



Chair: Cllr Toby Acton
Clerk: Bonnie Jones | Ware Farm, The Street, High Roding, CM6 1NT |
clerk@highongar-pc.gov.uk | www.highongar-pc.gov.uk

You are hereby summoned to attend
A Meeting of High Ongar Parish Council
To be held on
Wednesday 8th October 2025 – at 7:30pm
at High Ongar Village Hall

for the purpose of transacting business as shown on the agenda below.

The public and press are welcome to be present. Please note that this meeting may be recorded.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'B. Jones', is written above the printed name of the Parish Clerk.

Parish Clerk
Date: 03/10/2025

AGENDA

- 2025/26.69 Apologies for Absence**
Members are reminded that s85 of the Local Government Act 1972 states that apologies for absence must be received prior to the meeting.
- 2025/26.70 Other Absences**
- 2025/26.71 Co-option of Councillor**
There are currently two Councillor vacancy for Paslow Common ward, and the Council is able to fill this vacancy by co-option. Councillors are asked to consider any candidates for co-option.
- 2025/26.72 Declarations of Interest**
To declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable Interest or Non-Registerable Interest relating to items on the agenda.
- 2025/26.73 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**
To agree the Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners and the May Parish Council meeting held on 10th September 2025.
- 2025/26.74 Public Participation Session**
The Chair will invite questions and observations from members of the public present. A maximum time of 15 minutes will be allowed, with 3 minutes per person.
- 2025/26.75 Reports and Members Reports**
a) Chairman's Report – verbal report.
b) Vice Chairman's Report
c) District & County Councillors Reports - District Councillors are invited to submit a written report if they are unable to attend the Parish Council Meeting.
d) Parish Councillors - verbal reports will be received if no written report has been submitted.
- Ward Councillor Report – Paslow Common
- Ward Councillor Report - High Ongar
- Ward Councillor Report- Norton Mandeville
e) Highways Report
f) High Ongar Village Hall
g) Police Reports

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2025/26.76 Clerk's Report

To receive any reports from the Clerk.

2025/26.77 NJC Scale point increase

The National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) has reached an agreement on rates of pay applicable from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. This pay increase is applicable to the Clerk in accordance with her contract which is based on the NJC model. As such, the Clerks pay has been updated as of 1st September 2025. The NJC advise this pay increase should be retrospectively applied from 1 April 2025, and as such the Clerk has received her backdated pay to 1st April 2025.

2025/26.78 External Audit – Acceptance of exempt status

To note, PKF Little John has accepted this Councils notification of exempt status for the year end 31st March 2025.

2025/26.79 Village Green sign

At the previous meeting Cllr Gray advised that the sign located on Paslow Common was not clear and she felt would require painting. The Clerk has reviewed images of the sign and due to the deterioration of the sign it would be more cost effective for this council to purchase a new sign. The Clerk to provide costing for a new sign. Councillors to decide how they wish to move forward with this matter.

2025/26.80 Village Litter pick

At the previous meeting Councillors agreed that they would like to hold a village litter pick on a regular basis. The Clerk has emailed Councillors to recommend that the Litter Pick project is a community led project and not run or organised by the Parish Council. The reason for this is that by involving the Parish Council it creates a layout of cumbersome bureaucracy which would have a negative effect on the litter pick. Gray has agreed to head the organisation of this event via the Friends of High Ongar Facebook group. Councillors are asked for their thoughts on this matter.

2025/26.81 Planning applications responded to by way of Clerks Delegated Powers:

Reference	Address	Description	Comments
EPF/1851/25	292, Garra, Nine Ashes Road, High Ongar, Ongar, CM4 0LA	Retrospective change of use of ancillary pool to swim school.	Objection

High Ongar Parish Council wish to object to the above planning application on the following grounds:

1. Scale and Intensity of Commercial Use

The proposal admits to 4 full-time staff and 14 car parking spaces. This goes far beyond what could reasonably be regarded as a modest or ancillary home-based activity. The scale of the operation represents a material intensification of use, wholly incompatible with a residential setting.

2. Highway Safety and Parking

Provision for 14 parking spaces in a rural lane context will generate significant vehicle movements each day. Nine Ashes Road is not designed for this level of traffic. The resulting congestion, cars obstructing sight lines, and the increased risk of accidents present clear highway safety concerns.

3. Noise and Impact on Residential Amenity

The proposed operating hours (up to 8pm weekdays) together with amplified sound within the pool enclosure will result in continuous disturbance to neighbouring residents. This includes crying infants, group sessions, and instructors shouting. Unlike temporary disruption (such as building works), this impact would be ongoing and permanent, materially harming neighbours' ability to enjoy their homes and gardens.

