Minutes of the Meeting of Lenham Parish Council
Held on Wednesday 7th October 2026, 7:30pm at Lenham Community Centre

PRESENT Cllr. J Britt, Chair presiding.

Cllrs. P Culver, H Dale, D Earl, D Garland, K Hammond, S Heeley, J Murray, A Ratcliffe, D Turner, A Walmsley & C Wood.
L Westcott (Clerk & RFO), S Newell (Deputy Clerk and RFO)

Public participation

13x Members of the public present

- One MOP came to give her thanks about the clearance of the bus stop on the A20. Will pass the thanks on to Sarah Emberson. Asks if this will maintenance will be kept up.
- MBC Cllr. Mariela reported on the public liaison with Homes England re heathlands and the community energy programme.

The chair opened the meeting at 19:35.

26/89 Apologies for absence received.
Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. M Michaelas.

26/90 To receive declarations of interest on the agenda, declarations to changes to the Register of Interests, and to consider Requests for dispensations.
There were none.

26/91 To request notification of intention to film, photograph or record any items.
There were none.

26/92 In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, S1, the Council is to determine which items, if any, should be taken with the public and press excluded.
26/98 a & b will be taken in private due to being commercially sensitive.

26/93 To sign as a correct record the minutes of the Lenham Parish Council Meeting on 2nd September.
Cllr. D Garland proposed, Cllr. A Ratcliffe seconded and it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes for the meeting held on 2nd September are a true record and were approved, adopted and signed by the Chair of the Parish Council.

26/94 Progress of resolutions from 2nd September (for information purposes only)
None not on agenda

26/95 To sign as a correct record the minutes of the Extraordinary Lenham Parish Council Meeting on 29th September.
Cllr. A Walmsley proposed, Cllr. D Earl seconded and it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes for the meeting held on 29th September are a true record and were approved, adopted and signed by the Chair of the Parish Council.

26/96 Progress of resolutions from 29th September (for information purposes only).
None not on agenda.

26/97 To consider the proposed Acquisition of Leading Cross Green, Boughton Road as follows:

a. **To consider whether the Parish Council wishes to pursue the acquisition of the land at for the benefit of the residents of the Parish –** Solicitors report circulated included a review of the legal pack that was only made available today. To note: Covenants can only be removed by people who put them in, land not included I MBC Call for Sites, the owner is just looking to recover money to pay debts and the Environmental liability is unknown (not enough time to investigate).
The public consultation had 91 responses, all but one was supportive of LPC bidding for the land.
It was proposed to engage in auction process, a vote was called by the chair: 10 Cllrs in support. 1 Cllr against. 1 Cllr abstained. It was **RESOLVED** to pursue acquisition.

b. **To authorise Mark Presland of DHA to attend the auction and bid on behalf of the Parish Council.** Cllr. J Murray proposed, Cllr. P Culver seconded and it was **RESOLVED** for Mark Presland to attend the auction of behalf of the Parish Council.

c. **To authorise Parish Council Officers to liaise with the solicitor, auctioneer and other relevant parties and, if the Council is successful, to take the necessary steps to progress the purchase and arrange payments in accordance with the Council's resolution.**
Cllr. A Ratcliffe proposed, Cllr. P Culver seconded and it was **RESOLVED** for the delegate steps to officers.

26/98 To further consider the proposed Acquisition of Leading Cross Green, Boughton Road as follows: this item maybe considered without the public and press present – *(This was discussed with press and public excluded)*

a. **To consider accepting donations towards the acquisition of the land - any donation is conditional upon the Parish Council successfully acquiring the land. –** All councillors agreed to accept donations. All donations will be on top of the agreed amount of Parish Council funds.
b. **To determine the maximum amount that the Parish Council is authorised to bid at the auction. –** The chair called for a vote on three proposed amounts and the maximum amount was **RESOLVED**.

26/99 To consider the report from the Staffing Committee

Annual pay rise of 3.3% was noted on all pay scales in line with the NJC.

