

Minutes of Meeting 2026-1 held on Monday 5 January 2026 at The Community Room, Newchurch Village Hall, Newchurch, Romney Marsh, Kent TN29 0DP.

Unique Minute Number	Agenda item	Record	Action
2026-1-1	In attendance	Parish Councillors Colin Woollard (Chair), Scott Fielding (Vice Chair), Michelle Barden & Valerie Denby Finance Officer, Alison Prentice. 1 member of the general public was welcomed to the meeting. The chair welcomed Cllr Valerie Denby to her first meeting as a councillor. The Clerk confirmed all notifications to Folkestone & Hythe council had been undertaken. Apologies received from Cllrs Cooper, Hills & Wimble.	
2026-1-2	Declarations of Interest	The Chair reminded all Parish Councillors to declare any conflicts of interest in the business before them. None noted	
2026-1-3	Approval of previous minutes	The minutes of the previous meeting were approved. Proposed Scott Fielding, seconded Michelle Bardon.	ACTION Clerk to file/update notice board & website.
2026-1-4	Matters Arising	These were raised during later agenda items.	
2026-1-5	Invited speakers & public participation	Cllr Hills provided a report “Matters I have been engaged with, Romney Marsh ward. The residents of Romney Marsh ward are facing another challenging year, but we will have to see what unfolds. This month should see the planning committee decide on the application for a solar farm at St Mary’s Road, Romney Marsh. Enviromena has submitted a planning application to the F&H council for a solar farm with the capacity to produce 16 MW of power. The company states this will produce enough clean, renewable energy to power about 10,600 homes every year, The proposal is for about 40 hectares (98.8 acres). Water Quality - I have supported the excellent letter sent from Dymchurch PC to our MP concerning the decision of the EA to give Dymchurch bathing beach a poor rating for 2026 with the recommendation against bathing. In my opinion this is grossly unfair, as we have made positive strides to improve the local bathing water quality. I have emailed the letter to the EA asking them to review the evidence and change the rating to satisfactory. This end of Hythe Bay needs more investigation to what is contributing to our ongoing problems with water quality. I intend at the next meeting of the F&H district council to ask a question following the disappointing decision from the EA to give Dymchurch a ‘poor’ rating what the council is going to do about it. Solar Farms We must stay positive; we must keep pressure on our MP. If these ‘mega’ farms get go ahead from government, our coastal communities will be at extreme risk.	

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		They will take over two years to build; the roads will be taken over by construction traffic. How will our local business survive if visitors can't reach the coast. The knock on effects could be far and wide. It's not just the landscape and environment at risk. For many years I have been working on flooding issues. Not just from the sea but also ground and surface water. Across the marsh water it is in balance, but these solar farms will put all that at risk. So, as we enter 2026, we face these challenges as these companies will go into their second round of consultations. Rest assured, I will do my best to keep the Romney Marsh Parishes and residents informed of progress.	
2026-1-6	Newchurch Village website administration	Chair reported handover arrangements from Brooker Farms to Newchurch Parish Council were in progress – likely to be March 2026.	ACTION: Chair to arrange handover.
2026-1-7	Precept 26/27	Finances were reviewed and it was agreed to set the Precept for 2026/27 at £6500 (no increase from 2025/26).	ACTION: Clerk to confirm to FHDC.
2026-1-8	FINANCIAL REPORTS	Current & Deposit account Clerk reported she had visited Santander to ensure handover to new Finance Officer completed and paid in cheque for £88.25 from UK Power networks for Wayleave annual payment for Jubilee Field. A new current business fee free account with HSBC would be opened. Current balance £1160.71 includes cheques not presented – audit to be undertaken when new statements received. Deposit balance £1019.58 (plus interest) Cheques for payment: Newchurch village hall £79.00 meeting room hire until 31/3/26 inc cheque 000802, Alison Prentice clerk wages £262 & Ream of paper £6.99 total= £268.99 cheque 000801 Clerk HMRC Tax £64.40 cheque 000803 and KAD for clerk printer purchase £129.00 (4 cheques in total value £541.59)	ACTION: Clerk to open HSBC business bank account and obtain Santander final current account statements prior to transfer to new HSBC account.
2026-1-9	Planning	A representative from HOOM attended the meeting to advise that the application 25/0542/FH Land opp Marten Farm St Mary's Road Romney Marsh Kent TN29 OBT Construction of a solar farm including solar photovoltaic panel arrays to generate electricity, with ancillary substations, inverters, perimeter stock fencing and gates, cctv, lighting, access tracks, landscaping and other associated landscapes will be considered at Folkestone & Hythe Planning Committee at 7pm. Colin Woollard will attend as Chair of Newchurch Parish Council in addition to the Chair of HOOM	ACTION: Chair to attend Planning meeting to speak against the applicants rebuttal report and liaise with HOOM Chair.
2026-1-10	Jubilee Fields	The Chair reported that he would review and resolve the issue with the climbing net. Thanks to Mr D King resident of the parish, for procuring and installing dog waste holders/bags, however sad to note the one by the entrance from The Street has been stolen!	ACTION: Chair – repair net. ACTION: Chair to install camera

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		A camera would be installed in the area (not pointing to any properties). The other holder remained well used and Cllr Barden reported she would refill the bags for which she was thanked by the council.	
2026-1-11	Pond area maintenance	Thank you cards had been sent to Denis and Mike. Feedback had been received from parishioners about the pond area and this would be taken on board at a pond fix it day in the spring, prior to the contractor Connor Dunne annual quote being accepted/commenced for £280.00 for 2 hedge cuts and 9 grass cuts 4 weekly between March and end October.	ACTION: Clerk to co-ordinate fix it day and contractor.
2026-1-12	AOB	Grant application to District Councillor for purchase and installation of Cycle repair station post to be installed in the Pond area. Chair confirmed he would fabricate the station post to reduce costs as quotes of £1,500 were received, without installation. Highways – Norwood Lane roadway was collapsing and needed urgent repair. Clerk reported to Highways Inspector and road closure in situ pending funding to resolve. Highways – salt bin x 3 refill request chased with KCC. In addition to querying why the road from New Romney to Bilsington (a bus route) was not on the official gritting route. Folkestone & District Council road signage – The village sign before Limberlost required replacement, in addition to Church View and Mill Lane. These were all reported to FDC to resolve. Dog bin The Street has been removed and a new serviced large waste/dog bin installed by Folkestone & District council by the bus stop in Church View. Councillor vacancy: There remains only 1 vacancy to be filled. New parish electoral register circulated digitally confidentially to all councillors.	ACTION: Clerk to follow upon grant application. Chair to fabricate cycle repair station and arrange installation.
2026-1-13	Date, time & place of next meeting	Tuesday 27 January 2026 at 7.30pm in the Community Room, Newchurch Village Hall.	

The Chair thanked all those present and declared the Parish Council meeting closed at 8.30pm.