

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

Present	Cllr Jim Haslem (in the Chair); Cllr Simon Chaplin; Cllr Elliott Hulf; Cllr Freya Newman-Prince; Cllr Alan White; Cllr Andy Woolway. Mrs Joanne Glass (Clerk).
In Attendance	One member of the public

1] To receive apologies for absence

1009. VPC Cllr Dave Hawkins, VPC Cllr Olivia Meader & Ms Clare Collings (Assistant Clerk)

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

1010. None.

3] Questions from the press & public

1011. An Admers Wood resident had come to discuss parking (agenda item 17).

4] Borough & County Councillor representative reports

1012. None received.

5] Reports from Kent Police

1013. None received.

6] To approve the minutes of the Full Parish Council Meeting held on 16th February 2026

1014. The minutes from the Full Parish Council Meeting held on 16th February 2026 were noted and agreed, then signed by Cllr Haslem (as Chair) having been accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

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

1015. 930/879: BUS SURVEY: The Clerk had written to Dr Lauren Sullivan MP as agreed. A response had been received, thanking the Parish Council for taking the time to write regarding the issue. Dr Sullivan was pleased to hear that local residents were taking the time to engage with the survey. Dr Sullivan noted the concerns raised by the Parish Council and informed that she would be writing to Kent County Council directly regarding these concerns and to seek assurances that the needs of communities, such as Vigo were properly considered, particularly in light of the funding awarded to improve the network. A copy of the full response had been provided to Members for their information.

1016. 931/884: SNOW / ICY SURFACES: The Clerk reported that the school headteacher would be happy to meet with the Parish Council to discuss this matter. Clerk to make arrangements.

[Action: Clerk]

1017. 959: LEASEHOLD PARKING SPACES AND THE SALE OF PROPERTIES: The Clerk had not received much advice at all about how to resolve this issue. One resident had emailed to state that the issue had been resolved by taking out an indemnity policy.

Cllr Chaplin had done some research and estimated that an average indemnity policy would cost between £200 and £600. The Clerk would update the resident who made the original enquiry, to suggest this as a possible solution.

[Action: Clerk]

1018. 1006: SOUTHERN WATER TANKERS FILLING UP ON WATERLOW ROAD (TIMBERBANK JUNCTION). The Clerk had not yet spoken to Southern Water regarding this but would do so as soon as possible.

[Action: Clerk]

8]

Services

Grounds maintenance

1019. The grounds work sheet for February 2026 were not yet available.

[Action: Clerk]

1020. DAMAGE TO PARISH COUNCIL LAND: A significant amount of damage had been caused to Parish Council land, resulting in large ruts as well as an inspection cover being ripped off, exposing a large underground chamber. The licence plate of the vehicle had been left at the scene. It was thought that the vehicle involved was a large car transporter type lorry. Some CCTV footage had been located, but details of the company were not apparent. The matter had been reported to the Police.

The area had been taped off immediately for safety, and the inspection cover damage reported to Kent Highways (who had reinstated it very quickly). The ruts would be repaired by the Parish Council contractor.

1021. The Clerk noted that there had been an increasing number of incidents where members of the public were approaching the Parish Council contractors whilst they were operating machinery (strimmers, chainsaws, ride-on mowers) or even walking through cordoned off areas whilst tree surgery was being carried out.

It was agreed that an article should be put on the Council's website, Facebook page and also in the annual news booklet, asking people to not approach the contractors as it was dangerous and distracting. It was agreed that more sturdy barriers be purchased to cordon off areas where work was being carried out, and to have appropriate signage made up. Lastly, members of the public would be informed that they are welcome to take any logs left on the verges, but they should wait until the contractor had left the site.

Clerk to organise all the above.

[Action: Clerk]

Grass cutting

1022. Nothing to report.

Trees

1023. 937/869: HIGHVIEW: Damaged footpath (due to failure of Parish tree). Highways reference 928215. This was marked online as "enquiry under investigation".

