

STONE-cum-EBONY PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
Held on 19th November 2025 at 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall

Present:

Parish Cllrs: Cllrs D Lyward (Chair), R. Beckingham, S. Lowrie, R Parrock

Borough Cllr: 0

KCC Cllr: 0

Members of Public: 5

PO: 1

Clerk: A Beach

Minute No		ACTION
703	Apologies & Reasons for Absence Cllr Bacon – Personal Cllr Shilton – Conflicting ABC meeting Cllr Chapman – Conflicting meeting	
704	Declaration by Members i. Declaration by Members of any interest, Pecuniary or Other than Pecuniary, in accordance with the Council’s Code of Conduct. ii. To approve or reject any application put to the meeting by the Chairman in respect of Members’ seeking a dispensation under the Localism Act 2011, s.33. iii. Request that Councillors’ or any other persons’ present declare if they intend to record any of the proceedings using any video or audio recording device or camera.	
705	Confirm and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17th September 2025 The minutes were approved and signed by Cllr Lyward	
706	Public Session The meeting was adjourned to allow the Residents of the village to raise any concerns or put questions to the Parish Councillors. Four parents attended to discuss the matter of the bus to Homewood School, following the change of KCC decision that the nearest school is now Rye and a school bus is no longer available to Homewood, following a meeting they held with Cllr Chapman he suggested getting the PC involved, Cllr Lyward asked for a list of the points they would like raised and the PC will send a letter supporting the views. One resident suggested using Wealden Wheels, Cllr Lyward will investigate it further.	

	PC Darren Laker attended and gave a brief update on the situation in the area, a recent 'stop and search' operation checking vehicles for drugs was very successful and also highlighted following: - – The use of catapults continues to be a problem and he advised residents that if you see one in use to call 999. – There have been some burglaries in the area	
707	Village Matters <u>Street Lighting</u> Cllr Lyward gave an update on the non-working lights as reported at the previous meeting, the Clerk will report light numbers for the 001 and 003 which have been reported a number of times. <u>Defibrillator in Ebony</u> Cllr Lyward updated Councillors on the current status and confirmed that he will Hopkins again.	DL/MB
708	Matters Arising <u>Cricket Club Donation</u> Ongoing	
709	Borough Councillor Report. Cllr Shilton was unable to attend the meeting due to a conflicting ABC meeting.	
710	County Councillor Report Cllr Chapman was unable to attend the meeting but his abridged monthly report shows the following relevant points for the village: - Highways Nothing to report Grow in Kent / Eurostar to Kent The "Grow in Kent" event held at Ashford and Ebbsfleet International Stations. The event focused on reconnecting Kent to international rail travel, a vital step in boosting our economy, supporting local businesses, and reinforcing Kent's role as a gateway to Europe. Good news for Kent: Virgin Trains have been granted access to the Temple Mills International Depot, paving the way for the first real competition on the cross-Channel route in 30 years. This decision could: • Reconnect Kent to direct European routes • Boost local business and tourism • Fulfil the original promise of High Speed 1 Over 82,000 people backed the campaign to bring services back - your voices have been heard. Kent County Council will now work with Virgin Trains and partners to make this happen. Kent is ready - and we're not stopping here.	

