



## Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 1 October 2024 in Detling Village Hall

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

Also present were Sue King and Pieter De Villiers (MBC Planning Enforcement) 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 requested an update on the footpath at Queens Way; the car at the top of The Street; and the Council's cupboard in the hall.

*The Meeting was reconvened.*

### **1. Apologies.**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Chris Evernden; apologies noted.

### **2. Declaration of Interest. or Lobbying**

None were declared.

### **3. Dispensations**

None.

### **4. Items to be taken in closed session**

None identified.

*7.08pm Cllr Thompson arrived*

### **5. Visitors**

Sue King and Pieter De Villiers gave a presentation on Planning Enforcement and answered questions.

*ACTION: Clerk to include information regarding reporting a planning breach in the Newsletter.*

### **6. Approval of the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 3 September 2024**

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

Cllr Godding **PROPOSED** to accept the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 3 September 2024; **SECONDED** by Cllr Thompson: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**. Cllr English duly signed the minutes.

b) Matters arising from the minutes (except those issues appearing under specific headings)  
All matters on the agenda.

## **7. Visitors**

### a) Police

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

Following on from my previous report for September's meeting, I have continued to conduct patrols of the area to identify and disrupt criminality.

A colleague and I recently stopped a suspicious vehicle on the Pilgrims Way heading from Detling towards Thurnham in the early hours. The vehicle had been evasive of Police and was acting in a suspicious manner. When spoken with the occupants explained that they were lost, but when challenged agreed that their actions could be perceived as questionable. We'll never know whether that engagement prevented incidents occurring that evening, but we can hope our presence acted as a deterrent.

Additional patrols have been undertaken in relation to nuisance off-road bikes and quadbikes using public footpaths and byways across the Downs. I have conducted mobile patrols of a number of the footpaths from Bredhurst down into Detling to identify the most commonly used trails, as well as proactive patrols of the Pilgrims Way in both directions.

Enquiries were completed on behalf of the Metropolitan Police relating to two stolen vehicles believed to be in the general area of Detling. Acting on information received from the Met, officers located a 'chop shop' actively being used in the dismantling of stolen vehicles. Parts from several stolen vehicles were located and a stolen vehicle seized for forensic enquiries to be carried out. This information has been shared locally, and the forensic opportunities passed back to our Metropolitan colleagues for further investigation. A My Community Voice message has been sent to all residents registered on the site with crime prevention and safeguarding for their vehicles. Any residents not signed up already, can do so at <https://www.mycommunityvoicekent.co.uk/>.

I am pleased to see additional Community Speed Watch sessions being conducted in the area. The statistics generated from these sessions help inform Police of the problem areas, and the sorts of speeds being identified on the roads. This will help me to access support from other departments including the Safety Camera Partnership and Road Safety Unit. Thank you for your assistance in this. I will be looking to conduct additional Police speed checks in the problem areas.

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

### b) Borough Councillor

MBCllr Thompson reported that the Policy Advisory Committee was due to consider some Conservation Area Reviews, including Detling's. A group of Detling Parish Councillors have reviewed the document. The Working Group has agreed to extend the Conservation Area and to look after the village as much as possible.

The Policy Advisory Committee will review the Development Planning document which will go to Council and then out for public consultation on 2 December.

Cllr English informed Members that the Climate Transition, Corporate and Environmental Services Policy Advisory Committee has discussed issues with the garden waste bins, the subscription for all householders will start on 1 July and this will simplify the administration.

### c) County Councillor

Cllr English said KCCllr Prendergast has requested that she and Highways Officers be invited to the Co-ordinated Parishes Traffic Group.

Cllr Maclaren said she had raised this with the Chair of the group who felt there was nothing to discuss at the moment. Issues have been raised including the new Aldi store and the Lenham Heath and Lidsing developments; these will be raised at the meeting with the MP.

## **8. Correspondence**

### Cricket Club

Cllr English said there will be a village cricket match on the Spring Bank Holiday.

*ACTION: Clerk to request further details.*

### Traffic and congestion

Cllr Maclaren said concern has been raised regarding the increase in traffic on the A249 and the rat running through the village. The Council is very aware of the situation and Speed Watch has helped. Unfortunately, the traffic cannot be prevented from coming through the village.

Cllr English said the problem in Maidstone is that Kent County Council will not put in the measures that they do elsewhere, this needs to be challenged. It is a financial issue. KCC has had the ability to take out moving traffic enforcement but has not taken the opportunity.

## **9. Planning**

Ref: 24/503568/FULL

Address: 8 Hockers Lane Detling Maidstone Kent ME14 3JL

Proposal: Installation of air con unit to side elevation.

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

Ref: 24/503363/FULL Address: Woodsvie Matts Hill Road Detling ME9 7XA

Erection of single storey side and rear extensions including solar panels, changes to fenestration and creation of additional parking area. Demolition of existing garage, summer house and single storey flat roof projection. (Re-submission of previously approved application 23/503576/FULL).

Cllr Thompson **PROPOSED** this matter be dealt with under the officer's delegated power: **SECONDED** by Cllr Maclaren: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

## **10. Financial Matters:**

### a) Finance report

Councillors noted the report and agreed the half-year bank reconciliation.

