

# Minutes of Halwill parish council's January 2026 meeting

Held on 8 January 2026 at 7.30pm In the Baptist Hall

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The meeting started at 7:30pm.

## Present:

Cllrs J Lawlor (chair), L Bryan (LB), M Harding (MH) P Dixon (PD) E Down (ED), R Tucker(RT) and V Osborne (VO)

## In Attendance:

County Councillor L Rowsell (LR) and the Clerk

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## 2026/Jan/1 To receive apologies for absence

Ward Councillors S Gibson and P Hackett

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## 2026/Jan/2 Declarations of Interest

None

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## 2026/Jan/3 Public question time

There were no members of the public present.

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## 2026/Jan/4 Order of business

No changes

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## 2026/Jan/5 Clerk's and Councillors' announcements

County Councillor Rowsell reported that applications for this year's locality budget grants will not be considered after March 2, 2026. Applications for next year's locality budget will open on April 1, 2026.

LR reported that from time to time she hears the electorate complaining about the poor state of the roads. It is possible, she reported that the road network will decline in the coming years. The Highways budget is £83.6m for this year, the calculated cost of clearing the backlog of faults is £392m. The current contract for roads maintenance ends in 2027. LB was asked what procedures were in place to ensure scheduled work would not be interrupted by the changeover to a new contractor. Rectory Lane is scheduled for repairs.

LR reported that it is possible local government elections would be cancelled in Devon.

LR asked if we were aware of the consultation on libraries.

## 2026/Jan/6 To confirm minutes for the December 2025 Parish Council Meeting

The minutes were signed as a correct record by the Chair

## 2026/Jan/7 Finances

### 1 Bills for payment

It was **resolved** to pay the following bills

*Table 1: Table of bills to pay and cheques to be raised at the December meeting current account*

Date	Company	Amount inc VAT	For what
15/01/26	D C Osborne	£446.68	Pay December
15/01/26	D C Osborne	£12.00	Expenses
15/01/26	HMRC	£4.45	National Insurance employer's contribution
17/12/25	L&M Coles	£430.00	Parish Warden
07/01/26	Devon Association of Local Councils	£36.00	Chair training
14/01/26	Halwill Cleaning Services	£45.00	Bus shelter washdown
15/01/26	Halwill Baptist Hall	£40.00	Hall Hire

Current Account Total For month inc VAT: £1014.13

Current Account Total for month ex VAT £1008.13

VAT for month: £6

## **2 Budget:**

The Clerk presented a number of options for the budget with showing the percentage increase of the precept and the expected increase in council tax for each council tax band resulting from that increase. The options started with the budget presented at the December 2025 meeting and a number of scenarios with spending increased by £2000, £5000 and £10,000 above the budget presented at the December 2025 meeting.

There followed a lively debate. The issues considered included:

- Whether the budget presented for discussion at the December 2025 meeting made insufficient allowance for funding future projects.
- What increase over that budget would allow the parish council to carry out its duties and provide enhanced facilities for the parish
- Would the proposed increase in council tax be affordable for all parishioners

### **Resolved:**

**Halwill Parish Council resolves to adopt the budget proposed at its December 2025 meeting. This budget predicts a total council expenditure of £27,050 inclusive of loan repayments to be funded by precept and licence payments from the school and football club and an additional £10,000 to be funded from the precept to provide surplus funds for future projects**

The total budget requirement with the £10,000 added is therefore expected to be £37,050 to be funded by a precept of £33,850 and by licence payments from Devon County Council and the Halwill Football Club. Total income for the year is predicted to be £37,369

(Vote: For – 5, Against – 2, Abstentions – 0)

## **3 Precept**

The precept requirement was informed by the agreed budget

### **Resolved:**

**to demand a precept of £33,850 from Torridge District Council.**

(Vote: For – 7, Against – 0, Abstentions – 0)

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## **2026/Jan/8 Planning**

The following application was considered:

**Reference:** 1/1003/2025/FUL

**Proposal:** Demolition of the existing agricultural building and the erection of a replacement dwelling in lieu of Class Q approval 1/0595/2025/AGMB (Self build)

**Location:** Agricultural Building 244459 099435, Station Road, Halwill

**O.S. Map Reference:** ( E ) 244459 ( N ) 99436

The application was noted.

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## **2026/Jan/9 Progress report on Baptist church drainage and boundary sale**

The draft heads of terms for the easement allowing the Baptist Church to install and maintain a drain over land currently controlled by the Council has been received.

Once the easement has been sealed the sale of the boundary can progress.

The solicitors representing both parties have been on holiday.

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## **2026/Jan/10 Active Halwill delegate report**

The Clerk reported that he has been receiving questions from a MoP regarding the workings of Active Halwill. The Clerk advised that minutes should be brought up to date and published.

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## **2026/Jan/11 To consider joining the snow warden scheme**

The Chair introduced this Item. The School asked whether the parish council would grit the car park during snowy and icy conditions. In order to grit the car park the council would need trained personnel and to provide protective equipment in order to satisfy our insurers. We would also need volunteers and we need to be able to store the grit packs and machinery.

There is a scheme run by Devon County called the Snow Warden Scheme which provides the necessary training and insurance cover to volunteers. There is a delay at the moment with training.

It was agreed that we would not join the road warden scheme at this moment. The Chair will inform the school.

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## **2026/Jan/12      Action list**

The Action List is a compilation of tasks or actionable items that are created to help move a project toward its goals. These items serve as "stepping stones" and are crucial for project management, as they outline specific tasks that need to be completed. Action lists are to help ensure accountability and track progress. No new Actions should be generated in this Item but further measures to help achieve the desired actions can be considered.

The Action list is included in the meeting papers. The Action list was noted.

Regarding the Pre application for changing rooms and MUGA Councillor Bryan has had a positive response from Torridge.

The Clerk agreed to ask Scallywags for details of what they would want as new play equipment. The clerk will get quotes based on Scallywags request for future consideration.

Policy documents including bank signatories are due for review in May.

Councillor Harding agreed to help with the tree planting. He will talk with the school.

There was a discussion of the problems in siting the speed sign. We cannot place the sign where we wish, it has to be approved by the police; power is an issue; the original site is no longer available as the land owner is moving.

The Parish has been gifted a specimen tree. An endangered Devon Hornbeam. A number of sites were proposed to plant the tree. The chair will approach the village school.

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## **2026/Jan/13      Correspondence**

Correspondence received and to be written

A letter has been received from the office of our local MP regarding a meeting he is arranging to discuss broadband provision in the area. The Clerk and Vice-chair will attend to represent the parishioners.

A parishioner asked if the council would repair and upgrade the path to the school.

Scallywags have asked if the fence between the play area and the school access road can be replaced as children are running onto the road through the broken fence. The clerk explained that the parish council is responsible for the fence and should repair it. The clerk will get quotes to repair the fence.

Do we wish to receive a copy of the electoral roll. No we don't

## **2026/Jan/14      Next meeting**

The next Ordinary Meeting will be on the 12 February at the Baptist Hall

### **Part 2**

No items

The meeting ended at 21:05

DRAFT