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4. Conflict with Planning History

The earlier Certificate of Lawful Development (EPF/1906/21) was explicitly limited to 1-to-1 use by residents. The current application seeks retrospective approval for a much larger, fully commercial operation. Granting permission would effectively regularise ongoing breaches and undermine the integrity of local planning controls.

5. Sustainability and Policy Conflict

The business model relies on customers travelling from a wide catchment area (e.g. Rayleigh, Braintree), entirely by car. This is not a sustainable pattern of development and directly conflicts with the National Planning Policy Framework and Local Plan objectives to reduce reliance on private car travel.

For the reasons above, the proposed development is inappropriate in scale, harmful to highway safety and residential amenity, inconsistent with previous planning determinations, and contrary to sustainable development principles. We therefore respectfully request that the application be refused.

EPF/1840/25	199, Former Larkins Farm, Nine Ashes Road, High Ongar, Ongar, CM4 0JY	Variation of Conditions 13 and 14 trees and landscaping of EPF/2601/18 (Demolition of an existing structure and replacement with 2 x detached dwellings with associated new vehicle crossover, garages, landscaping and other associated works).	No comments
EPF/1812/25	181, Berry Farm, Nine Ashes Road, High Ongar, Ongar, CM4 0JY	Open air pool to rear with small pump room to side of garage.	No comments

2025/26.82 Planning applications for consideration

There were no planning applications to consider at the time this agenda was distributed.

2025/26.83 Planning Updates

Councillors are asked to note the below planning updates:

Reference	Address	Description
EPF/1531/25	292, Garra, Nine Ashes Road, High Ongar, Ongar, CM4 0LA	Outline application all matters reserved except access for up to 8 residential units. Planning Application: EPF/1531/25

High Ongar Parish Council **objects** to this application for the following reasons:

1. Green Belt - Non compliance with EFDC Local Plan Policy DM4 Green Belt, and NPPF Paragraph 153

Rationale: The applicant states they consider the site to be classified as Grey Belt as defined under paragraph 155(a) of the NPPF. The Parish Council has completed an assessment of the land based on the criteria for determining Grey Belt including PPG dated 27th February 2025, and advise that this site **fails** to meet the criteria on the following grounds:

- The site is NOT in a sustainable location, as defined under NPPF paragraph 55(c).
- NPPF paragraph 110 states significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This site does not fulfil this criteria.
- NPPF paragraph 115 states that in assessing specific applications for development, it should be ensured that sustainable transport modes are prioritised taking account of the vision for the site, the type of development and its location.

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Therefore, the site should be classified as assessed as Green Belt. The NPPF states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. 'Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. The applicant has not provided any very special circumstances to justify the loss of Green Belt.

2. Biodiversity Net Gain – Non compliance with Schedule 7A (Biodiversity Gain in England) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Rationale: Applications are required to deliver a mandatory 10% measurable biodiversity net gain. This application fails to provide sufficient information to confirm this can be achieved.

3. Affect on Listed Building – non compliance with EFDC Local Plan Policy DM7 Historic Environment, parts A, B, C and F, and Paragraph 202 of the NPPF

Rationale: Directly adjacent to the application site is the property known as 'Hardings' - a building listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for its special architectural or historic interest (listed building entry number 1337236). The application fails to consider the impact of the proposals on the setting of this listed building. The NPPF states that heritage assets (which includes listed buildings) are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

Should this application be recommended for approval, the Parish Council confirms its intention to attend and speak at any planning committee meeting.

2025/26.84 Finance

84.1 To note the status of the accounts.

84.2 Clerk to provide bank reconciliation, to be reviewed and signed by the Chairman.

84.3 To agree the following payments:

Payee	Description	Method	£ (inc VAT)
Bonnie Jones	Clerks Salary (September) + Backdated pay (NJC scale point increase)	PAID	£595.18
EFDC	Summer 2025 Play in Park session	Online	£82.50
Npower	Street Light Electricity used (August and September)	Online	£100.57
Thornwoods Ground Maintenance	Grass cutting (September)	Online	£348.00
Skilled Tech	RMM, antivirus and Microsoft 365 for period October 2025	Online	£93.66

2025/26.85 Outstanding Matters

To note any outstanding matters.

2025/26.86 Date of next meeting

The next meeting of High Ongar Parish Council will take place on Wednesday 12th November 2025 at the High Ongar Village Hall.

2025/26.87 Exclusion of the public and the press



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In the event that an agenda item needs to be discussed confidentially, councillors will be asked to consider the following motion to be proposed by the Chairman: "That the public and the press be excluded from the meeting, the Council believing that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be discussed. However, an item may be placed in the Confidential part of the meeting so long as it is accordance with the Statutory Guidance.

Land Adjacent to 202 Nine Ashes Road, Blackmore