



## **Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 1 April 2025 in Detling Village Hall**

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

Also present were nine members of the public.

Cllr English welcomed everyone to the meeting

### **Public Time**

*The meeting was adjourned for the Public Time*

Members of the public requested an update on the Tudor gate; footpath at Queens Way; Maidstone Big Day Out; the Village Hall lease; trees on the central reservation; announcement and presentation of Villager of the Year; availability of the minutes at meetings.

*The meeting was reconvened*

### **1. Councillor Vacancy**

No applications have been received.

### **2. Apologies.**

All Members were present.

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**

None identified.

### **6. Approval of the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4 March 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 and the confidential minutes held on 4 March. 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. This month our work has predominantly focussed on holding individuals to account for alleged offences. We have worked with other departments to speak to individuals involved. Unfortunately we can't say much more on that matter.*

*We also met with the editors of Detling and Thurnham News to discuss our role in the community as Beat Officers, and the ways in which we help gather information and intelligence, and tackle crime and antisocial behaviour. We discussed the matters we can deal with, and the ways we work with our partner agencies if they are more suited to dealing with the task at hand. We also talked about the problems we face in our role, particularly the impacts of underreporting of issues. Please continue to report any issues affecting your community to the relevant authority. If you haven't seen us around yet and aren't sure what we look like – there's a photo alongside the article in this month's edition of the publication!*

*We have continued to tackle reports of nuisance parked vehicles, and hopefully these have now been resolved with the vehicle owners.*

*We have also sought to liaise with local residents around fraud, and ways they can prevent themselves falling victim.*

*We also recently popped into the Detling Community Store and spoke with staff about how valuable the store is to the community. We also gained an insight into issues affecting the store, and the wider village.*

PC Cox had requested whether reports could be submitted quarterly. Councillors suggested a report every two months unless there is an issue, with a review in two months.

**ACTION:** Clerk to report scramble bikes in the village.

### Borough Councillor

MBCllr Thompson reported that the bikes have been going through to Bredhurst, the Police are aware. Some have been apprehended and equipment confiscated.

MBCllr Thompson had attended the KALC Maidstone Area Committee meeting with Cllr Maclaren and devolution and Local Government reorganisation was discussed. Cllr Maclaren's contribution was significant and Councillors who engage well are invaluable. It was a positive meeting.

It is frustrating how long it takes to resolve issues with trees, Tree Preservation Orders and flytipping. Stockbury village sign has been stolen, and reports of cars being stolen are commonplace, our vigilance is important.

A request for assistance with Gypsy and Traveller issues was made at MP Helen Whatley's surgery, but this was not forthcoming.

The Fire Service attended a fire in March 2024 and again in 2025, this shows the need for a Community Resilience Plan, more people are needed as Councillors as well as being part of community resilience.

Concern was raised at the Maidstone Joint Transportation Group that not enough notice of street works was being given, this situation has since improved.

The Lidsing Steering Group met last week, the group has managed to obtain further information. There will be another meeting on from offers and the developer,

Cllr Maclaren reported rate relief on village halls has been reviewed but some halls had received invoices and had paid; they then found they did not have to pay.

## County Councillor

Cllr English said pre-election there are few meetings at Kent County Council so there is little to report as Councillors are in purdah.

### **8. Correspondence**

Councillors considered a request from Pennies Day Nursery to install a new bug hotel in Horish Woods and also for Horish Woods and Monks meadow to be part of Maidstone's Big Day Out.

Cllr Maclaren expressed concern regarding parking in the area, the increased footfall in the area and the impact of this would have on wildlife.

Cllr English said that his previous concerns stand, the impact on the area is not what is wanted. The installation of a new bug hotel and planting of wild flowers will be discussed by the Open Spaces Working Group

### **9. Planning**

#### a) Ref: 25/500845/FULL

Address: Woodsvie Matts Hill Road Detling Kent ME9 7XA

Proposal: Demolition of garage, summer house and single storey flat roof projection. Erection of single storey side extension, changes to fenestration and creation of additional parking area.  
Councillors considered the application and had no objections to the proposal.

#### b). Ref: 25/500949/FULL

Address: The Fold White Hill Road Detling Kent ME14 3HH

Proposal: Conversion of an existing stable block to ancillary residential annexe. Erection of extension for porch, fenestration.

Councillors considered the application and had no objections to the proposal and would request that any external lighting be directed down.

### **10. Financial Matters:**

#### a) Finance report

The Clerk reported that confirmation of receipt of the Winter Support Grant is to be confirmed; the insurance refund from Zurich has been confirmed; Bearsted Parish Council has secured a grant of £13166.

Cllr English said Cllr David Hall, Bearsted Parish Council had put a tremendous amount of work into securing the funding.

