Abbots Ripton Parish Council

Parish Clerk: Mrs Samantha Sharp
Telephone: 07927 530538
E-Mail: clerk@abbotsripton-pc.gov.uk

A meeting of Abbots Ripton Parish Council[1] was held on Tuesday October 28th 2025 at 7.00pm at: Abbots Ripton Village Hall, Abbots Ripton, Huntingdon PE28 2PF

Present; Steve Brown (SLB) – Chair,Kevin Mills (KM), Darren Carter (DC), John Kelly (JK)

Members: 6 Quorum: 3

MINUTES

0063/10-25 To receive and approve apologies for absence.

Clerk Samantha Sharp, Cllr Victoria Wilson, Cllr Miranda Eastbury, District Cllr Simon Bywater – all accepted

0064/10-25 To receive Disclosable Interests Declarations.

Members of the Council are subject to the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interest) Regulations 2012. All dispensation requests must be made to the Clerk prior to the meeting.

None

0065/10-25 Public participation.

To allow up to 10 minutes (2 minutes per person) for any members of the public and councillors declaring theexistence and nature of a prejudicial interest to address the meeting in relation to the business on this agenda.

None present

0066/10-25 Reports from District & County Councillors

Email report from Councillor Bywater received, attached as an addendum to the minutes

0067/10-25 To approve minutes of the meeting on 16th Sep 2025.

Unanimously Approved

0068/10-25 Matters arising from minutes of 16th Sep 2025.

068/10-25.1 Property Maintenance

There continue to be issues with street lighting

- Long running mechanical maintenance in Wennington to fix the lamp cover
- Intermittent flashing of the light outside the Post Office
- Contiued issues with lamp shielding outside Rectory Farm Cottage

Action – Clerk to prompt Balfours to correct unresolved issues

[1]Local Government Act 1972, schedule 12, paragraph 7 (2).

Given the poor performance and high costs of the existing maintenance contractor the meeting resolved to investigate alternate suppliers. A potential supplier has contacted the Chair – SparkX, details have been forwarded to the Clerk for further investigation

0068/10-25.2 Website Status

The website is built and part populated, we are close to re-launching the live website.

Cllr Carter noted that the site does not yet show up in web searches – this can evidently be easily resolved by the developer making some revised settings – **Action Clerk**

Some layout and text changes are needed before "go live". **The Chair** (SLB) will liaise directly with the Clerk to address these. All back links to the Bury site used as a template need to be removed.

Ongoing the site needs to be "self maintained" by Council members without reliance on third party contractors unless further development work is required.

Action – Clerk Arrange Admin/login for all council members and the Clerk and set up a training session with the developer to cover the basics of uploads, editing and minor layout adjustment.

Cllr Eastman has agreed to be the lead for the Website management and all non statutory content will be reviewed by council with Miranda acting as Chair. Statutory content; Agendas, Minutes, Financials and Policies, etc will be uploaded and maintained by the Clerk.

0068/10-25.3 School Signage

Confirmation has been received that the costs of the new School Sign Maintenance will be borne by the County Council directly. Clerk to keep this correspondence on file for future reference – **item closed**.

0069/10-25 Appointments to Outside Bodies – Councillor Reports

0069/10-25.1 Village Hall – Cllr Wilson

Attendees from the council at the Harvest Supper event reported a very successful evening well attended by village residents

0069/10-25.2 Flood Forum - Cllr Kelly

No new items to report

0069/10-25.3 Alconbury Weald – Cllr Brown

No new items to report

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0070/10-25 Finance

0070/10-25.1 Monthly reconciliations and to approve accounts for payment.
Approved

0071/10-25 To discuss the public consultation and potential design plans for the playground adjacent to Jubilee Gardens

- **Clerk** to confirm status of the address change at the Land Registry to show Current Parish Clerk details.
- **Cllr Kelly** to incorporate proposed amendments to the Consultation Document and distribute to Councillors.
- Cllr Carter proposed potential companies for a “turnkey” design and install service at various pricing levels.
- **Cllr Kelly** will organise a preliminary site survey with one or more companies to help with the planning and costing exercise

0028/07-25 Abbots Ripton Train Disaster Story Board

Artwork for the Information Board is now complete and was presented to Council.
It was resolved Cllr Brown will issue authorisation to the supplier to complete the Information Board.
When delivery timing is established a working party will be set up to install the Board in Jubilee Gardens and plans drawn up for an “unveiling” to involve locals, contributors to the project, dignitories and representation from Abbots Ripton school and pupils.
It was resolved to frame original artwork commissioned to be incorporated into the Information Graphic for display in the Post Office/Store to encourage visitors to see the Information Board in Jubilee Gardens

A vote of thanks was unanimously agreed for Jonny Queen, Wennington resident and local artist for his work in preparing the stylised map incorporated into the Information Board and to Charles Saunders, a local railway historian for his invaluable help in researching the event.

