



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 3 June 2025 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 County Councillor Sarah Emberson, PC Ben Cox, and 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 asked about Horish Woods; Queensway alley; the Tudor gate; and first aiders in the village.

The meeting was reconvened

1. Councillor Vacancy

Cllr English reported that there are residents who have expressed an interest in being co-opted to the Council.

2. Apologies.

All Members were present.

3. Declaration of Interest. or Lobbying

None were declared.

4. Dispensations

5. There were none.

6. Items to be taken in closed session

None identified.

7. Approval of the minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 6 May 2025

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

8. Visitors

a) Police

PC Cox reported that there are two Police Officers and a PCSO on the team; there have been few call outs to the parish. The team supports the Speed Watch group and can offer training. Cllr Maclaren said there had been an incident at the weekend involving youths throwing stones and damaging cars, they were not local young people.

PC Cox said this was likely to be catapults which are not illegal to own. The more reports of incidents the more the Police can respond; in an emergency 999 should be called.

Cllr Maclaren asked if the Police are aware of problems with quad bikes and the damage caused to Jade's Bridge.

PC Cox said the Police are aware but need to have descriptions of bikes and riders, including helmets and clothing. Neighbourhood Watch used to be bigger but now there is only one co-ordinator for West Division covering Maidstone, Tunbridge Wells and Sevenoaks. People are encouraged to sign up to My Community Voice, which includes Neighbourhood Watch, to receive key messages and local information.

Cllr English said My Community Voice is an excellent tool for disseminating information.

Cllr English thanked PC Cox for attending and for his report.

b) County Councillor

County Councillor Emberson reported that the new administration is currently organising the committee. She is here to serve and help everyone. She is concerned about the over-development in the area; anti-social behaviour; and to protect the countryside for future generations.

Cllr English thanked KCCllr Emberson for attending.

c) Borough Councillor

MBCllr Thompson reported that the Supplementary Planning Document for the Lidsing development is due on 12 June; it is part of the Local Plan and Ward members are liaising with Medway Council to get the best value out of the process.

Maidstone's Big Day out is on 14 June and will promote local green spaces for local people.

It has taken nearly a year to get the massive fly-tip by the aerodrome cleared.

The Planning and Healthier Stronger Communities Policy Advisory Committee will discuss the Detling Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and boundary extension on 4 June.

Cllr English said the Committee will not make a decision on this document but will make a recommendation to Cllr Tony Harwood, the Cabinet Member, who will make the decision in a few weeks' time.

#- Does Detling have a village plan?

Cllr English said the Council has discussed whether to draw up a Neighbourhood Plan. If the village does not want further substantial development, urbanisation, there is no point in having a Neighbourhood Plan. If the village is looking for development it would need a Neighbourhood Plan; but if we do not want development we do not need a Neighbourhood Plan as it would focus on where development would be. If we have a housing plan we would commit to further development. The problem with planning at the moment is that it is biased towards delivery.

Cllr English said he was surprised that some people are now requesting a Neighbourhood Plan as he thought that Detling did not want development.

Cllr Maclaren said there were plans for three sites in the village to be developed, one site for twenty-five units at the back of The Croft was turned down.

Cllr English said that it should not be assumed that when there is an accepted Local Neighbourhood Plan, other sites would not be taken forward. The Parish Council can look to see what could be developed. It would be a useful initial step to get some idea of costing.

Cllr Maclaren said the Council needs to find out what residents want for the parish.

Item for next agenda.

9. Correspondence

Detling Village Hall Management Committee

Cllr English reported the Council had suggested that the lease on the Village Hall could be for fifty years to help with future grant applications, the Committee has agreed and requests the new lease should include break clauses after ten, twenty-five and forty years.

Councillors **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to the break clauses.

Cllr English reported that there had been a meeting with Jeff Kitson, Head of Parking Services Maidstone Borough Council, and this will be discussed with the Village Hall Management Committee.