### b) Invoices for payment

<b>Cheque no</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Nett</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Total</b>
500138	DCK Payroll Solutions Ltd	Payroll fees	30.00	6.00	<b>£36.00</b>
500139	Hopkins	AED aftercare and governance	207.90	41.58	<b>249.48</b>
500140	TMPI Ltd	Play area inspection	220.00	44.00	<b>£264.00</b>
500141	Mrs W Licence	Reimbursement of laptop repair	379.00		<b>£379.00</b>
500142	Mr G Godding	Expenses	7.10		<b>£17.10</b>
500143	Mrs L Maclaren	Expenses	34.20		<b>£34.20</b>
500144	KALC	Councillor Training	140.00	28.00	<b>£168.00</b>
500145	Administration		69.58	1.17	<b>£70.75</b>
500146 - 7	Staff costs				
500148	Farvis Mazars LLP	Limited assurance review	210.00	42.00	<b>£252.00</b>
500149	Detling Village Hall	Room Hire	24.00		<b>£24.00</b>

500150	CANCELLED				
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Cllr English **PROPOSED** to make the payments; **SECONDED** by Cllr Godding: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

c) Conclusion of audit

The conclusion of the limited assurance review was noted. Cllr English thanked the Clerk for her work on the audit.

d) To consider quotations for Honours Board

Councillors considered the quotations.

Cllr English **PROPOSED** to accept the quotation from Creative Honours Boards Ltd: **SECONDED** by Cllr Godding: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

**11. Highways**

a) To receive an update

Cllr Maclaren reported that KCC Highways has been formally asked to start the consultation process for double yellow lines at Jade’s Crossing.

A meeting was held with a KCC Highways drainage engineer to look at the drainage on the south side of Church Lane. The Rochester Bridge Trust has agreed in principle to allow the excess surface water to be drained onto its land. Options are being considered. The drainage repairs undertaken at both junctions into the village are working really well, and regular cleaning and maintenance will be undertaken going forward. Opportunities will be taken to do this when the A249 is closed for other works

Gritting of the village and Church Lane was raised with the engineer who agreed black ice might be an issue if no drainage solution was found. The Parish Council will ask for the gritting lorries to resume the previous regime when gritting the slip lane to come through the village and grit Church Lane at the same time as this is a bus route for school children.

The *No Through Road* sign at the top of The Street is still being considered by the survey team and hopefully will be reinstalled in the near future.

Faults are being reported on the KCC portal and the important issues have been dealt with. The damaged steps on the bridge near the shop are still to be repaired.

KCC Highways has offered to pay for Speed Watch equipment for the Parish Council; this offer has been accepted.

The installation of the SIDs cannot take place until neighbouring parishes have had their SID locations approved.

KCC Highways is unable to provide mirrors opposite Queensway due to the nature of the verge which is tree covered or privately owned. The verge to the east was reported and cleared earlier this year to improve the sight lines. The only remaining bushes are on private land and whilst these have been reported to Highways for remedial work, as they are not in the carriageway there is no compulsion to have them cut back or removed as they are not on the highway. However, if they start to encroach on the highway they can be reported on the Fault Reporting System.

Accident data was requested from KCC Highways to help evaluate the impact of the average 50 mph speed check installation. However, the data provided only reported injury accidents and was only available until the end of June. None of the recent accidents at Jades, the two up the hill and one at Scragged Oak, were recorded nor any southbound on the A249 Detling Hill. None were recorded at the Church Lane Junction for the last year. We need to keep our own data.

Residents have raised concern regarding the increased traffic flows and rat running as a result of the M2 Junction 5 improvements being completed. The Council is acutely aware of the need for urgent improvements to the Junction 7 M20 roundabout, and the reinstatement of the Bearsted Road Improvement Scheme, and the matter is being raised again with the Co-

ordinated Parishes Traffic Group, our County Councillor and at a meeting with Helen Whately on the 8 November.

The Highways & Transportation Working Group will lose a member soon, the vacancy needs to be filled.

*ACTION: Item for Newsletter*

b) Co-ordinated Parishes Traffic Group - to receive an update

Cllr Maclaren said there will be a Co-ordinated Parishes Traffic Group meeting on Thursday and all issues will be raised.

Cllr English thanked Cllr Maclaren for her report and for her hard work on highways.

## **12. Open Spaces**

a) Monks Meadow and Horish Woods -To receive an update

Cllr English said the Open Spaces Working Group will be considering these areas.

b) To co-opt members to the Open Spaces Working Group

Cllr English said the Council needs to ensure that everyone will be given the opportunity to put themselves forward for co-option. Leaflets will be delivered to houses which do not receive the newsletter.

c) Play Area Inspection Report

Councillors **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept the report.

d) To consider quotations for replacement swing seat.

Councillors considered the quotations.

Cllr Godding **PROPOSED** to accept the quotation of £300.03 from Safeplay Playground Services Ltd: **SECONDED** by Cllr English: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

e) To consider tree survey and maintenance

Waiting to receive quotations.

## **13. Community Resilience Plan**

Cllr Thompson said that he and Cllr Godding will be co-ordinating the Community Resilience Plan.

## **14. Arrangements for the Remembrance Day Service**

Cllr English and Cllr Godding agreed to help with the stewarding of the event.

It was **AGREED** unanimously to donate £40 for a poppy wreath.

Cllr English thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

## **15. Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 5 November 2024**

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

Signed as a true record of the meeting

Chairman

Date: 5 November 2024