0029/07-25 Correspondence

The Draft Local Plan for Huntingdonshire has been released for the next stage of consultation. One of the sites put forward for potential development that has direct impact on Abbots Ripton has been listed in the preferred options. The report is a long read at over 400 pages as it covers many potential developments throughout the whole District. The part covering

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Abbots Ripton is **Section 12 Local Service Villages** and the entry is **12.3 Abbots Ripton 1 Home Farm South.**
This outlines the proposed build of c15 homes and some commercial development on 2.83 ha of land to the South of the existing Home Farm Close and adjacent to the road running to Tesco incorporating the existing commercial units on the plot.

This is not a Planning Application but the initial response of Planners and the HDC cabinet to their earlier call for potential sites from all developers

The Draft has not yet appeared on the HDC Public Website but Council Members will be attending the consultation review meetings in November and will report at our next Parish Council Meeting.

030/07-25 Matters as Agenda Items for future consideration

No items

0031/07-25 To resolve the dates of the next Parish Council meeting.

All at Abbots Ripton Village Hall – 7:00pm

- Tuesday 25th November 2025 – Budget Approval
- Tuesday 6th January 2026
- Tuesday 3rd March 2026
- Tuesday 14th April 2026

Meeting Closed – 20:30

Addendum 1

Report from District Councillor Bywater.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RE-ORGANISATION - HUNTINGDONSHIRE TO GO IT ALONE?
I am able to report that Huntingdonshire District Council are considering a proposal (known as Option E) which would see the council become a unitary authority in its own right and take on responsibilities such as highways social care etc, which are currently undertaken by the County Council. HDC Cllrs will consider this at our next council meeting 19/11/25. The County Council voted administration choose option A as their preferred option this was despite mine and other concerns

PARKING SCAM ALERT
The District Council has received reports that some residents are being sent text messages claiming they have received a parking Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) from "a local council."

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Please be aware that Huntingdonshire District Council will never contact anyone via text regarding PCNs.
The council believes these messages to be part of a nationwide scam and recommends that anyone receiving such a text, does not click on any links or provide any personal information and deletes it immediately.

LOCAL PLAN

HDC LOCAL PLAN TO 2046 PROPSALS
HDC Preferred Options Draft Local Plan is a newly released document that outlines the recommendations from Council Planning Officers to the administrations Cabinet regarding the Huntingdonshire Local Plan. Cabinet approved this last night and will now be released in due course for a for a 6-week consultation process. Decision - Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046 and supporting Sustainability Appraisal - Huntingdonshire.gov.uk
It contains three important parts:
1) An introduction outlining the strategic priorities overarching the Plan;
2) A series of Local Plan and Development Management policies that are proposed to be used to assess future planning applications;
3) An assessment of sites to be allocated for Housing and Commercial development.
At 469 pages it is a very long read, but the important aspects to consider are the proposed planning policies where you live.
Residents will be particularly interested in the Preferred Options for Housing and Commercial development, having seen the various and many 'Call for Sites' submissions over the past 18 months.
In the Sawtry Ward there are a number of recommendations to be adopted in the next local plan. Villages are listed
Finally, it is important to note that - thanks to the increased housing target for Huntingdonshire - HDC is currently in the position of not having enough approved planning permissions to satisfy our '5-year housing supply' under this new target.
This places us in something called 'tilted balance', where applications submitted are considered against less onerous standards, and may not be approved as allocated sites for housing within either the existing or emerging Local Plans.
It is entirely possible that developers of sites proposed to be rejected under this Preferred Options proposal may choose, possibly in the near future, to simply submit a planning application to see if they can obtain a permission whilst HDC remains in 'tilted balance'. So you need to be alive to this in your parish
Obviously, the more permissions granted over the next few months, the closer we get to getting back to having an adequate 5-year housing supply, upon which we will come out of 'tilted balance', and it will become more difficult to obtain permissions again outside of any local plan.
All residents are free to comment on any aspect of the proposal once published.