10. Planning

a) Ref: 24/503177/FULL PINS reference: APP/U2235/W/25/3363879

Proposal: Siting of 4no. additional mobile homes for Gypsy/Traveller occupation, retention of existing mobile home and day room (mobile home), and erection of storage building (Part Retrospective). Location: Lynch Bank Farm Detling Hill Detling

Cllr English informed members that the appeal hearing will be held on 15 July 2025 at the Town Hall. As a bare minimum the Planning Inspector should be aware of the situation.

ACTION: Cllr English to attend.

b) Rural Exception Sites

Cllr English said there had been interest from a planning agent commissioned by Maidstone Borough Council regarding rural exception sites to be developed for local needs housing. The initial response was that the Council did not want to bring forward any rural exception sites as we might get sites developed where we would not want development. If we consult with residents regarding a Neighbourhood Plan, it could be considered whether local housing needs are met.

11. Financial Matters:

a) Finance report

The Clerk reported that the internal audit has taken place. An application for a grant towards the play area has been made to the Cobtree Trust. The bank reconciliation was agreed.

b) Invoices for payment

Cheque no	Payee	Reason	Nett	VAT	Total
500215	DCK Payroll	Year end Payroll	30.00	6.00	£36.00
			31.50	6.30	<u>£37.80</u>
		Total			£73.80
500216	Administration	Expenses			£72.30
500217-8	Staff costs				

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

c) Annual Governance Statement- To agree the statement

Councillors considered and agreed the Annual Governance Statement. The statement was duly signed by Cllr English and the Clerk.

d) Annual Return for Year End 31 March 2025- To receive and to consider the adoption of end of year return

Councillors considered the Accounting Statement end of year return 2024-25 and **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept it. The statement was duly signed by Cllr English.

e) Independent Internal Auditor's report

To be received.

f) Review of Financial Regulations

Cllr English said the Financial Regulations need to be amended in respect of procurement thresholds and the website name.

12. Highways

Cllr Maclaren reported that there is now a new Highways and Transportation Working Group and a resident has come forward to join the group.

A meeting was held with Jeff Kitson of Maidstone Borough Council and a parking monitoring survey is being carried out. The report will help identify any options for parking restrictions which might benefit Detling. However, his view was that restricting parking would most likely just move the problem elsewhere in the village. Furthermore, the bays would reduce the amount of parking in the village. Parking remains a concern and all options are being explored for resolution.

The Village Hall Management Committee has requested a meeting to discuss parking provision. In order to provide this we would need a viable site and grant funding.

The damaged steps on Jade's have repeatedly been reported to KCC Highways for repair. Currently, the footpath to the steps is closed. To alleviate the repeated damage problem and quad bikes using footbridge the Highways and Transportation Working Group will discuss the placement of bollards to restrict access widths both sides of the bridge and send proposals to KCC Highways.

Reports have been made to chase:

Central reservation grass cutting on A249

Line painting No Entry Signs at Jades/ A249

Vegetation cutting millennium sign area

Blocked drain The Street

Damaged sign - Princes Way

We still await the installation of the No Through Road sign; the area by the bridge which needs tarmac; and installation of the SID.

Two emails have been sent chasing the KCC Highways Engineer in relation to lack of drainage, and maintenance to Jades Bridge. This matter is ongoing.

Two other signs in the village have been reinstalled by the Parish.

Please report any Highways concerns on the KCC Highways fault reporting system.

Cllr English thanked Cllr Maclaren for her sterling work.

13. Open Spaces

Cllr English reported that the Open Spaces Working Group had met with Pennies Nursery regarding their proposal to site a bug hotel in Horish Woods.

Cllr Maclaren said Gallaghers have offered boulders to protect the verge by Horish Woods but concern was raised regarding liability if a vehicle might be damaged. A meeting of the Open Spaces Working Group will be arranged,

14. Speed Watch

Cllr Jubb said the team has considerably reduced numbers and new members are urgently needed.

15. To consider Assets of Value to the Community

Cllr English said the report is waiting to be proof-read.

Cllr English thanked everyone for attending.

Date of next Parish Council Meeting– Tuesday 1 July 2025

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Chairman

Date: 1 July 2025