



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 7 April 2026 in the Meeting Room, Detling Village Hall

Present: Cllr Clive English, Cllr Chris Houlihan, Cllr Steve Jubb, Cllr Laura Maclaren and Cllr Bianca Willmott;
and Mrs Wendy Licence (Clerk).

Also present were five members of the public.

Cllr English welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Public Time

The meeting was adjourned for the Public Time

Graffiti on the telecommunications box was raised.

The meeting was reconvened

1. Councillor Vacancy

No applications had been received.

2. Apologies.

Apologies had been received from Cllr Stephen Thompson (at another meeting): noted.
Apologies had also been received from County Councillor Sarah Emberson at another meeting.

3. Declaration of Interest. or Lobbying

None.

4. Dispensations

None.

5. Items to be taken in closed session

No items identified.

6. Approval of the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 3 March 2026

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

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2026 as a true record; the minutes were duly signed by Cllr English.

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

All matters on the agenda.

7. Highways

a) To receive an update

Cllr Maclaren reported that the road closures in Hockers Lane were due to sewerage spills and had been intermittent and concerns were raised regarding the diversions.

The NO THROUGH ROAD sign has been installed although the PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS warning sign is yet to be installed, this matter will be chased with KCC Highways. The Speed Indicator Device (SID) training and installation in Detling will now take place on the 17 April and the SID will be operational after that date.

KCC Highways public consultation on a 20 mph scheme in the Village is now closed, if agreed, the scheme is scheduled for installation in May/June this year.

The new RESTRICTED ACCESS signs have been installed so they match the TRO, unfortunately there is still a problem with traffic as drivers seem unaware. The Highways Working Group has agreed to trial a media campaign to get the message out reminding drivers that the signs are enforceable.

A meeting has been held with our County Councillor and a KCC Highways Officer to discuss in detail the accidents and all the safety issues on Hockers Lane bends. An Automatic Traffic Counter (ATC) will be installed, and the design team is looking at viable safety improvement options, the ATC also records vehicle speeds. We understand a new footpath to Bearsted Academy has been opened from Hockers Lane, and plan to see whether this can be linked to our pavement in Hockers Lane

A meeting has been arranged mid-April with our County Councillor and a KCC Highways Officer to discuss the accidents, speed and safety measures that can be put in place to improve safety in White Hill Road.

Following responses from National Highways, our MP and KCC Highways, regarding M20/J7 improvements, there is no set date for the works due to lack of funding. The Parish Council has decided to write to Helen Whately MP to get her support to have responsibility of Detling Hill (A249) transferred from Kent County Council to National Highways.

Potholes continue to be reported and requests have been submitted to refresh white lines in the village.

Cllr English thanked Cllr Maclaren for her report and for her sterling work on highways,

b) To consider baseline traffic management survey

Cllr Maclaren **PROPOSED** to accept the quotation from Citisense for a basement traffic management survey: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

c) Traffic training in Hockers Lane

Cllr Maclaren reported that training to install the SID has been arranged; a risk assessment and volunteers agreement has been drawn up. Thanks go to Mr Trace Heard for sourcing cones and Cllr Jubb for storing equipment; the Council has the equipment to install the SID safely.

8. Open Spaces

Cllr Maclaren reported that the Open Spaces Working Group has met.

Monks Meadow and Horish Woods are in good repair and wood chippings have been spread on the pathways. Trees are in good order generally but some maintenance is planned. The volunteers now all have identifying jackets so it is possible to identify legitimate activities in the areas. There may have been some illegal tree felling, residents are asked to report to the

Council if they see any illegal tree felling or activities. Our volunteers have applied for over a one hundred new trees, free from Kent Woodland Trust, and there will be a tree planting day in the autumn.

The Council is grateful to our volunteers who keep our open spaces so pristine

Two reports have been received from the members of the public about motorcycles using the pathways, damage to fencing and gates, and extensive damage to the plateau area at The Larches. The Police are aware and any anti-social behaviour should be reported to the Police, Kent Wildlife Trust is now going to undertake repair works to fences, gates and to ensure the area is less accessible to motorcyclists and unauthorised vehicles.

Reports have been made about nuisance young motorbikes with no number plate, dressed in all black who regularly travel up and down through the village, doing wheelies and riding dangerously in the road. Any photographs or video reports should be sent to the police and incidents recorded.

Members of the Open Spaces Working Group met with Maidstone Borough Council Conservation Officer to discuss the Tudor Gate. This has enabled a comprehensive list of what remedial work and repairs to be compiled and quotations are being sought from suitable qualified contractors; the Parish Council will need to apply for grants for the works to be completed.

The Parish Council is waiting for a response from Southern Water regarding the capacity of the sewer network and pumping station. There have been no further overflows at Monks Meadow, this month, but there have been episodes in land adjacent to Hockers Lane bends resulting in road closures. This resulted in considerable disruption, tankers emptying the pumping station 24/7 for several days, and an acknowledgment that the pipework, on 6" is very fragile not only throughout the village but particularly from the pumping station.

