



Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 4 March 2025 in Detling Village Hall

Present: Cllr Clive English (Chairman), Cllr Steve Jubb and Cllr Stephen Thompson;
and Mrs Wendy Licence (Clerk).

Also present were eight members of the public.

Cllr English welcomed everyone to the meeting

Public Time: No matters were raised.

1. Councillor Vacancy

No applications have been received.

ACTION: Cllr English to draft article for newsletter.

2. Apologies.

Apologies had been received from Cllr Chris Houlihan (holiday) and Cllr Laura Maclaren (personal).

Apologies had also been received from Ward Member Vanessa Jones (at another meeting), PC Ben Cox and PC Neil Denney.

3. Declaration of Interest. or Lobbying

None were declared.

4. Dispensations

There were none.

5. Items to be taken in closed session

Cllr English **PROPOSED** that item 15 To consider Assets of Value to the Community and item 18 Staffing Matters be taken in closed session, both matters to be taken at the end of the meeting: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6. Approval of the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4 February 2025

a) To consider the minutes of the previous meetings and if in order sign as a true record.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4 February 2025 as a true record. Cllr English duly signed the minutes.

b) Matters arising from the minutes (except those issues appearing under specific headings)

All matters on agenda

7. Visitors

Police

PC Cox was unable to attend the meeting and had sent the following report:

This month PC Denney and I have continued to respond to issues affecting your local community. After reports from residents and the Parish Council regarding nuisance parked vehicles and waste being fly-tipped in the locality, information has been shared with our partner agencies to seek to address the issues raised. The Maidstone Community Safety Unit work closely with a number of other partner agencies, sharing information and intelligence and conducting joint visits to persons or premises of interest, to ensure that the most appropriate agency can lead any investigation or enforcement action.

Further mobile patrols of the byways in and around Detling have been conducted, with those using the routes engaged with regarding safe, considerate and road legal usage of the byways. Several individuals riding off-road vehicles were spoken with, and the roadworthiness of their vehicles established.

Statistics are showing a 23.5% decrease in Antisocial Behaviour on the previous rolling year in the ward, which is good news. This quarter we are also seeing a decrease in crime, down 15% on the previous quarter. Hopefully these trends continue and we see less instances of crime and antisocial behaviour occurring.

If you have a specific issue or concern you wish to raise, please send the details through to the Clerk for dissemination to myself and PC Denney. As always, if there are any crimes requiring immediate Police attendance, phone 999.

Borough Councillor

MBCllr Thompson reported that over the past couple of months trees had been vandalised, some trees now have Tree Preservation Orders on them. Concern has been raised regarding a legitimate business which has continued to burn waste at their site, affecting air quality in the neighbourhood; this has been reported and found to be in order.

Devolution- There will not be a mayor in Kent immediately, Maidstone Borough Council and other District Councils are expected to present a plan to Government by 21 March. It is said that Parish Councils will be more important however there is an issue recruiting Parish Councillors. Community Resilience is an example of where Parish Councils and the wider community groups are more important.

Lidsing- Both Ward members have attended meeting regarding the Supplementary Planning Document to assist the design to make Lidsing a functional community, progress is very slow. There is enormous pressure on Officers to deliver the document in three months, it usually takes eighteen months. The formal consultation will begin in May.

County Councillor

Cllr English said the County Councillor has also covered devolution in her report. Kent County Council wanted to transfer quickly to Unitary Authority. KCC is suffering from budget pressures which is affecting all Local Authorities. KCCLl Prendergast is pressing for improvement to the handling of street works. There was a meeting with KCCLl Prendergast and six County Officers with Cllr English and Cllr Maclaren to discuss highways issues in Detling.

8. Correspondence

Councillors considered a request to have the old gate leading down to Bluebells removed and yellow lines painted on the road and agreed to pursue the matter.

ACTION: Clerk

9. Planning

Ref: 25/500649/FULL

Address: Hampton Harple Lane Detling Kent ME14 3EU

Proposal: Erection of part single-storey part 2-storey extension to rear and side, replacement garage and new shed

Councillors considered the application.