*ACTION: Clerk to thank Cllr Hall*

#### b) Invoices for payment

<b>Cheque no</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Nett</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Total</b>
500196	DCK Payroll Solutions Ltd	Payroll fees	30.00	6.00	<b>£36.00</b>
500197	KALC	Subscription	394.20	78.84	<b>£473.04</b>
500198	LRH Property Maintenance	Various			<b>£332.00</b>
500199	Administration	Expenses	137.59	12.23	<b>£150.82</b>
500200	Cancelled				
500201/3	Staff costs				
500202	Mrs L Maclaren	Play area expenses	6.66	1.32	<b>£7.98</b>

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

## 11. Highways

Cllr Maclaren reported that there had not been a meeting of the Highways & Transportation Working group, there are currently only two Councillors on the group and residents are needed to join this. The Highways Improvement Plan has been submitted to KCC Highways. KCC Highways want to change the signs at the entry to the village to 7 -9am to comply with the Traffic Regulations Order. Speed Watch recorded 509 vehicles in one hour with 200 coming through Church Lane. If the signs are changed they will be enforceable.

Cllr English said this is in the process from transitioning from the Police to KCC Highways for enforcement, the suggested changes in signs should go ahead.

*ACTION: Clerk to contact KCC Highways.*

Cllr Maclaren reported that Helen Whately MP, had been given a comprehensive list of problems and representation was made regarding the issues and she has taken this on the Council's behalf; this will also go to the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board.

Would the Council consider contacting Stagecoach to re-introduce the bus service in the village southbound? Helen Whately MP has agreed to take this up, it would be helpful if the Parish Council pursue this as well.

Cllr English said the Council will liaise with Stagecoach and Maidstone Borough Council can also be asked to intervene.

Cllr Maclaren said that there is no service at weekends and residents cannot get out of the village.

The extension of the 30mph speed limit has been approved in principle. There has been no action regarding the Hockers Lane/ Ware Street junction.

*ACTION: Clerk to contact Thurnham Parish Council for an update.*

Cllr Maclaren informed Councillors that the Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) were requested fourteen months ago, two sites have been approved in Detling; Hollingbourne Parish Council submitted seven locations and all were turned down. The joint parishes group cannot get the SIDs until all the sites have been approved.

There will be a meeting with Jeff Kitson, Parking Services Manager Maidstone Borough Council, to discuss parking issues in the village.

Cllr English thanked Cllr Maclaren for her tremendous work on highways, it is appreciated.

## 12. Open Spaces

### a) To receive report from the Open Spaces Working Group

Cllr Thompson said that MBCllr Richard Conyard has written to parishes which had concerns regarding Maidstone's Big Day Out on 14 June. There is virtue to publicising nature reserves as it might attract volunteers. Monks Meadow and Horish Woods should be added to the map. Cllr English said there was no issue with the areas being on the map as long as it is clear that no event is planned.

It was agreed to add the sites to Maidstone Borough Council's map.

*ACTION: Clerk*

Cllr Maclaren said the Cricket Club is participating in the Big Day Out, there may be an issue with parking.

*ACTION: Clerk to clarify*

Cllr Maclaren thanked the young people who responded to the recent consultation, their views will be taken into account when plans for the Old School Playing Field are discussed by the Open Spaces Working Group

### b) To consider quotation for play area repairs

The Clerk reported that she had contacted the company regarding the warranty on the equipment and was waiting to hear back.

Cllr English **PROPOSED** that if the repairs cannot be carried out under the guarantee, to accept the quotation from Maylow Construction Ltd, **SECONDED** by Cllr Maclaren, **4-FOR, 1-ABSTENTION: MOTION CARRIED.**

### c) To consider quotations for tree work

Councillors considered the tenders for tree work and playing field maintenance.

Cllr English **PROPOSED** to accept the quotation from Warings: **SECONDED** by Cllr Maclaren: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

### **13. To consider Assets of Value to the Community**

Cllr English reported that following extensive research, he is drafting a briefing document which will be circulated to Councillors.

### **14. Speedwatch**

Cllr Jubb said Speedwatch sessions are held weekly between 7.30- 8.30am in different locations. There is an urgent need for volunteers as the team is now down to three members. Cllr English thanked Cllr Jubb and the team for their sterling work.

### **15. Social Media**

Councillors considered the value of social media and noted that some Parish Councils do have a social media account, usually Facebook.

The main use of Facebook would be signposting, it would not be used for Council documents such as agendas and minutes as these are published on the website and it would not be used for comments/ discussions online. It could also be used to disseminate urgent information.

*ACTION: Clerk to set up a Facebook account.*

Cllr Maclaren asked if there was an update regarding monitoring pollution levels which MBCllr Stuart Jeffries had spoken about at the December meeting.

*ACTION: Cllr English and Cllr Thompson to follow up.*

### **16. Date of Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Parish Council Meeting – Tuesday 6 May 2025**

Cllr English thanked everyone for attending.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.55pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Chairman  
Date: 6 May 2025