	Local Government Reorganisation & Devolution (LGR&D) The LGR&D process has been initiated by central government - not KCC - requiring all Kent councils to review their structures, with no transition funding provided. This means additional costs are inevitable and may be reflected in future council tax bills. As a member of the KCC LGR&D Committee, I have been directly involved in discussions. Several models are being explored, but KCC's preferred option - the "Hybrid 1A Model" - proposes a single unitary authority supported by three local assemblies. This model preserves KCC's efficiency and resilience while devolving more powers to local communities. Financial analysis shows it to be the most viable option, both short- and long-term. Our next committee meeting will be on Monday 3 November, followed by the full council meeting on Thursday 6 November, where our proposal will progress to the next stage. You can read the full KCC report here: - https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=979&MId=9846&Ver=4 Staying Focused on Local Priorities "As councillors, we are mindful of the wider political landscape, including the growing discussion across all parties about how local and national government can deliver better value and accountability. My focus, however, remains firmly on local priorities and service delivery here in Tenterden and the surrounding villages."	
711	Planning The following applications have been received and decided on since the last meeting. PA/2025/1812 High House Farm. Two storey extension and changes to the fenestration following demolition of existing extension Decision: Declined PA/2025/2023 High House Farm. Listed building consent for the application above Decision: Declined	
712	Village Sign Cllr Lyward confirmed that the refurbishment by Black Forge is complete at a total cost of £500 (excl. VAT), the sign will be reinstalled as soon as possible.	DL/MB
713	Website Update Cllr Parrock is still working on the change and hopes to complete it shortly, and asked the Clerk to forward the HugoFox contact details to allow her to resolve	RP

	some issues. <i>Post meeting the Clerk forwarded the links to the email address, team@hugofox.com and the Help Centre website https://help.hugofox.com/</i> The Clerk confirmed that each PC must now have at least one Gov.uk registered to the Clerk. Councillors agreed this.	
714	Village Caretaker Update As confirmation has been received that the scheme will cease from April 2026 an alternative contractor is required to undertake the items that are not on the original contract with Ashford BC and ABC have confirmed that Aspire will only do the following work: - – Grass cutting around Stone Church - 12 times per year – Grass cutting in Stone Green - 12 times per year. – Cut the hedges in Stone Green. – Grass cutting in Forge Meadow. The work carried out on behalf of KCC will continue including: - – Cutting out grips – Clearing storm gully covers – Cleaning and repairing road signs The uncontracted items requiring quotes for are: - – Cutting the grass around the Church if specifically asked for a wedding. – Weedkilling. – Emptying the Parish owned dog bins in The Ferry Inn car park and in The Street towards Church Hill. – All other dog and litter bins should be emptied by ABC's contractors, but this is not happening. The Clerk has budgeted £750 for this work in the 2026-27, proposed, budget, but this is an estimate. Cllr Lyward asked for suggestions of any extra required work and Contractors to undertake it.	DL
715	Finance <i>a. <u>Payment Authorisation</u></i> Chq No. 606 – Black Forge, Village Sign Repairs - £600.00 Chq No. 607 – Outlook in Oxney, March to October - £980.00 Chq No. 608 – A Beach – September & October Salary - £404.63 <i>b. <u>Receipts</u></i> Ashford BC – 2nd Precept Payment - £3,187.50 Deposit Account Interest September £4.88 Following the transactions above the current account will have a balance of £12,773.85 and £5,308.78 in the deposit account giving a working capital of £18,082.63 <i>c. <u>2026-27 Budget Update & Precept Agreement</u></i> The Clerk presented the proposed budget for next year; due to the status quo of the caretaking service the proposed budget includes an	

	amount of £750, and an increase to the precept by £790 making the cost per Band D properties to £32.13 an increase of £2.62. Councillors discussed the proposal and Cllr Lyward proposed its acceptance and seconded by Cllr Beckingham and agreed by all	
716	Correspondence <u>Previously emailed</u> KALC – Chief Executive Bulletin – September & October Newsletter – Training & Weekly Bulletins – Community Awards Scheme – Ashford Local Plan Presentation Locations KALC – Ashford Branch NALC – Chief Executive Bulletins Katie Lam – September & October in The Weald Ashford BC	
717	Date of next meeting Wednesday 21st January 2026 at 7.30pm	
718	Items for Information Place Outlook onto the next agenda George Orpin kindly cut the hedge around the play area, Cllr Lowrie will send a thank-you card.	

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.40pm

2025-26 Meeting Dates

January	Wednesday 21 st January 2026
March	Wednesday 18 th March 2026