Cllr English **PROPOSED** that there were no objections and not to request referral to Planning Committee: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

10. Financial Matters:

a) Finance report

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept the finance report.

b) Invoices for payment

Cheque no	Payee	Reason	Nett	VAT	Total
500190	DCK Payroll Solutions Ltd	Payroll fees	30.00	6.00	£36.00
500191	Mrs L Maclaren	Padlock	5.83	1.17	£7.00
500192	Administration	Expenses	88.87	1.38	£90.25
500193	HMRC	PAYE & NI			£421.39
500194	Staff	Salary			£1,306.34
500195	Detling PCC	Magazine page			£30.00

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to make the payments.

11. Detling Village Hall Lease

Councillors considered the request from the Village Hall Management Committee to extend the lease to 24 June 2050.

Cllr English **PROPOSED** to extend the Village Hall lease to 24 June 2050; **SECONDED** by Cllr Thompson: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Cllr English **PROPOSED** to appoint Gullands Solicitors LLP to revise the lease **SECONDED** by Cllr Thompson: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**

12. Highways

Cllr English said Cllr Maclaren had sent a comprehensive update, some issues have been previously reported. The bus service will continue until 21 May 2027, the Parish Council had worked with Bearsted Parish Council and Cllr David Hall, former Chairman, has put a lot of work into securing the continuation of the service. Concern continues regarding rat running through the village. New signs have been requested to warn of no footpath on Hockers Lane bends; a new *No Through Road* sign for The Street/Pilgrims Way (East); and signs to warn of horses, cyclist and walkers in Pilgrims Way (East). A new grit bin has been installed at the bottom of the bridge. More volunteers are needed to join the Highways & Transportation Working Group which meets approximately every six weeks to discuss and try to find ways to address highways issue.

KCC Highways has agreed that it is possible to supplement some of the programme with CIL money, this had previously been resisted.

Cllr English thanked Cllr Maclaren for her sterling work on highways.

13. Open Spaces

a) To receive report from the Open Spaces Working Group

Cllr English reported the Group had a valuable meeting and a site visit and is moving ahead with proposals.

b) To consider quotation for open spaces maintenance

Cllr English **PROPOSED** to accept the quotation for grounds maintenance from Paul Waring
SECONDED by Cllr Jubb: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**

c) To consider quotation to refurbish information board by shop.

Cllr English **PROPOSED** to accept the quotation from LRH Property Maintenance to refurbish the information board; **SECONDED** by Cllr Jubb: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**

d) To consider participating in Maidstone's Big Day Out - Saturday June 14

Cllr English said this is a new initiative by Maidstone Borough Council but the Parish Council does not have anything which would fit the profile.

Cllr Thompson said Maidstone Borough Council likes to be a supporting partner although there is no funding available; the initiative is for people to go to places in their locality.

Cllr English said local sporting societies and groups could be contacted to see if they have anything which would fit the criteria. It would not be desirable to have large numbers of people in Horish Woods or Monks Meadow. The Borough Council is looking at larger areas such as country parks, the intention is not for nature reserves to be included as an influx of visitors could be detrimental to those areas. If there is nothing in the parish, the Council need not take any action.

Cllr Thompson said there is a continuity challenge in Monks Meadow and Horish Woods. At Hale Park, volunteers would be seen; visitors would talk to the volunteers and possibly offer help.

Cllr English said the Council cannot commit volunteers without asking. The Open Spaces Working Group has been consulted and raised concerns about parking issues and the impact a large number of visitors would have, it would also need a lot of planning. Encouraging volunteers is another matter. The priority for nature reserves is the natural habitat, not attracting more visitors. Enquiries will be made regarding groups in the village.

14. Community Resilience Plan

Cllr Thompson said a Community Resilience Plan is not a substitute for the emergency services. Given the information regarding help, in the public domain, a plan would not add anything. Community Resilience is not a job for the Parish Council

16. Speedwatch

Cllr Jubb reported that the parish now has its own equipment. There are currently seven people on the team, more volunteers are needed. The team goes out weekly, last week eight cars were recorded travelling at over 35mph. The aim of Speedwatch is to educate drivers.

Cllr English thanked Cllr Jubb and the team for their sterling work.

17. Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 1 April 2025

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 and because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press were excluded from the meeting during the consideration of Staffing Matters and Assets of Value to the Community

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Chairman
Date: 1 April 2025