



Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 4 February 2025 in Detling Village Hall

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

Also present were thirteen members of the public.

Cllr English welcomed everyone to the meeting

Public Time

No matters were raised.

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Cllr Stephen Thompson, at another meeting.
Apologies had also been received from County Councillor Shellina Prendergast and PC Ben Cox.

2. Councillor Vacancy

a) To Consider applications for the co-option of Councillor

Cllr English said there was currently a vacancy for a Parish Councillor.

b) To appoint to Working Groups

Cllr English **PROPOSED** that Cllr Houlihan be appointed to the Highways & Transportation Working Group: **SECONDED** by Cllr Maclaren: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

3. Declaration of Interest. or Lobbying

Cllr Godding declared an interest in 9b as he had been made aware of the facts of the case and attended a site meeting; he did not comment at that meeting.

4. Dispensations

There were none.

5. Items to be taken in closed session

Cllr English **PROPOSED** that item 15 Villager of the Year be taken in closed session: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

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

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 7 January 2025; **SECONDED** by Cllr Maclaren: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**. Cllr English duly signed the minutes as a true record

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

7. Visitors

a) Police

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

Since our last report, we have collaboratively worked with Maidstone Borough Council to address local planning enforcement issues in the ward.

With regards to crime trends, I would like to say that we have had no reported incidents of burglary, however we have seen an increase in theft from motor vehicles. Action around this will include increased Hi visibility patrol targeting any emerging hot spot areas. The district has also seen an increase in the theft of motor vehicles. We would like to advise residents to be vigilant regarding any suspicious activity and report accordingly to Kent Police.

Owners of vehicles that have keyless entry we recommend keeping your key as far away from your car as possible and storing the key at a good distance from the windows and doors of your house. This makes it harder for criminals to detect, intercept and amplify your key signal. A Faraday pouch or box uses a metallic lining to block radio waves from your keys so they can't be amplified.

As part of our daily business, we are patrolling the area particularly north of Jades crossing. Nuisance vehicle reports across the byways and footpaths in and around Detling are coming in to us which we appreciate. Please continue to report any sightings with as many details as possible, ideally descriptions of vehicles, offenders and vehicle registration plates, so that research and action can be taken where appropriate.

We will continue to ensure that we are as present as we can be in the area, however unfortunately of late we have been committed with various district operations which have prevented us from being there as much as we would wish to be.

We will be planning a surgery with future date and location to be published on My Community Voice and via the Parish Council.

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

b) Borough Councillor

Cllr English reported that Maidstone Borough Council Environmental Waste Team had seized a vehicle on 21 January concerning an unlicensed waste carrier; the vehicle will be auction off, proceeds will go towards the ongoing work of the team.

A resident raised concern about a van parked outside the church facing oncoming traffic as this had been there for several months.

Cllr Maclaren said the matter has been reported again, unfortunately this has encouraged other vans to park there.

Cllr English said the Government will be making a decision on devolution and whether the Kent County Council elections can be cancelled.

Cllr Maclaren said that there has been a skip going through the village on Saturday, residents can report this anonymously to Maidstone Borough Council.

c) County Councillor

Cllr English reported that there had been a meeting with KCC Highways and KCCllr Shellina Prendergast which was very beneficial.

8. Correspondence

Information Commissioner's Office Decision Notice

Cllr English reported that following a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), on the basis that a requester believed Detling Parish Council did not make a full disclosure; the Commissioner's decision was that the Council had disclosed all held information and the Commissioner did not require further steps to be taken.

9. Planning

a) Ref- 24/505336/FULL

Address: Pollyfields Barn Scragged Oak Road Detling Kent ME14 3HL

Proposal: Part retrospective erection of 3 bay garage with associated turning circle and drive (Amendment to application 19/506427/FULL).

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

b) 25/500129/FULL

Address: Hillside House Pilgrims Way Detling Kent ME14 3EX

Proposal: Erection of a part single storey part two storey side extension with changes to fenestration.

Councillors considered the application and had no objections to the proposal provided it is the current scheme proposed.

10. Financial Matters

a) Finance report

Cllr English **PROPOSED** to accept the finance report; **SECONDED** by Cllr Maclaren: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.**

b) Invoices for payment

Cheque no	Payee	Reason	Nett	VAT	Total
500181	DCK Payroll Solutions Ltd	Payroll fees	30.00	6.00	£36.00
500182	Hopkins	Defibrillator battery	65.75	13.15	£78.90
500183	Administration	Expenses	203.90	25.28	£230.82
500184	Kingfisher Direct	Salt bin	103.54	20.71	£124.25
500185-6	staff				
500187	Detling Village Hall	Meeting room hire			£48.00
500188	Elite Arborists	Tree survey	450.00	90.00	£540.00

Cllr English **PROPOSED** to make the payments; **SECONDED** by Cllr Maclaren: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.**

c) To consider grant request from Detling Short Mat Bowls Club

Councillors considered the request for a grant of £1,000 from the Detling Short Mat Bowls Club towards the purchase of a new short mat bowls mat and noted that there was only £150 in the grant budget for the current financial year.