LG Wood Ltd (LGW), was commissioned by Southern Water to undertake a survey of all pipework of run off, surface water and sewers. Southern Water has reported forty-one properties in Hockers Lane were identified as having surface water, rainwater entering the sewage system. Another ten property owners could not be contacted. Currently, we do not know how Southern Water plan to manage this matter, but it is illegal to have surface/rain water entering the sewage system and some action will be required by residents.

The Council is actively working to try to get matters resolved.

Cllr English thanked Cllr Maclaren for her report and for her sterling work.

9. Visitors

There were no reports from external Councillors.

Cllr English informed Members that no date has been set for the proposed development at Land at Hockers Farm, Orchard View to go to Planning Committee.

10. Correspondence

Correspondence had been received from a resident regarding a discarded bag of dog waste which trapped a hedgehog. The resident has put a bin in the area and is emptying it.

Cllr English said that additional bins are due to be installed by Maidstone Borough Council.

11. Planning

a) Ref: 26/500979/FULL

Address: 55 Hockers Lane Detling Kent ME14 3JN

Proposal: Erection of 2no. dormer extensions to the side roof slopes to existing loft accommodation.

Councillors considered the application and had no objections to the proposal.

b) Ref: 26/501183/PN14J

Address: Kent County Showground Detling Hill Detling Kent ME14 3JF

Prior notification for the installation of solar equipment on non- domestic premises. For its prior approval to: -Design and external appearance of the development - The impact of glare on occupiers of neighbouring land.

Councillors considered the application and had no objections to the proposal.

c) Ref: 26/500844/TCA

Romantica Pilgrims Way Detling Kent ME14 3JY

Conservation area notification to Fell one (T1) Holm Oak to ground level.

Maidstone Borough Council, the Local Planning Authority, raised no objection to the proposal.

12. Financial Matters:

a) Finance report

Noted

b) Invoices for payment

Cheque no	Payee	Reason	Nett	VAT	Total
500282 <i>Paid out of meeting</i>	DCK Payroll	Payroll Re-issue of 500277			£302.40
500283	Grammer Printers	Printing			30.00
500284	KALC	Subscription	423.03	88.61	£507.64
500285	DCK Payroll	Payroll and year end	63.00	31.50	£75.60
500286	Administration	Expenses and Land registry search			£89.10
500287 -88		Staff costs			£784.75
500289	B Willmott	Digital Friends Expenses			£10.00

Cllr English **PROPOSED** to make the payments: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**

c) To consider quotations to install the notice board

Councillors considered the quotations, Cllr English **PROPOSED** to accept the quotation of £195 from Octopus Handyman; **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**

d) To consider grant request from Kent ACRE

Councillors considered the request and differed the matter to be considered later in the financial year.

13. Village Hall Lease

Cllr English reported that despite having been reassured on 13 March that the draft lease would be sent out within the following week, nothing has happened. The Council will check with the Village Hall Management Committee to see if their solicitor has received the draft lease.

14. Speedwatch

Cllr Jubb reported that one to two sessions are held weekly, with three sessions in one week. Between two hundred and fifty and three hundred and fifty vehicles per hour are recorded in Hockers Lane. The Speedwatch Team has permission to film all sessions and recordings will be sent to the Police.

Cllr Maclaren said that one session recorded 654 vehicles per hour coming through the village, many come in at the Pilgrims Way junction and exit via Church Lane to try to jump the queue on Detling Hill.

Cllr English thanked Cllr Jubb for his report and for her sterling work on leading the Speedwatch Team.

15. Community Resilience

i. To consider community resilience

Deferred to next month.

ii. Water supplies and sewage network

Cllr Maclaren reported that a lot of tankers have been accessing South East Water in Hockers Lane due to supply issues in other areas. There have also been large lorries with bottled water using Hockers Lane, there is concern due to the size of the lorries and the damage they cause to the road..

Cllr English said the Council could ask that another depot be used to alleviate the problem in Detling and the fleet manager could be requested to remind drivers to drive carefully.

ACTION: Clerk to contact South East Water.

16. Digital Friends - Digital Champion Network

Cllr Willmott reported that she and Cllr Maclaren have been contacting KCC but are getting nowhere because either they do not respond or different information is given. Initially, we were told not to apply until April and when we did we were told we had missed the deadline.

Cllr Maclaren said this will be followed up.

17. Assets of Value to the Community

Cllr English reported that the nominations are progressing.

Cllr English reminded everyone that the next meeting will be on Wednesday to enable the Annual parish Meeting and presentation of the Villager of the year Award to be held in the hall.

ACTION: Clerk to request use of the microphone.

Concern was raised regarding two recent incidents of hall hirers using the playing field and leaving a mess.

Cllr Maclaren reported that the Council will be liaising with the Village Hall Management Committee regarding the issues.

Cllr English thanked everyone for attending.

Date of next Meetings

Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Parish Meeting Council Meeting: Wednesday 6 May 2026

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Chairman
Date: 6 May 2026