



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 6 January 2026 in the Meeting Room, 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 six members of the public.

Cllr English welcomed everyone to the meeting

Public Time

The meeting was adjourned for the Public Time

A question was raised about the Highways consultation.

The meeting was reconvened

1. Councillor Vacancy

No applications had been received.

2. Apologies.

Apologies had been received from Cllr Bianca Willmott noted.

Apologies had also been received from County Councillor Sarah Emberson.

3. Declaration of Interest or Lobbying

None declared.

4. Dispensations

None.

5. Items to be taken in closed session

It was agreed that items *8c Play area – to agree the tender process* and *15. To consider Assets of Value to the Community* be taken in closed session.

6. Approval of the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2 December 2025

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 2 December 2025 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)

Cllr English reported that responses had been submitted to recent MBC consultations.

7. Highways

Cllr Maclaren reported that there had been two meetings with Kent Highways in December.

Helen Whately MP is still championing Operation Mini Brock.

There have been concerns about the impact of the Bearsted Road Improvement Scheme on Detling.

The 20mph consultation has concluded and residents are in favour of the scheme. Kent Highways has produced a design plan and have been asked to reduce the costs and make a couple of changes so that it starts before the traffic gets to the village. This will need to be ratified.

The Speed Indicator Devices still have not been delivered and the poles have yet to be installed.

Concern remains about the speed of vehicles in Hockers Lane, Kent Highways will not extend the 20mph zone. However, they have agreed to install signs at both ends warning of pedestrians in the road. Safety improvements for White Hill Road have been considered by Kent Highways, speeding vehicles is not an issue but the characteristics of the road.

The parking consultation does not have a conclusive result and there were not many responses. Since Maidstone Borough Council conducted a parking survey the problem has worsened, there are now a lot of commercial vehicles parking and this is causing problems. The matter will be discussed by the Highways and Transportation Working Group and Full Council. Requests have been made for a car park and while the Rochester bridge Trust is amenable, the problem is funding and who will use the car park. The Council is looking at other parking in the village as well.

Cllr English said safety must be paramount over parking; Kent Highways has started to implement corner protection schemes to tackle problems caused by inconsiderate parking. If a resident parking scheme is implemented, the Borough Council would be responsible for the permits and enforcement.

Cllr Maclaren said there had been a Highways Improvement Plan meeting with Kent Highways and KCCllr Sarah Emberson to discuss items on the previous plan which had been agreed and also new items. Kent Highways agreed that the road should be gritted because of the school bus however, last weekend the slip lane had not been gritted. They will not refresh the double yellow lines outside the Tudor Gateway because there is no Traffic Regulations Order (TRO), but it was agreed that this would be included in the next TRO. It will cost £4,000 for the work and the TRO.

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

8. Open Spaces

a) To receive an update

Cllr Maclaren reported that there had not been a meeting of the Open Spaces Working Group. Some trees have come down in Monks Meadow and Horish Woods and these have been cleared by the wardens. A visual check of the play area has been completed with no issues.

Cllr English said that it has been established that Horish Woods is a Landscape Site. Maidstone Borough Council is looking for sites to be included in landscape protection. Monks meadow does not have the same landscape and biodiversity but could be included.

Cllr English requested permission to submit Horish Woods and Monks Meadow for inclusion in the Landscape Character Assessment: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

The public notice board is looking shabby and could be budgeted for replacement.

Cllr English reported that he had raised with Maidstone Borough Council the possibility of a bin at Jades crossing, this will require consent from Kent Highways.

The fence at the viewpoint is falling into disrepair.

ACTION: Clerk to report.

The salt bin at the viewpoint has been replaced but the old one has not been removed.

ACTION: Clerk to report.

b) Strategically Important Play Areas

Cllr Maclaren informed members that she had attended a Maidstone Borough Council training session on play areas; the Council has lots of parks and also pays for park maintenance in some parishes. The Parish Council can contact the Parks Department for assistance.

c) Play area – to agree the tender process

Deferred to end of meeting.

9. Visitors

a) Police

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

At present, we do not have any significant matters to report for Detling, as there have been very few incidents or concerns raised with us recently which require our attention. A lot of weather-related calls for trees down, and broken-down vehicles.

I have just sent out a MyCommunityVoice message reminding residents of driving in adverse weather conditions, so perhaps this can be reiterated. I note that on the Detling Facebook group there was discussion around Church Lane towards the A249 and the ice, with some vehicles taking it upon themselves to use the alternate carriageway. Perhaps my MyCommunityVoice message is a timely reminder of sensible driving. Hopefully Highways will grit the area sufficiently tonight.

We have been seeing another spike in theft from motor vehicle offences, particularly small change left visible in vehicles, sunglasses, and numberplates from the exterior of vehicles. This has been district-wide and not specifically Detling however.

We will, of course, continue to monitor the area and remain available should any issues arise. Please do not hesitate to contact us if there is anything specific the PC would like us to address.

b) Borough Councillor

MBCllr Thompson reported that the Landscape Character Assessment consultation concludes on 11 January, Detling areas need to be submitted. MBCllr Harwood has included the Planning Inspector's report on Lynch Bank in the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Development Plan consultation; Detling Parish Council has responded to the consultation.

10. Correspondence

Hockers Farm- it was noted that residents had copied the Council into emails sent to the developer following a leaflet distributed in the village. The emails sent to the developer will help them to draft their planning application.

FOI request- this has been responded to.

Parking survey- issues were raised and the resident had been invited to the meeting.

11. Planning

a) Hockers Farm

Cllr English said that currently there is no planning application.

MBCllr Thompson said that he had invited the developer to have a pre-application meeting with Maidstone Borough Council planning.

b) Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Development Plan Document Consultation
Cllr English reported that he had submitted comments, there is still time to add further comments.

12. Financial Matters:

a) Finance report

Noted

b) To review and adopt Budget for 2025-26

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to set the budget at £53,946.

c) To set the Precept for 2025-26

Deferred

d) Invoices for payment

Cheque no	Payee	Reason	Nett	VAT	Total
500262	DCK Payroll	Payroll	31.50	6.30	£37.80
500263	Detling Village Hall	Room hire			£24.00
500264	Administration	Expenses			£58.91
500265	Cancelled				
500266	Staff Costs				
500267	AJ Gallaghers Insurance Brokers	Insurance			£2135.66
500268	Staff Costs				

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

e) To consider membership of CPRE

Cllr Thompson **PROPOSED** a one-year membership at £60: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

13. Village Hall Lease

The Clerk reported that the Village Hall management Committee has appointed solicitors and that she had chased Gullands twice to respond to them.

ACTION: Clerk to chase.

14. Speedwatch

Cllr Jubb reported that sessions have been suspended due to inclement weather, they will resume when conditions permit.

Date of next Parish Council Meeting– Tuesday 3 February 2026

Cllr English thanked everyone for attending.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** that 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 the play area upgrade and Assets of Value to the Community.

Public session of meeting closed at 9pm.

8c Play area – to agree the tender process

Councillors agreed the timeline for the tendering process.

15. To consider Assets of Value to the Community

Councillors agreed to apply for listing as Assets of Value to the Community on four sites in the parish.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Chairman

Date: 3 February 2026