[Action: ongoing]

1024. 964/882: The Clerk had been contacted by James Young, who was Parks and Open Spaces Manager at Gravesham Borough Council. Mr Young would like to speak to the Parish Council regarding the broader management of woodlands in the Borough, including those in the ownership of the Parish Council, specifically with regard to mapping trees. The Clerk was due to have a zoom meeting with Mr Young on 23rd March and would report back to the next meeting.

[Action: Clerk]

1025. A local resident (moving away from the area) had donated a 25-year-old Horse Chestnut tree to the village – this had been planted at the end of Chestnut Lane and marked on the Parish Online maps.
1026. Chestnut Lane: the resident had asked for work to be carried out to the rear (overhanging trees). The Parish contractor had agreed that two trees needed to be coppiced, and this had now been carried out. The resident would like further work done, however. The Clerk would ask the Tree Warden to inspect.

[Action: Clerk]

1027. A silver birch located on the centre path (near Croftside / Stonecroft) had fallen during recent high winds. The tree had been difficult to remove; due to the location (near a streetlight) and the fact it was hung in some adjacent hornbeams (not on Parish land). After consultation with the Clerk and the Chairman, it had been agreed to hire in a Roto Hire to dismantle and remove the tree. This had been at a cost of £450 plus VAT.
1028. The Parish Council had been impressed at the speed in which the Roto Hire machine had been able to dismantle and remove the silver birch. The Clerk informed the day rate to hire this machine was £1,300. It was agreed to hire it for one day to see how much work could be carried out. Funds would be taken from the Emergency Tree Budget. It was noted that the machine was really only suitable to remove entire trees, and not to carry out pruning or reduction work. The Clerk would liaise with the Parish contractor regarding the list of trees to be tackled with this machine once hired.

[Action: Clerk]

Gardening

1029. Nothing to report.

9]

To receive update on tree work projects:

Harvel Road, rear of Highview

1030. 934/866: TREES ON HARVEL ROAD TO THE REAR OF HIGHVIEW. All the work had been carried out on this project now (from no.192 to no.226). Cllr Haslem would meet with the Parish contractors to review the work and to look at what area to move onto next.

[Action: Cllr Haslem]

Work carried out by Cherry Picker

1031. There had been a number of issues with the hire of a spider cherry picker from JMS Powered Access. As a result, the Clerk had cancelled the third day of hire and had asked for a refund to be given accordingly. An alternative cherry picker and operator were subsequently hired from PG Platforms, which had proved useful with no issues.

1032. 935/867/798/705: DEAD HORNBEAM (ERSKINE ROAD opposite the pub car park). This had now been pollarded and left at 6m high).

1033. 938/870: CHURCHSIDE: One Sweet Chestnut had been pollarded along with 2 Ash Trees. Additional work had also been carried out.

10]

Flytipping

1034. 965/883/790: Tim Harris (Gravesham Borough Council Environmental Enforcement Team Manager) had emailed the Clerk regarding flytipping in Commority Road. Mr Harris noted that this area was problematic regarding prevention and enforcement. There were multiple pull-in locations and as a result a number of CCTV cameras would be needed. Another issue was the lack of light in the area after dark when most of the offences occurred.

Mr Harris was however willing to meet with the Parish Council to discuss possible solutions that he had in mind. It was agreed to meet with Mr Harris – Clerk to make arrangements.

[Action: Clerk]

1035. Highview: rubbish dumped to the rear. The Clerk had been informed of a quantity of garden waste which had been dumped on Council land on Commority Road to the rear of this property. The material appeared to have come from this particular property. The Clerk had written to ask for the rubbish to be removed.

[Action: ongoing]

1036. 958: Highview properties with rubbish and debris (including mattresses) stacked in their front garden. The Clerk had visited this area and noted that there no longer seemed to be an issue and therefore had not sent letters.