Cllr English **PROPOSED** to make a grant of £150 to the Bowls Club; **SECONDED** by Cllr Maclaren: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**. (cheque no 500188).

11. Highways

Cllr Maclaren reported that the new lorry prohibition signs have been installed at the top of Hockers Lane. A grit bin has been ordered for Jades Crossing. The grit bin by the war memorial is back in place but may be relocated to the footpath by the Tudor Gate bungalow to allow easier access next winter.

The double yellow lines, at the Hockers Lane/Ware Street junction is still being pursued by Thurnham Parish Council

A meeting was held related to drainage issues on Jades bridge and the gullies are due to be cleared.

Our new Speed Watch equipment, which has been funded by KCC Highways, has now been received and will be used this week.

Numerous fault reports have been raised including the flooding issues in Church Lane and Hockers Lane; the mud in Hockers Lane; reduced access as you enter the 40-mph limit; plus potholes and blocked drains on the road and bridge. KCC Highways is proposing to install grips to alleviate the problem of residual water in Church Lane.

A meeting was held with KCllr Prendergast and the HIP team this afternoon, to discuss a range of Highways issues, to enable the final draft of the 2024/5 HIP to be finalised for submission in the next couple of weeks. We raised numerous strategic issues so that KCC Highways is aware of the impact on the village. Following the recent consultation on the speed limit on the Pilgrims Way, in principle, KCC Highways are prepared to go ahead; the warning sign (pedestrians and horses) has been agreed. Today, Cllr Prendergast told KCC Highways that they must grit the roads off the A249 into Detling because it is a bus route for school children. Maintenance on the A249 has been requested and this will now happen. Residents are encouraged to report issues on the KCC Highways fault reporting portal.

An overview of the more strategic issues facing Detling in relation to Highways such as the impact of three major road improvement schemes in Sittingbourne, the A2 junction improvement, lack of planned improvements for the M20 J7 roundabout and now the planned improvements for Bluebell Hill and the approval of the Thames Crossing, was also provided prior to the meeting.

Cllr English thanked Cllr Maclaren for her sterling work on highways, the Parish Council is finally making progress with the help of KCllr Prendergast.

Cllr Godding said it had been a very constructive meeting. For personal reasons, I am resigning from the Parish Council.

Cllr English thanked Cllr Godding for all he has done for the Parish Council and proposed a vote of thanks.

Cllr Godding left the meeting.

12. Open Spaces

a) To receive report from the Open Spaces Working Group

Cllr English reported that there had been a very productive meeting of the Working Group; a long list of matters has been identified to hopefully improve during the next year. The Working Group looked at the play equipment on the playing field and the arrangements for the management of Monks Meadow and Horish Woods; and also to replace notice boards in a state of disrepair. Bringing about a consistency of style. There will be a site meeting in the next few weeks. The notice board at the top of Scragged Oak Road will be looked at as well. An updated PSPO sign will be obtained from Maidstone Borough Council.

Cllr Maclaren said a notice board will be installed by the shop, this is one that was previously purchased.

b) To consider quotation for grounds maintenance

The specification will be tweaked.

Item for next agenda.

13. Community Resilience Plan

A resident raised concern that there has been suspicious activity in the village and asked if there should be a neighbourhood Watch scheme.

Cllr Maclaren said that residents do look out for their neighbours.

Cllr English said that the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme has not worked well for a number of years. What works well for Parish Councils is My Community Voice which helps people to keep in touch with their local policing team, this needs to be publicised.

Cllr Maclaren said that Kent Police has their own website which is regularly updated and that she puts reports on the village Facebook page.

14. To consider Assets of Value to the Community

Cllr Maclaren said that assets of value to the community can be listed to protect amenities in the village giving residents the option to purchase them if they come up for sale.

Cllr English said potential sites can be discussed at the next meeting in Part 2.

Item for next agenda.

Cllr English thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

15. Villager of the Year

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 Village of the Year Award.

Members approved the recipient for the 2024 Villager of the Year Award.

16. Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 4 March 2025

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.46pm.

Signed as a true record of the meeting

Chairman

Date: 4 March 2025