he would like to arrange a meeting regarding the broader management of the Parish woodlands, communal spaces, verges and open spaces. The Clerk had responded to say the Parish Council were happy to meet, but no further response had been received. Matter filed as pending.
- 965.** 883: Flytipping (empty alcohol cans / bottles being dumped in the village). The Clerk had established that a particular hot spot was Commority Road, around 80 – 100m up from the Harvel Road junction. The Clerk would liaise with Gravesham Borough Council regarding this.

[Action: Clerk]

- 966.** POOR ROAD SURFACE / POTHOLES: The Clerk had been receiving a number of complaints about this issue, so had decided to put a post online to explain that any issues should be reported to Kent Highways. If residents were unable to do this, they were welcome to contact the Clerk who would do this on their behalf.

The Clerk noted that there had been an issue doing online reports, but this appeared to have resolved.

- 967.** It was agreed that if repairs were not forthcoming, the Clerk should contact the County Council Member responsible for Highways.

17] To discuss Pride in Place application with regard to ownership of The Bay

- 968.** 885: The Clerk had met with Gravesham Borough Council on 23rd January to discuss the Pride in Place funding. The meeting had been very positive, with the GBC officer open to the idea of a funding application from the Parish Council to install a Christmas Tree pit in The Bay.

VPC would be responsible for all risk assessments, management, and insurance. VPC would also purchase the tree every year. The funding would be to install the pit only.

It had been proposed that the electricity would be run underground from the streetlight, but Council Members felt it may be easier to run it overhead to the top of the tree, from the village hall or the pub. Clerk to update GBC regarding this change of proposal.

Gravesham Borough Council had confirmed that The Bay was registered as Vigo Parish Council owned on Land Registry. The Parish Council confirmed they did not have any objections to a tree pit being installed there (location to be agreed). Clerk to update GBC.

GBC would calculate the square meterage of The Bay. This would show the amount of community space that would be improved.

The Clerk would speak to the Borough Councillors (Cllr Aslam / Cllr Bains) and / or the local MP (Lauren Sullivan) to ask if they would support the application made by the Parish Council.

The Clerk would then arrange another meeting with Gravesham Borough Council to move the application forward.

[Action: Clerk]

18] Street lighting

- 969.** 886: STREETLIGHT OUTSIDE 220 HIGHVIEW. This repair had been arranged for the new financial year (from April onward). However, it appeared the streetlight may have been damaged again as it looked like it was leaning further than before. The Clerk had asked the streetlighting contractor to inspect and bring the replacement work forward if necessary.

[Action: ongoing]

19] To receive an update and discuss any play area issues (play park & ballpark)

- 970.** 887: ZIP WIRE: The zip wire had now been repaired.
- 971.** 888: TIMBER TRAIL: The Clerk had asked the gardener if he would carry out a twice-yearly treatment (anti-fungal wood-based preservative) on the Timber Trail. The gardener had agreed to this. The Clerk had sent the maintenance advice sheets to the gardener for information.
- 972.** 889: Relocating spinner and updating playpark surface in identified areas. The weather had not been conducive to this work (too wet) but it was hoped it would be carried out toward the end of Winter / early Spring.

[Action: ongoing]

- 973.** 890: The sweeping seesaw had been repaired and was due to be re-instated. The Clerk would liaise with Highview Services and GBC regarding this.

[Action: Clerk]

- 974.** 891: The gates to the playpark did not appear to be closing automatically. The Clerk would ask the Assistant Clerk to investigate and arrange a repair if necessary.

[Action: Clerk]

- 975.** MONKEY BARS: The Assistant Clerk reported that the playpark survey carried out with the school and scouts had noted that the monkey bars could do with upgrading.

As the Parish were considering a lottery grant application (to repaint the equipment and install a ground trampoline) it was agreed to get a quote to update the monkey bars.

The Assistant Clerk was due to meet a Playdale representative on 17th February 2026.

[Action: Assistant Clerk]

- 976.** PLAY PARK REFUBISHMENT: A quote had been received from Safe Play to repaint all the equipment in the play park: £3,274 plus VAT. A second quote would be sought before a lottery application was made.

20] Finance

To note any payments made since the last meeting

- 977.** The following payment had been made since the last meeting:

09.02.26	D/P	Viking Stationery	63.31	Invoice 4410214671
09.02.26	D/P	Jackson Mechanical Serv	2278.74	Cherry Picker hire
30.01.26	D/P	Lloyds Bank	8.40	Bank Charges
16.02.26	D/P	Lloyds CMP Card	5.00	Lebara Mobile
			20.00	Chat GPT subscription
			3.00	Monthly Fee
			16.98	Charged in Error (repaid by JG)
			44.98	Total
07.02.26	D/P	Nest	208.59	January Clerks Pension

To authorise payments due

978. The following payments would be authorised by Cllr Woolway and Cllr White:

16.02.26	D/P	Playdale Playgrounds	693.76	Zip Wire repair
16.02.26	D/P	KALC	84.00	Chairmans Conference
16.02.26	D/P	Streetlights Limited	667.37	Quarterly Maintenance Contract
16.02.26	D/P	Joane Glass	224.59	Covenant Survey Printing
28.12.25	D/P	Salaries	2277.08	February salaries

979. The following Standing Orders / Direct Debits were authorised:

22.02.26	D/D	Gravesham BC	97.20	Paladin Bins – January 2026
29.02.26	D/D	J&F Accounting	38.28	Payroll Fees – January 2026
29.02.26	D/D	British Telecom	64.69	Phone & Broadband
28.02.26	D/D	Highview Services	5529.63	Grounds Maintenance

980. A transfer of £13,000 from the deposit account to the savings account (to cover outgoings) was agreed.

981. INCOME: The following income was noted:

£16.98: J Glass (re Corporate Multi Card mischarge)

To discuss Clerks proposal to purchase specialist accounting software (Scribe)

982. The Clerk would like to investigate sector specific accounting software. The Clerk had had a demonstration from scribe and been given a quote. The Clerk was asked to look into alternative providers and to put the matter on the agenda for the March meeting.