11]

To agree how to manage the grass verges on Waterlow Road during Wildflower Season 2026

1037. It was agreed to manage the Waterlow Road grass verge in the same way as in 2025:

- The grass would be cut during April.
- The grass would then be left uncut during May, June and July.
- A strip of approximately one metre would be cut around the edge of the verges to ensure visibility for motorists and to stop the grass impeding the road and footpath.
- Three areas would be cut, and the arisings raked, the rest would be cut with a mulching deck mower. The areas to be raked would be the same as in 2025.
- The Clerk would speak to Mr Williams to ask that he carry out a wildflower survey again this year, before the grass was cut.

[Action: Clerk]

12]

Parish Councillor Vacancy: to agree to co-opt

1038. 923: The Notice of Vacancy had been produced and advertised. There had been no call for an election. Therefore Electoral Services had informed that the vacancy could be filled by co-option. The Clerk would draft a poster to advertise this.

[Action: Clerk]

13] Planning

Local authority tree preservation applications

1039. 943: 20260171: 136 Timberbank: 1 x Oak (removal). The Clerk had lodged a formal objection against this application as agreed.

1040. 20260182: 7 Highview: Reduction of Sweet Chestnut, No objections noted.

Full planning applications

1041. None at time of agenda publication.

Covenant applications

1042. 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]

1043. 53 Timberbank: installation of pitched porch roof (retrospective application). No objections. Clerk to write giving retrospective approval.

[Action: Clerk]

1044. 24 Highview: installation of resin driveway. No objections. Clerk to write giving approval.

[Action: Clerk]

1045. 13 Stonecroft: request for approval for cladding colour (oyster white). No objections. Clerk to write giving approval.

[Action: Clerk]

Other Planning Matters (to include enforcement issues)

1046. None.

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

1047. 947/876: Timberbank: Large composite shed in front garden. The Clerk had not yet written to this property but would do so as soon as possible. *Post meeting note, the shed had now been removed, before any letter was sent.

15] To receive a report from the Covenant Working Party following the initial analysis of the Covenant Survey

1048. 950: A total of 325 responses had been received. The Covenant Working Party were due to meet on 25th March to review the results and would put a full report to the next Parish Council meeting.

[Action: Covenant Working Party]

16] To discuss requests from and matters regarding residents

- 1049.** 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]

- 1050.** TIMBERBANK: The resident had contacted the Clerk with concerns regarding inconsiderate parking. Vehicles were parking on the crossover from the highway to the nearby properties. The resident asked if the Parish Council could put KEEP CLEAR or NO PARKING markings on this area.

It was noted that the area in question was actually part of the Highway and therefore the responsibility of Kent County Council (Highways). However, as a gesture of good will, the Parish Council agreed that they would install “no parking” or similar signs on the Community Land which was on either side of this crossover. The resident was to fund the cost of the signage. Clerk to organise and update the resident.

[Action: Clerk]

17] Parking: to discuss Admers Wood parking issues

- 1051.** An Admers Wood resident had attended the meeting to ask if they could utilise Parish Council land to gain access to their property in order to park a vehicle. The Parish Council noted that this was not possible due to the restrictive covenants on the land.
- 1052.** 954/877/813/731: The Clerk advised that the Parish Council had no legal power to install white lines on the public highway. However some Members were keen to explore this further as they felt it may be the only solution to an ongoing issue. It was agreed to set up a working party to discuss this further. Membership agreed as: Cllr Haslem, Cllr Hulf, Cllr Newman-Prince, Cllr White & Cllr Woolway. The Clerk would arrange a provisional meeting by zoom.

[Action: Clerk]

18] The Bay

- 1053.** 962: ADVERTISING SHOPS IN THE BAY: Cllr Meader was not at the Parish Council meeting, but the Clerk would liaise with her regarding the remaining articles for the annual report (three shops had provided them so far) and also some photos to go with the articles.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1054.** Once again concerns were raised about the viability of the newsagents in The Bay, the stock in the shop was low and it did not appear to be used by many people. The Parish were keen to do whatever they could to support this shop, especially as the Post Office was located there. The Clerk would liaise with Cllr Meader regarding this.

