



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 6 June 2026 in Detling Village Hall

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

Also present were County Councillor Sarah Emberson and seven members of the public.

Cllr Houlihan welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked all for attending.

Public Time

The meeting was adjourned for the Public Time

The village hall lease was raised by a member of the public.

The Clerk will arrange a meeting with representatives of the Village Hall Management Committee.

The meeting was reconvened

1. Councillor Vacancy

No applications have been received.

2. Apologies.

All Members were present.

3. Declaration of Interest. or Lobbying

None were declared..

4. Dispensations

None

5. Items to be taken in closed session

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** that in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and by reason of the confidential nature of the remainder of the business, the Press and the Public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of items 18, 19, 20 and 21.

6. Approval of the minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 6 May 2026

Cllr Maclaren **PROPOSED** to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 6 May 2026 as a true record, **SECONDED** by Cllr Houlihan: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**. The minutes were duly signed by Cllr Houlihan.

7. Highways

a) To receive an update

Cllr Maclaren thanked KCC Highways and KCCllr Emberson for attending meetings in the parish concerning safety issues in the village. The Automatic Traffic Counter (ATC) baselines have been agreed for the upper part of the village. The Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) was submitted in January and KCC Highways is now looking at our key issues related to safety on Hockers Lane; extension of the footpath outside the pub; and double yellow lines on the corner of the pub and opposite side of the road from Pilgrims Way to the entrance to Tudor Gate; to improve road safety on the bend.

KCC Highways and KCCllr Emberson attended a meeting in Hockers Lane regarding safety issues at the bends. KCC Highways has drafted a design plan. The Parish Council requested a speed limit reduction to 40mph for the bends, but there was no crash data to support it.

There was another meeting in White Hill Road following several recent accidents, a design plan is being drafted for this area.

The Police have declined to use probationers to deter drivers from flouting the restricted access to the village. Five hundred and ninety-nine people came in near Jade's Crossing in one hour; we assumed 1/3 of the traffic went out through Church Lane but it was 54%; this is very dangerous. The Council is grateful to KCC Highways for their support; KCC Highways is looking at closing the junction southbound.

The Speed Indication Device (SID) has been installed, the data after four weeks showed 30,979 vehicles came through the village, most complied with the speed limit, and 11% travelled over the limit. The SID will go to another parish on 12 June.

Speedwatch still operates and is catching drivers.

A letter has been sent to KCC Highways, National Highways and our Member of Parliament regarding the problems at junction 7 and the Council has suggested that this part of the A249 be taken over by National Highways.

The Highways Working Group will run a campaign to educate drivers regarding the restricted access to the village. The 20 mph scheme should be installed in the village (except Hockers Lane) this summer.

There have been issues at the Scragged Oak Road junction with the A249. KCC Highways has said that the accident data is insufficient for intervention; more evidence is needed. This may go on the next HIP if necessary.

b) To consider KCC Highways' proposal for improved signs for Hockers Bends

Cllr Maclaren informed Councillors that KCC Highways will install additional signs at the bends: three sets of markings to slow down the traffic; chevrons around the bend; signage warning of pedestrians and no footpath; the warning of horse riders will remain.

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

8. Open Spaces

Cllr Maclaren thanked Mr Tony Taylor for his help on the Open Spaces Working Group and for all his help in the village for a number of years; Mr Taylor has been a valued member of the Open Spaces Working Group.

Monks Meadow and Horish Woods are fine. A woodland management plan is being prepared to support an application to the Rural Payments Agency for funding. A bid has been submitted to the Woodland Trust for a hundred free sapling trees which is hoped can be planted in Horish Woods as a Community Planting Day in November.

The Kent Wildlife Trust is addressing the disrepair and recent damage caused by motorcyclists in The Larches.

Quotations are being obtained for work on the Tudor gate; the Council will then need to seek grant funding.

Four tenders were received for the upgrade of the play area. A grant fund application has been submitted; the results should be known in September, and if successful, the contract will be awarded.

Playground inspections are continuing.

The litter bin on the other side has been put in the wrong place and will be moved.

Cllr English said he will check with Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) regarding the bin on the Pilgrims Way.

Cllr Maclaren thanked Mr Trace Heard for obtaining signs and bollards for litter picking.

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

9. Water supplies and sewage network

Cllr Maclaren said the issues started with overflows of sewerage; there was a productive meeting with Southern Water, and there have been no further spills in Monks Meadow. Southern Water has installed an alarm at Monks Meadow. There have been three other spills which have been reported and dealt with.

There have been five South East Water pipe bursts which have been resolved; the damage was caused by tankers which also cause a problem for residents.

Cllr Maclaren **PROPOSED** that a follow-up letter be sent to Southern Water and also a letter to South East Water regarding other issues; **SECONDED** by Cllr Houlihan: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

ACTION: Cllr Maclaren to draft letters.

10. Visitors

a. Borough Councillor

MBCllr Thompson reported that residents continue to contact him regarding the proposed development at Hockers Farm.

MBCllr Thompson reported that he had raised a list of concerns with South East Water; the Borough Council will write to South East Water regarding the issues in the area.

Maidstone Borough Council Enforcement Officers are currently dealing with live cases in Detling.

Potholes in the area are being repaired. The impact of the A249 on local villages needs to be resolved.

b. County Councillor

KCCllr Emberson reported that she has been part of a short Short-Focused Inquiry into the Failure in Water Supply, looking at the failures and impact of water issues and the need for resilience and accountability; the Kent Water Resilience Partnership has been announced to work with Local Authorities and OFWAT. The first meeting will be in September.