26/100 To sign as a correct record the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes (F&GP) meeting on 21st September

Cllr. H Dale proposed, Cllr. D Garland seconded and it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes for the meeting held on 21st September are a true record and were approved, adopted and signed by the Chair of the Parish Council.

Recommendations:

a. **To authorise payments for September and note income. –** one additional payment was included for Martine Waghorn of £1794
Cllr. S Heeley proposed, Cllr. A Ratcliffe seconded and it was **RESOLVED** to make all payments for September.
(Details of payments and income tabled in September F&GP minutes)
b. **To approve purchase of replacement dog bin in the Church Yard. (£361.18) -** Cllr. A Walmsley proposed, Cllr. D Garland seconded and it was **RESOLVED** to purchase a new dog waste bin.
c. **To approve purchase of new waste bin at the picnic site. (£502.87 inc VAT.) -** Cllr. D Garland proposed, Cllr. A Walmsley seconded and it was **RESOLVED** to purchase a new waste bin for the Picnic Site.
d. **To consider further information from PPG regarding the grant application for £500. –** Cllr. J Britt declared an interest. Cllr. P Culver proposed, Cllr. A Ratcliffe seconded and it was **RESOLVED** to award £250 to the PPG.
e. **To instruct Qualitree to complete tree works -** Cllr. A Ratcliffe proposed, Cllr. D Garland seconded and it was **RESOLVED** to instruct Qualitree to go ahead with tree works.

26/101 To resolve to receive, review and adopt the External Auditor's Report and action

Cllr. K Hammond proposed, Cllr. A Walmsley seconded and it was **RESOLVED** to note and action the report on the Audited AGAR 2025-26.

The notice of conclusion of audit and the statement of accounts, including the External Auditor's report, have been published on the council website.

26/102 To authorise renewal and payment of LPC Insurance schedule £5733.56

Cllr. J Murray proposed, Cllr. K Hammond seconded and it was **RESOLVED** to authorise payment for insurance.

26/103 To receive the clerk's report for September 2026.

Noted.

26/104 To sign as a correct record the minutes of the Planning and Implementation Committee (P&I) meeting 16th September

Cllr. D Garland proposed, Cllr. K Hammond seconded and it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes for the meeting held on 16th September are a true record and were approved, adopted and signed by the Chair of the P&I Committee.

a. **To consider the planning applications in Appendix A –** please see appendix a comments.

26/105 To consider review and adoption of the LPC Data Audit

To be reviewed with Auditor in line with Cllr C Wood comments.

26/106 To consider specification for steps and gates at Cherry Downs Picnic Site and apply for funding from Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) Programme

Cllr. H Dale reported on the plans for the picnic site. All agreed to go ahead with the grant application.

a. **To review land ownership documents – ACTION** Cllr. A Walmsley to write a letter to KCC to inform them.

26/107 To consider quotes for adjusting headstone at the cemetery. (report/quotes circulated)

Cllr. D Garland proposed, Cllr. A Walmsley seconded and it was **RESOLVED** to instruct Cleverley & Spencer to complete the works to the grave. **ACTION** Officers to instruct works to go ahead.

26/108 To consider purchase of winter pansies up to £400.

Cllr. P Culver proposed, Cllr. K Hammond seconded and it was **RESOLVED** to purchase pansies from Coolings.

26/109 Updates from meetings attended/ planned (for information purposes only)

a. Cllr. J Murray is meeting SOS Cabling this Friday.
b. Cllr. A Walmsley & Cllr. D Garland attended planning refresher training.
c. Cllr. D Turner & Cllr J Britt to attend Speedwatch set up meeting.
d. Cllr. J Britt & A Walmsley attending nursery meeting this Friday.
e. Cllr. K Hammond attended Maidstone KALC meeting.
f. Cllr. A Ratcliffe attending meetings to answer enquires on surfacing projects.
g. Cllr. J Britt attending Heathlands/Meeting with Borough Councillor C Houlihan and meeting with MP H Whately.

26/110 Project Updates (for information purposes only)

- CCTV phase 3 – still waiting on lamppost adoption and new lamppost fixtures.