[Action: Clerk]

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

- 1055.** 963/881: Highview resident parking on driveway without a dropped kerb. The Highways online portal showed this as “enquiry under investigation” (reference 944779).
- 1056.** It was noted that at least two inspection covers had been stolen from the highway in Vigo (one on Waterlow Road and one on Erskine Road). This had been reported to Kent Highways who had addressed the matter promptly.
- 1057.** TIMBERBANK ROAD SIGN (Harvel Road junction). This street name plate had been damaged. The Clerk had reported it to Gravesham Borough Council who had agreed to repair / replace it. However, this was not likely to happen for another six months.

20] To receive an update on the Pride in Place application

- 1058.** 968/885/818: The Clerk had met again with Gravesham Borough Council (Naznin Chowdhury) on 11th March and now had a form to complete for this project. The Clerk aimed to get the form completed by the end of March / first week in April.

[Action: Clerk]

21] Street lighting

- 1059.** 969/886/819/738: STREETLIGHT OUTSIDE 220 HIGHVIEW. The streetlight outside 220 Highview has sustained repeated damage and has required works to return reset it, most recently at a cost of £427.50 plus VAT.
- A full replacement with a new galvanised column has been considered; however, this would require disconnection and reconnection of the electricity supply. A quotation from UK Power Networks for this element of the work is £4,357 plus VAT. This is significantly higher than anticipated and would result in the overall project exceeding budget by approximately £2,300.
- The Clerk confirmed that alternative approved providers are available, but had been informed that these are unlikely to offer significant cost savings and may only undertake the work where multiple columns are involved.
- At present, the column has been reset to its original position. It remains at a slight lean; however, this has been assessed as safe. The column has been in this condition since the streetlights were originally handed over to the Parish Council.
- The streetlighting contractor has advised that the cost to return the column to a fully vertical position (RTV) would be £675 plus VAT. However, as the column is concrete, there is a risk that attempting to return it to vertical could cause it to crack, which would then necessitate full replacement. Despite this risk, the contractor considers it worth attempting. The contractor has also recommended that protective measures, such as installing bollards or a barrier, should be put in place prior to any RTV works to prevent further impact damage.

Options for Consideration

- Leave the column in its current leaning position, subject to confirmation that it remains safe. (Clerk to confirm safe).
- Leave the column in its current leaning position and install protective bollards or a barrier to prevent further damage (Clerk to get quotes to install bollards)
- Return the column to vertical and then install protective bollards.

- Obtain a quotation for full removal of the column (including disconnection as required) in the event that RTV is attempted and fails (Clerk to speak to contractor).

It was noted that for future reference, the Parish Council may wish to consider allocating future budget for the phased replacement of concrete columns with steel columns. This could be undertaken alongside other works to benefit from economies of scale and achieve better overall value.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1060.** HANDOVER UPDATE: Column 3 (outside 5 The Coach Drive) still had an issue with the "cut-out" the Streetlighting contractor were speaking to Gravesham Borough Council regarding this. It had been agreed that if GBC funded the UK Power Network charges, the Parish Council would fund a new steel column. The officer at GBC who had dealt with this had left, and the Streetlighting contractors were waiting to hear back from the new officer.

Once this issue had been resolved, the streetlights could be formally handed over.

- 1061.** ANNUAL CHECKS: The streetlighting contractor had confirmed that there was no specific date each year for the service inspection report, but they would let the Parish Council have a date in due course.

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

- 1062.** 972: Relocating spinner and updating playpark surface in identified areas. Works had begun on 10th March and were anticipated to be completed in the next few days.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1063.** 973/890: The sweeping seesaw now been replaced.