[Action: Clerk]

Other finance issues to note & Responsible Finance Officer's report

983. 894: PRECEPT 2026/2027: The Clerk had written to Gravesham Borough Council requesting a precept of £156,261 for 2026/2027. GBC had acknowledged safe receipt of the letter.

984. 895: BUDGET AND PRECEPT FIGURES: Cllr Haslem had worked on a pie-chart to illustrate how the Parish Council spent it's money. The information was agreed by all Members and would be posted on the Council's website, Facebook page, and also in the Annual Newsletter.

It was noted that it was important to note that the £9,000 funding allocated for the Community Warden which remained unspent was ringfenced and would not be used for anything else.

[Action: Clerk]

985. 902: REDWOOD BANK 35 DAY DEPOSIT ACCOUNT: It was agreed as it was so close to the financial year end, a transfer would be made to Redwood Bank once the precept for 2026/2027 had been received in early April.

[Action: Clerk]

986. 903: Cyber Cover Insurance – the Clerk had asked Gallager to quote for this.

[Action: ongoing]

987. 904: BANK SIGNATOTRY: Cllr Hulf was now set up as a bank signatory, but there appeared to be an issue with the memorable name that had been set up. Clerk to look into this.

[Action: Clerk]

988. A re-declaration of compliance for Vigo Parish Council had been submitted and received by the Pensions Regulator.

21] To receive the Chairs announcements

989. Cllr Haslem noted that the Gravesham Borough Council Local Plan was now out for consultation.

990. The next Parish Chairs meeting was to be held on 9th March. Cllr Haslem and Cllr Woolway would attend.

22] To receive the Clerk's report and note correspondence received

991. 906: The Clerk asked Council Members to submit photographs for the Council website, if they had not done so already.

[Action: all Councillors]

992. The Clerk noted that someone had posted on Facebook stating that they were looking at bringing two opportunities to Vigo for the younger residents. The first being a darts club, and the second being sports coaching qualifications. There seemed to be some interest in this and as a result the Clerk had posted encouraging the gentleman to contact the Parish Council (which he had).

The gentleman ran a not-for-profit organisation that used sport and activity for positive social impact for all, ranging from young children to older adults.

It was agreed it would be good to speak to the gentleman to find out more and establish if the Parish Council could support him in any way. Cllr Meader would look into this.

[Action: Cllr Meader]

993. YOUR BOROUGH: The Clerk had submitted an article for Your Borough, covering the PC budget, the playpark upgrade, streetlights, The Bay, the Pop Up Café, the Repair Café and Parish Council meetings.

994. The Assistant Clerk was organising a volunteer session for Councillors at the Community Cupboard. Details of available dates had been sent to all Councillors.

[Action: Assistant Clerk]

995. The Clerk noted she would be on annual leave from Thursday 26th February, returning to work on Monday 9th March.

23] **Training: to receive updates on any training attended and note any training booked.**

996. Cllr Haslem was booked in to attend the KALC Chairmans Conference on 26th February in New Romney.

24] **Reports from other organisations**

997. None.

25] **Working Party Reports**

998. **TREE MANAGEMENT WORKING PARTY (now known as Woodland Management WP)**

999. 912: Cllr Haslem had drafted Terms of Reference for this working party and found a number of useful documents that could be used for reference. Due to the scope of the Terms of Reference, Cllr Haslem had re-named the group "Woodland Management Working Party".

1000. The Assistant Clerk had sent out a number of dates to the working party members, but none had been suitable for all. The Assistant Clerk would contact members again with alternative dates running into March and possibly April.

[Action: Assistant Clerk]

1001. 913: Tree Management: The Clerk had put a post on a Clerks Forum to reach out to any other Parish Councils who managed large areas of trees / woodland. The Clerk would update at the next meeting.

[Action: Clerk]

1002. **COVENANT WORKING PARTY (please also refer to agenda item 12)**

1003. 916: MAINTENANCE OF PROPERTIES: Covenant Working Party to consider this issue.

1004. **WORKING PARTIES – OTHER**

1005. 917: The Clerk had sent out the update working party commitment list.

26] **Any other urgent business (at Chairman's discretion)**

1006. It was noted that Southern Water were filling up tankers using the water supply on Waterlow Road at the junction with Timberbank (near the memorial bench). This had left the Parish land very wet and muddy and in poor condition. The Clerk was to speak to Southern Water regarding this.

[Action: Clerk]

27] **To receive an update on the matter being dealt with by the Parish Council solicitor (covenant breach).**

1007. **CLOSED SESSION:** Pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960, that due to the confidential nature of the next item, the public and press were asked to leave the meeting.

- 1008.** 920: COVENANT BREACH: The Parish Council solicitor was due to have a telephone conversation with a barrister to discuss this matter on Thursday 19th February.

[Action: ongoing]

**There being no other business,
the meeting of the Full Parish Council was closed at 21:25 hours.**