26/111 To report correspondence received (for information purposes only)

- MoP still complaining about ball games in playpark – Cllrs want to ask mop what exactly he would like us to do?

The meeting closed at 22:15

Signed as a true record on this day 4th November 2026……
Chair of Lenham Parish Council

Appendix A

Application Number	Address	Comment
26/503577/FULL	The Alders Sandway Road Sandway Kent ME17 2LU	Lenham Parish Council objects to this application. We would point out that the land falls within the Natural England GCN Risk Zone – Amber Risk – i.e. that the likelihood of finding GCNs in this area is significant. This has not been reflected in the planning application form and neither has the fact that a tributary of the River Len runs past the rear of the property (possibly the "ditch" mentioned in the application.) The tributary takes the form of a Bourne i.e. will only run in wet weather but will still take any contamination downriver towards Leeds Castle. In addition, our comments made in respect of 24/503992 still very much apply to this totally unsustainable location – these are repeated below. The application site lies in an area of attractive countryside outside both the village Lenham and the hamlet of Sandway. The application site is clearly visible from the public realm along the Sandway Road. Whilst there is a scatter of development, including some residential development, in the vicinity this area is clearly open and mainly undeveloped attractive countryside. It would appear that the current lawful use of the site is agriculture. The spread and form of the development proposed would have a significant harmful effect on the rural character and appearance of the countryside such that the proposal would clearly conflict with development plan policy LPRSP9 which aims to protect the countryside from inappropriate and intrusive development. **Whether sustainable location and accessibility**. Sandway has no facilities and local residents turn to the villages of Lenham and Harrietsham, both rural service centres situated about 1 mile away for their day to day needs. The characteristics of intervening roads are not conducive for walking or cycling. In particular the lane to Lenham is mostly unlit with no footway and has for a large part restricted forward visibility for all uses which makes it generally unsuitable for children and the elderly to walk or cycle along. There are no public transport services at Sandway. Mr David Murray, the Inspector appointed by the government to determine a recent appeal at Warren Lands also at Sandway, considered whether the hamlet was a sustainable location suitable for a gypsy or traveller caravan site. In his decision letter dated as recently as

		eighth of October 2024 concluded as follows at paragraph 27, page 6. *It is inherent that a Gypsy or Traveller way of life is dependent on a regular degree of travel probably by a vehicle. Nevertheless, the proposals are for a dwelling and /or a settled permanent base and this is likely to involve the families having to reach schools services and facilities even when a worker is travelling away. The location of the site away from services and facilities and the lack of practical alternatives to the use of the car means that the proposed dwelling or gypsy/traveller site would still be largely dependent on the use of the car. This would not help achieve a sustainable pattern of growth and both proposals conflict with the policy in the Framework to promote sustainable transport, together with Policy AT2(3) of the LNP (Lenham Neighbourhood Plan)* . Lenham Parish Council believes that the above comment clearly indicates that Sandway is not a suitable or sustainable location in principle for development for Gypsy and Traveller site. Such development proposals at Sandway are clearly contrary to both the development plan and government policy as set out in the Framework. The heart of the Sandway conservation area, which is very close to the application site, comprises a narrow and dangerous road junction. Additional traffic generated by the proposal would have to navigate this junction which would be highly detrimental to highway safety. **Policy LPRHOU8.** The application conflicts with policy LPRHOU8 part (b) in terms of the sites accessibility to local services, part (c) because of the significant landscape impact and harm to rural character, part (d) the wider impact on highway safety including the very dangerous and congested junction which lies at the heart of the Sandway conservation area and part (f) the ecological impact on the Stodmarsh SAC. The short-term use of the current application site to accommodate the travelling community does not justify harm to rural and residential amenity on a permanent basis which would result from the approval of the proposals. The proposals clearly conflict with the guidance contained within the Framework and should therefore be refused.
26/503337/LBC	Liverton Place Liverton Hill Sandway Kent ME17 2NP	No comment
26/503336/FULL	Liverton Place Liverton Hill Sandway Kent ME17 2NP	No comment