- 1064.** 975: MONKEY BARS / GROUND TRAMPOLINE: A quote had been received to install "Timber Wavy Bars" and a Ground Trampoline at £17,494.

- 1065.** The Clerk informed that she had been contacted by the Gravesham Borough Council playpark inspector and was anticipating an issue with some of the play park surfacing when the Annual Report was received. As such, it was agreed to hold fire on any lottery grant applications, in case funds were needed for surfacing issues.

23] Grant funding: to note applications received and agree allocation of funds.

- 1066.** The Council considered grant applications from both Vigo School and Vigo Scouts. The following was agreed (proposed by Cllr Haslem, seconded by Cllr White, agreed by all):

- Vigo School PTFA, £250 for inflatables for the Summer Fair
- Vigo Scouts, £250 to support attendance at the World Scout Jamboree

The full budget of £1,200 for 2025/2026 had now been allocated.

The Clerk would update both the school PTA and the scouts and arrange payments.

[Action: Clerk]

1067. 992: It was noted that Cllr Meader had spoken to Mr Dodge about his proposal to start running youth opportunities in Vigo. Mr Dodge had asked for a grant application form which the Clerk had sent to him, but he had not as yet submitted an application.

24]

Finance

To note any payments made since the last meeting

1068. The following payment had been made since the last meeting:

28.02.26	D/P	Lloyds Bank	8.85	Bank Charges
06.03.26	D/P	Nest	208.59	January Clerks Pension
16.03.26	D/P	Lloyds CMP Card	5.00	Lebara Mobile
			20.00	Chat GPT subscription
			16.98	Microsoft Charges
			14.00	Land Registry Charges
			3.00	Monthly Fee
			58.98	Total

To authorise payments due

1069. The following payments would be authorised by Cllr Woolway and Cllr Haslem:

16.03.26	D/P	Boys & Maughan	1177.00	Solicitors Fees
16.03.26	D/P	Michael Mills	1800.00	Tree Surgery
16.03.26	D/P	Kent Ass Local Councils	60.00	Training
16.03.26	D/P	Vision ICT	48.00	Email provision
16.03.26	D/P	Viking	110.80	Stationery
16.03.26	D/P	Streetlights Limited	513.00	Column Repair
16.03.26	D/P	Vigo PTFA	250.00	Grant in Aid
16.03.26	D/P	Vigo Scouts	250.00	Grant in Aid
28.03.26	D/P	Salaries	2277.08	March salaries
22.04.26	D/P	HMRC	2392.48	Final quarter PAYE

1070. The following Standing Orders / Direct Debits were authorised:

22.03.26	D/D	Gravesham BC	97.20	Paladin Bins
29.03.26	D/D	J&F Accounting	38.28	Payroll Fees
29.03.26	D/D	British Telecom	64.69	Phone & Broadband
28.03.26	D/D	Highview Services	5529.63	Grounds Maintenance

1071. A transfer of £14,000 from the deposit account to the savings account (to cover outgoings) was agreed.

INCOME

1072. The following income was noted:

£50, retrospective covenant application fee (Stevens, 53 Timberbank)

To discuss the purchase specialist accounting software (quotes received)

1073. 982: The Clerk had sourced quotes from three providers (Scribe, Edge and Rialtas). The Clerk would now compare the quotes and the services provided so that Council Members could make a considered decision at the April Parish Council meeting.

[Action: Clerk]

To note the date of the annual internal audit

1074. The Clerk reported that Mr Lionel Robbins had been booked for 2nd June to carry out the year end internal audit. The AGAR would be on the June Parish Council meeting agenda for approval, which would ensure that the 30th June AGAR completion deadline could be met.

To note the quote for specialist cyber insurance

1075. 986/903/835/754/652: Gallagher (Insurance Broker) had sourced quotes for this insurance and recommended that the Coalition Risk Solutions Limited package at £387.12 represented the best value for the Parish Council. There was some discussion regarding what the cover was for and if it was needed. The Clerk would forward the documentation to both Cllr Woolway and Cllr Hawkins for them to review and put a recommendation to Council.

[Action: Clerk]

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

1076. 984/895: BUDGET AND PRECEPT FIGURES: The Clerk had not published these figures on the website but would do so as soon as possible.

[Action: Clerk]

1077. 985/902/832/755: REDWOOD BANK 35 DAY DEPOSIT ACCOUNT: Once the precept for 2026/2027 had been received in early April, the Clerk would arrange a transfer to this savings account.

[Action: Clerk]

1078. 987/904/836: BANK SIGNATOTRY: Cllr Hulf had been unable to sign in with the memorable name provided by the bank. The Clerk was to speak to the bank to try and resolve this issue.

[Action: Clerk]

25] To receive the Chairs announcements

1079. Cllr Haslem had attended the Charis Meeting and gave an update on the Local Plan to all Members.
1080. Cllr Haslem gave his apologies in advance for the Annual Council Meeting on 11th May. Cllr Woolway would Chair this meeting.

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

1081. 994: Community Cupboard Volunteering; Cllr Haslem and the Clerk had to defer this volunteering due to other more pressing commitments. It was hoped to reschedule later in the year.
1082. Local Government Reorganisation Consultation: Noted that this consultation ended on 26th March, should Councillors wish to respond individually.
1083. Noted that the Harvel Hash House Harriers annual "Harvel 5" race would be held on 6th June and would require a road closure notice. Advance warning notices would be set up.

27] To note the arrangements in place for the Annual Parish Meeting

1084. The Clerk had produced promotional material for this event and would send out invitations in due course.

The Community Cupboard would be attending and giving a presentation.

The Clerk would liaise with Cllr Haslem regarding arraignments for setting up the hall on the day.

[Action: Assistant Clerk]

28] To agree the arrangements for Parish Officer appraisals

1085. Agreed that there was no need to set up a staffing committee, and that Cllr Haslem (as Chair) would conduct the Clerk's appraisal, and that the Clerk would conduct the Assistant Clerk's appraisal.

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

1086. Cllr Meader was due to attend the KALC course "Handling Difficult Situations" on 9th April 2026.

The Clerk and Cllr Haslem would attend the SLCC "Guide to the Appraisal Process" webinar on 23rd March 2026.

30] Reports from other organisations

1087. The next Gravesham Area KALC meeting would be held in Vigo on Monday 1st June (PM). The Clerk had booked the small hall.

31] Working Party Reports

WOODLAND MANAGEMENT WORKING PARTY

1088. 1000: The Clerk had scheduled two meetings for this working party, on 8th April and then 22nd April (both 7.30pm by zoom).

1089. 1001/913/846/771/667/444: 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. No response had been received.

To note proposal from Cllr Haslem regarding regular dates for future WP meetings

1090. Cllr Haslem suggested that going forward, Mondays be the first choice to hold working party meetings. This would fit in around the Parish Council meeting schedule and hopefully make meetings easier to organise. All agreed.

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

1091. 1003: MAINTENANCE OF PROPERTIES: Covenant Working Party to consider this issue.

To agree the membership of the Community Working Party

1092. The following Council Members agreed to join this working party, along with Cllr Meader: Cllr Newman-Prince, Cllr Hulf and Cllr White). The Clerk would liaise with Cllr Meader regarding matters to be discussed.

[Action: Clerk]

1093. The Clerk would update the working party commitment list and circulate to all Members.

[Action: Clerk]

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

1094. None.

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.

33] To receive an update on matter being dealt with by the Parish solicitor (covenant breach) and to agree the associated projected costs moving forward.

1095. 1008/920/853/775/670: COVENANT BREACH: The projected costs were noted and agreed. The budget would be overspent by around £500. Clerk to continue to liaise with the solicitor regarding this matter.

[Action: ongoing]

**There being no other business,
the meeting of the Full Parish Council was closed at 22:00 hours.**