There will be feedback to Central Government regarding development and the water companies not being a consultee; the Kent MPs are involved as well.

Kent County Council is looking into ways to deal with flytipping.

There is a lot going on with Highways and progress is being made.

Cllr English said Councils across the country are aware of overdevelopment and the impact on infrastructure, including water, MPs say the infrastructure should be in place before houses but the new regulations mean that what power Planning Authorities have will disappear. Every Local Plan has been forced to have more houses. It is not the Local Councils who are responsible for this but MPs.

Cllr English **PROPOSED** that a motion be put to the KALC AGM regarding the problem; **SECONDED** by Cllr Thompson: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

11. Correspondence

No matters to discuss.

12. Planning

a) Ref: 26/500485/FULL

Land At Hockers Farm Orchard View Detling Kent ME14 3BF

Proposal: Demolition of existing structures and erection of 25(no) dwellings and associated car ports and parking (with 40% affordable housing onsite), erection of 2-storey building to be used as children's nursery and associated parking, provision of open space, biodiversity net gain area and landscape buffering, and associated earthworks, with access from Orchard View.

Cllr English informed Councillors that MBCllr Jones has referred the application to the MBC Planning Committee for determination; no date has been set yet.

b) Ref: 26/501781/LBC

Address: 19 The Street Detling Kent ME14 3JT

Listed Building Consent for relocation of an existing domestic boiler to the loft space adjacent to the bedroom (works completed), and the proposed installation of a new flue and cowl to serve the boiler, exiting through the rear roof slope. Re-pointing works to mortar.

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

c) Ref: 26/501780/FULL

Address: 19 The Street Detling Kent ME14 3JT

Proposal: Relocation of an existing domestic boiler to the loft space adjacent to the bedroom, proposed installation of a new flue and cowl to serve the boiler, exiting through the rear roof slope. (Part Retrospective)

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

13. Financial Matters:

a) Finance report

The Precept £43,075 has been received. The Independent Internal Auditor completed his audit on 8 May and has submitted his report. The AGAR will need to be agreed and signed at tonight's meeting. A VAT reclaim for £257.35 has been submitted.

The grant application to the FCC for £100,000 has been submitted and further information was submitted.

The Cricket Club did not bank the grant the Council made last November and when they presented the cheque recently it was out of date; after checking with the bank, a new cheque was issued out of meeting to replace the earlier one.

Cllr Maclaren **PROPOSED** the budget be added to the website with a caveat that it is subject to change.

b) Invoices for payment

Cheque no	Payee	Reason	Nett	VAT	Total
500296	Detling Cricket Club <i>Paid out of meeting</i>	Reimbursement of grant (chq no 500255- out of date)			£500.00
500297	Cancelled				
500298	Mr L Robbins	Independent Internal Audit			£140.00
500299	Administration	Expenses Toner Total	61.93 64.06	12.82	£138.81
500300-1	Staff costs				
500302	DCK Payroll	Payroll	31.50	6.30	£37.80

Councillors **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 Houlihan and the Clerk.

d) Annual Return for Year End 31 March 2026- To receive and to consider the adoption of end of year return

Councillors considered the Accounting Statement end of year return 2025-26 and **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept it. The statement was duly signed by Cllr Houlihan.

e) Independent Internal Auditor's report

Cllr noted the report and thanked Mr Robbins for his assistance.

f) Review of banking arrangements

It was agreed unanimously to defer this item to the closed session.

14. Village Vision

a) To set up a working group to progress a vision for the village

Cllr Maclaren said a vision for the village was raised at the Annual Parish Meeting; this will not be a Neighbourhood Plan or a Development Plan but to see where the village is going. The idea is to have a group of Parish Councillors and residents to consider a vision for the parish.

ACTION: Item for newsletter,

b) To agree terms of reference for the Village Vision Working Group

15. Speedwatch

Cllr Jubb reported to Members that regular Speedwatch sessions are held in three locations in Hockers Lane. One session recorded eighteen speeding vehicles; more volunteers would enable more sessions to be held. Cllr Jubb thanked Mr Trace Heard for storing and recalibrating the equipment and recharging the battery.

Cllr Houlihan thanked Cllr Jubb and the team for running the Speedwatch sessions in the village.

16. Communications Strategy

Cllr Houlihan said it was suggested at the Annual Parish Meeting that a communications sub-group be formed to inform local residents as to what the Parish Council does.

Cllr Jubb asked whether anyone would join the group?

Cllr English said Boxley and Bearsted Parish Councils have fifteen Councillors and are able to facilitate extra committees. Councillors will consider ways that the Council could communicate with the parish that would not necessitate a committee, given its much smaller number of Councillors and current open position.

ACTION: Clerk and Councillors to consider further.

17. Digital Friends - Digital Champion Network

Cllr Willmott reported that she will meet with Digital Kent; they will set up a community hub, possibly in September.

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 following items:

18. Assets of Value to the Community

The nominations have been submitted.

19. Tudor Gate

Contractors are making a site visit before submitting a tender.

20. Village Hall Lease

Solicitors for both sides are dealing with the matter.

21. Hocker's Bends

Various issues were discussed

22. Review of banking arrangements

Councillors agreed to remain with the Coop Bank and to transfer money into the Business Reserve Account and leave £5,000 in the Current Account.

Date of next Meeting: Tuesday, 7 July 2026

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.23pm.

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Chairman

Date: