



## **BOBBING PARISH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

**Held on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025**

**Present:**

Cllr. G. Randall	Sarah Poole - Clerk
Cllr. R. Richardson	Cllr. M. Bencych
Cllr. S. Chapman	Cllr. N. Twardochleb

3 Parishioners (1 parishioner arrived 19.07) 2 left at 21.23, 1 police officer and guest speaker Michelle Anderson SBC who left at 19.55

**BPCM25/26 – 85**

**Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

Cllr. Randall welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending tonight. Apologies were received from Cllr. Baldock, Cllr. Watson, Borough Councillors Cllr. Cavanagh, Cllr. Hunt, due to Swale Borough Council meeting and County Councillor Cllr. Palmer. Cllr. Blake-Knowles, the Parish Council has resolved to waive Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 (Vacation of Office by Failure to Attend Meetings) for Cllr. Lewis Blake-Knowles due to family matters. Under Section 85(1) of the Act, a member of a local authority who fails to attend any meeting for a consecutive six-month period ceases to be a member unless their absence is approved by the authority before the expiry of that period. As this is a matter for the Parish Council and not Swale Borough Council or the Monitoring Officer, the Council has resolved to approve Cllr. Blake-Knowles absence on the grounds of emergency family matters, ensuring he retains his position while these family matters are present. This resolution **RESOLVED** accepted. All agreed.

**BPCM25/26 – 86**

**Resignation from Cllr. French**

Cllr. Randall read out the resignation from Cllr. French, and wished him well, he has been exceptional over the years, even before he was a Parish Councillor he came to meetings as a member of the public, and hopes he will continue with The Meads Woodlands project which he has been involved in. This was proposed by Cllr. Bencych and seconded by Cllr. Twardochleb to accept his resignation, there was also a discussion on how long he was with the Parish Council and the Clerk was asked to do a thank you and a gift for his outstanding contribution to the Parish, and to wish him well. **RESOLVED** accepted. All agreed.

**BPCM25/26 – 87**

**Public Session** as per our Standing Orders 3 f, g & h and shall not exceed 30 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting. An individual member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting. The chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.

No comments were received from the public.



**BPCM25/26 – 88**

**To receive any report from Borough Councillor** Cllr. Mike Baldock, Cllr Ann. Cavanagh, Cllr. Lloyd Chapman, Cllr. Roger Clarke and Cllr. James Hunt.

Cllr Cavanagh reported continued attendance at the Heather House Chatty Café, which now has a regular group of attendees. She attended several meetings during September, including the Western Area Committee, Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group, Extraordinary Full Council on Local Government Reorganisation, and a Large Planning Applications briefing covering major developments such as Bobbing Garden City.

She will also attend the Community Governance Review Steering Group and noted that the Highsted Inquiry resumes on 2nd October.

No other reports received from the other Borough Councillors.

**BPCM25/26 – 89**

**To receive any report from County Councillor** Cllr Palmer

Cllr Palmer sent in a report that KCC debt has reduced from £732m to £660m; £2.5m saved on school transport. New pothole reporting tool [Report a pothole - Kent County Council](#) . FACE offers support services in Sittingbourne.

**BPCM25/26 – 90**

**To receive any report from PC** Philip Clemens.

PC Atherton attended the meeting, advising that PC Clemens has now left the area. PC Skye Williams will cover Bobbing, and PC Jacob Boosey will cover The Meads. Information is awaited on who will cover Archers Park and Grove Park.

PC Atherton will forward the reports from both officers to the Clerk.

Cllr Randall thanked the Rural Task Force for their outstanding work, noting several stolen vehicles recovered from a Pigeon Farm at Bobbing Hill. Due to the ongoing investigation, details remain limited, but police continue to work closely with various partners.

The Rural Task Force recently seized over £80,000 worth of suspected stolen items across Swale, including caravans, vehicles, copper cabling, and machinery. Several suspects remain under investigation following recoveries in Bobbing. It was also reported that since January 2024, the team has seized over £3.5 million in suspected stolen property, reinforcing Kent Police's commitment to tackling rural and countryside crime through proactive policing and community engagement.

Cllr Richardson suggested that local police officers might wish to hold a police surgery during the Friendship Café (last Saturday each month) or the Repair Café (second Saturday each month), as both attract parishioners and could also be publicised via Parish Council social media.



**BPCM25/26 – 91      Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) - public consultation – Presentation by Michelle Anderson**

Michelle Anderson, Active Travel Officer, gave a presentation on the Swale Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

The LCWIP aims to identify and prioritise future walking, cycling, and wheeling routes across the Borough to support sustainable travel and attract external funding.

The public consultation focused on Sheppey Towns and Sittingbourne is open until 26th October 2025, with opportunities for residents to view maps, comment online, or access paper copies at Swale House, Sheerness Gateway, and Faversham Town Council <https://swale.gov.uk/your-council/consultations/swale-local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plan-lcwip>

Following consultation, feedback will be reviewed, routes prioritised, and funding sought for design and delivery of the infrastructure improvement

Cllr Richardson asked several questions as an avid cyclist, and Cllr Randall thanked Michelle for attending and for giving a very detailed presentation.

**BPCM25/26 – 92      For Members to make or receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary Interests in regard to any items on the agenda under the Council's adopted Code of Conduct**

Cllr Randall declared an interest in BPCM25/26 – 102(b) Correspondence Application for grant for Sittingbourne Christmas Lights and Sleigh Rounds, as he is the Treasurer of the organisation. He will not take part in the discussion or decision on this item.

**BPCM25/26 – 93      Approval and Adoption of Minutes from the previous meetings Minutes of the Council Meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2025.**

These were all circulated before the meeting all agreed. Cllr. Richardson proposed, and Cllr. Bencych seconded all agreed. All agreed. **Resolved: Accepted.** The Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

**BPCM25/26 – 94      Matters arising from the minutes not covered by other agenda items.**

**a.      Kitchen Quote – Village Hall (Cllr Chapman)**

Cllr Chapman reported that two additional professional catering companies have visited to assess the kitchen, and she is awaiting designs and quotations.

**b.      Defibrillator Update (Cllr Chapman)**

Cllr Chapman and the Clerk have submitted a grant application to the British Heart Foundation for a funded defibrillator (Application Ref: AED\_CP-005021). The application has been acknowledged and will be reviewed within eight weeks.



**c. Nethertoos, Sheppey Way**

An update was received from Kevin McKenna MP and the Environment Agency regarding reports of illegal waste at Nethertoos, Sheppey Way.

An Environment Agency officer inspected the site on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2025 with the landowner. A minor waste issue was identified, and the landowner was advised to clear a small fire site within the garden. No evidence was found of large-scale waste deposits. A warning was issued, and no further incidents have been reported.

Residents were reminded that any future concerns can be reported via the Environment Agency's 24/7 incident hotline – 0800 807060

**BPCM25/26 – 95**

**Community Engagement**

**i. Report on Loneliness Project 30<sup>th</sup> August 10.30-12.30 then last Saturday of each month.**

The Clerk reported on the Loneliness Project Café held on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September, with around 16 attendees. Feedback was very positive, with several new participants expressing appreciation for the social contact it provides. Some have shared that they now plan to spend Christmas Day in company rather than alone.

Cllr Randall thanked everyone involved for their continued support and promotion of the project.

**ii. Feedback on Repair Café 13<sup>th</sup> September then second Saturday of each month 10.00-14.00**

Uwe provided an update on the Repair Café held on 13<sup>th</sup> September. Attendance was modest, with three residents bringing items such as children's books, a kettle, and a camping light. It was noted that the initiative will take time to grow, and the Parish Council agreed to continue promoting it. The Clerk recorded formal thanks to Uwe for his ongoing help.

A suggestion was made to offer a "Winter Cycle MOT" session, subject to more volunteers being available.

**iii. Christmas Dinner project.**

Cllr Chapman reported that a poster has been prepared and will be displayed around the Parish to promote the Christmas Dinner Project, which aims to support those alone or homeless over the festive season. The event will include a home-cooked roast dinner, snacks, games, and music, providing companionship and community spirit. Members welcomed the project as a valuable initiative to reduce loneliness at Christmas.



**iv. Newsletter distribution update.**

The newsletter has been printed and is ready for distribution. Cllr. Randall thanked the Clerk for doing this.

- Cllr Chapman – Sheppey Way
- Cllr Randall – Bobbing Hill and surrounding houses
- Cllr Richardson – The Meads
- Cllr Bencych – Archers Park
- Cllr Watson – Grove Park

**v. Emergency Resilience Plan – Cllr. Richardson**

The Clerk attended an introductory session earlier in the day on the new community preparedness project “Strengthening Preparedness Together in Swale.” The organisers have expressed an interest in working with Bobbing Parish Council to develop an Emergency Resilience Plan.

Following the session, the Clerk received further details confirming Bobbing Parish Council’s participation in the Community Resilience self-assessment (CRMI) programme, along with a unique voucher code to enable access. The assessment will produce a report with recommendations, from which an action plan will be created and reviewed after six weeks to track progress and identify any training needs.

Future plans include the East Sheppey Preparedness Cluster event, likely to be held in January 2026, and discussions about a potential joint event for Bobbing, Iwade, and Newington parishes.

Online “Introduction to Resilience” training sessions for Swale residents will take place on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> October and 27<sup>th</sup> November, and councillors were encouraged to help promote these sessions locally.

**BPCM25/26 – 96**

**General matters raised by Parish Councillor’s Reports for discussion.**

**a) Provision of Toilets at The Grove – Update from Swale Borough Council**

The Clerk advised that she is still awaiting a response from Swale Borough Council regarding the provision of public toilets at The Grove. Councillors noted the update and agreed that the matter should remain on the agenda for further discussion once feedback is received

**b) New Union Jack Flag**

Cllr Richardson proposed the purchase of a new 2-yard Union Jack flag to replace the existing VE Day flag. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Randall and agreed by all Councillors. **RESOLVED** Accepted.



c) **Litter Picking Dates for Sheppey Way**

Cllr Sue Chapman will organise future litter-picking dates for Sheppey Way and proposed to commence the first session on Saturday, 25th October, following the Friendship Café.

The Clerk will design posters and promote the event on social media platforms.

It was noted that litter-picking equipment is located and stored at the Village Hall.

d) **Assets**

Cllr Richardson requested a meeting with the Clerk to review all parish assets in detail.

The Clerk reminded Councillors that Swale Borough Council would like to discuss the possibility of the Parish Council taking on certain assets prior to the local government reorganisation in 2026/2027.

A full debate ensued. Cllr Randall expressed concerns about assuming responsibility for additional assets due to the financial implications this would have for the Parish Council's budget.

It was agreed that the Clerk will arrange a meeting with Swale Borough Council and inform Councillors of the date.

Those who are available to attend include Cllr Randall, Cllr N. Twardochleb, Cllr Sue Chapman, and the Clerk.

**BPCM25/26 – 97      Financial Statement and Authorisation of Payments**

- a. *The Clerk will make payments under the delegated powers of the Clerk/RFO and to seek approval of any additional payments as necessary.*

The Clerk talked through the financial transactions due to be made after this meeting, which is recorded through the Scribe accounting platform. It was noted that Cllr. Richardson has access to reconciliations and payments within the system.

Several payments are on Direct Debit, Standing Orders and had already been processed under the delegated authority of the Clerk/RFO. The Parish Council was asked to approve these, together with any outstanding payments.

It was proposed by Cllr. Richardson and seconded by Cllr. Bencych that the payments be authorised. This was all agreed, **RESOLVED:** Accepted.

The Clerk confirmed that the Unity Trust Bank balance stood at £103,681.36 prior to processing the listed payments. Payment instructions had been prepared online, and all councillors with access were requested to log in and authorise them.





**b. Remittance from Swale Borough Council**

It was noted that a remittance from Swale Borough Council had been received.

**c. Assertion 10 Presentation.**

The Clerk presented a report on Assertion 10 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), detailing the new requirements relating to digital and data compliance. The presentation covered areas including website accessibility standards, secure email management, GDPR obligations, and the implementation of a formal IT policy. Parish Councillors acknowledged the changes in legislation and thanked the Clerk for providing a clear and informative overview.

Cllr Randall expressed his gratitude to Kent Police for their continued presence and support within the parish over the years. He particularly thanked them for their work in the Bobbing Hill area, acknowledging that some parishioners had experienced stress due to ongoing issues in that locality.

He noted that residents are now receiving reassurance as positive progress is being made through the multi-agency partnership involving the Kent Police Rural Task Force, which has achieved recent success in addressing local concerns.

As a gesture of appreciation, Cllr Randall proposed that the Parish Council make a £200.00 donation to the Kent Police Benevolent Fund, which provides support to officers and their families who have faced difficulties during or after their service.

The proposal was seconded by Cllr Chapman all agreed. **RESOLVED** Accepted.

**BPCM25/26 – 98**

**Finance Working Group**

The Finance Working Group has met twice since the last Full Council meeting, on 22nd and 29th September 2025. A draft budget has now been prepared, which will form the basis for determining the precept. The Working Group will review the precept proposal prior to the next Full Council meeting so that both the budget and recommended precept can be presented in full for discussion.

The draft budget will be circulated to all councillors ahead of the next meeting for consideration and comment.

**BPCM25/26 – 99**

**Planning Application – viewable on: Swale:**

**<http://pa.midkent.gov.uk/onlineapplications>**;

- a. ***Just for note:*** Application No: 22/503654/EIOUT Location: Land To The West Of Bobbing Sittingbourne Kent ME9 8QL Proposal: Outline application (all matters reserved except for access) for a mixed used development comprising up to 2,500 dwellings, a 5.21 ha commercial employment zone including doctors' surgery, a 4.35 ha sports hub (and sports pitches), 3FE primary school, community facilities, local retail provision, public open



space, children's play areas and associated parking, servicing, utilities, footpath and cycle links, drainage, ground and other infrastructure.

This application was noted by the Council as a standing item. No further discussion took place at this meeting.

- b. Planning Application Ref. No: 25/503597/FULL [Loft conversion including a part raised ridge with rear balcony and 4no. roof lights to side elevations.](#)  
17 Keycol Hill Bobbing Kent ME9 8LZ

Councillors considered the above application and agreed that the proposal is in keeping with the surrounding residential properties and would not have a detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity or the street scene. This was proposed by Cllr. Randall and seconded by Cllr. Richardson All agreed. **RESOLVED** Accepted.

**Resolved:** Bobbing Parish Council **raises no objection** to this application.

- c. Planning Application Ref. No: 25/503683/OUT [Outline application \(access, landscaping, and layout sought\) for a residential development comprising up to 152no. dwellings, including erection of a retail store with flats above and a building for Class E use, with associated access from Quinton Road.](#)  
Land Adjacent To Quinton Road And Sheppey Way Bobbing Kent ME9 8QP

The Parish Council discussed this application in full detail. Councillors raised serious concerns regarding:

- **Loss of countryside gap** between Bobbing, Sittingbourne, and Iwade.
- **Lack of consultation** with nearby residents, many of whom were unaware of the proposal until informed via the Parish Council website. They were present at the meeting.
- **Highway safety** issues on Quinton Road and Sheppey Way, and the strain on already overloaded local infrastructure.
- **Negative impact on residents' amenity**, including privacy, noise, and light pollution.
- The proposal being contrary to the NPPF and Swale Local Plan (Policies ST3, DM25, CP4).

Proposed by Cllr. Richardson, seconded by Cllr. Bencych, that Bobbing Parish Council strongly objects. All agreed, **RESOLVED** Accepted.

**BPCM25/26 – 100** **Appeals:**

None

**BPCM25/26 – 101** **Consultations**

a) **Swale LGR**

The Clerk reminded councillors that the consultation period has now closed and expressed hope that all Councillors had submitted their responses. It was noted that further workshops were originally scheduled for 16th and 18th October, however, these sessions have been cancelled. A combined event will now take place on Monday, 4th November at 19:00.





**b) Notification of Strategic Planning Policy Database Transfer**

Councillors considered the correspondence received from Maidstone Borough Council's Strategic Planning Team regarding the migration from the Objective Keyplan system to OpusConsult. Councillors confirmed that they wished to continue receiving updates on planning policy consultations.

**c) LCWIP <https://uk.planengage.com/swalelcwip/page/home>**

The Clerk reported on the following consultation matters. Prior to this item, Members received an in-depth presentation from Michelle Anderson, which provided helpful background and context to the subsequent discussions. Councillors were informed of the current consultation available via <https://uk.planengage.com/swalelcwip/page/home>. Councillors were encouraged to review the proposals and provide feedback where appropriate.

**BPCM25/26 – 102 Correspondance**

**a) Notice of Extension – Temporary Closure of Public Footpath ZR109 (Borough of Swale)**

The Paish Council noted that the Secretary of State for Transport has directed that the Order made by Kent County Council on 26 March 2021, and previously extended until 26 September 2025, has now been further extended until 26 September 2026, or until completion of the works, whichever is earlier.

The closure remains in place to address an increase in recorded safety incidents at the railway level crossing. Network Rail has requested continued closure while alternative safety solutions are being considered.

The path is closed, between the junction with Public Footpath ZR111 and Key Street. The alternative signed route follows Sandford Road, Woollett Road, and uses the Cattle Arch to access the northern side of the railway line. A public meeting will be held at Bobbing Village Hall in January, and the Clerk will put something in the next Bobbing Reporter about this.

Councillors noted the continuation of restrictions under the Public Footpath ZR109 (Prohibition of Traffic) Temporary Order 2021, as issued by Kent County Council under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended).

**b) Application for Grant – Sittingbourne Christmas Lights and Sleigh Rounds**

A request for financial assistance was received from Mr Gareth Randall, and read out by the Clerk on behalf of the Sittingbourne Christmas Lights and Sleigh Rounds Association, seeking support for the annual Father Christmas sleigh rounds and Sittingbourne town centre festive lights.

*Cllr Randall declared an interest in this item, and refrained from talking during this item.*

It was proposed by Cllr. Richardson and seconded by Cllr. Bencych that the Council provide a grant of £500.00 to support this year's activities. All agreed, **RESOLVED** Accepted, Cllr Randall Abstained.



**c) Illegal Waste at Nether Toes, Sheppey Way**

The Clerk reported earlier in the meeting about this and also read out the letter from Mr Steve Miller concerning reports of illegal waste storage at Nether Toes.

**d) Kent PCC Summer Newsletter**

The Kent Police and Crime Commissioner's Summer Newsletter was circulated for information. Members noted its contents.

**e) Parishioner Correspondence – Pigeon Farm and Media Enquiry**

Two letters were received from parishioners expressing concern regarding alleged illegal activity at Pigeon Farm and the perceived lack of action by the Parish Council. Councillors discussed the matter in detail and reaffirmed that the Parish Council does not hold enforcement powers in such cases. However, the Parish Council continues to liaise closely with the relevant authorities, including the local police task force, who have been active in the area in recent weeks.

It was noted that as the letters received did not include postal addresses, the Clerk is unable to provide a formal written response to the parishioners concerned.

**f) Key Street – Notice of Upcoming Closures**

The Clerk reported receipt of an email from Jackson Civils Ltd advising of planned night-time closures of the A2 at Key Street, restricting traffic travelling towards Sittingbourne on Wednesday 15th and Thursday 16th October 2025, between 8:00pm and 5:00am each night.

A further closure will affect the A249 southbound entry slip road from 27th October 2025 until early December 2025, to facilitate construction works associated with the new slip road from the Chestnut Street roundabout. During this period, diversions will be signposted via Sheppey Way to the Bobbing interchange.

The Clerk also circulated the latest Key Street Improvement Scheme Newsletter issued by National Highways, providing updates on the progress of local works and forthcoming traffic management measures.

**g) Kent Archives – Barrie Cook Public Talk**

Correspondence was received from Kent Archives regarding a forthcoming public lecture by Dr Barrie Cook, former Curator of Medieval and Early Modern Coinage at the British Museum.

The event, titled "*The Coin Hoards of Medieval Kent, 1180–1560*", will take place on Monday 20 October 2025. The Clerk was asked to share the promotional materials through the Council's communication channels, as the event may be of local historical interest.



**h) Kent County Council – Digital Friends Webinar/ Helping Hands Scheme**

The Clerk reported receipt of an invitation from Kent County Council's Financial Hardship Team to attend a free Digital Friends Webinar scheduled for 31st October 2025, from 10:00am to 12:00pm. The session aims to provide practical guidance on supporting residents who may experience digital exclusion or energy-related challenges, and promotes participation in the Digital and Energy Champion Network. Councillors were encouraged to attend where possible.

The Clerk also reported on correspondence received regarding the Kent Helping Hands Scheme, a county-wide initiative offering assistance and advice to vulnerable residents across the county. Councillors noted the information for signposting purposes and agreed that details of both initiatives be shared on the Parish Council social media to raise local awareness.

**i) Swale Borough Council – Local Heritage List Nominations**

Swale Borough Council advised that the deadline for submitting nominations for the Local Heritage List has been extended to 31 October 2025.

The Parish Council noted that the scheme seeks to identify buildings, structures, and green spaces that contribute to the borough's local character and heritage, even where they do not qualify for statutory listing. Councillors were encouraged to review potential nominations within the parish.

**j) Kent Volunteers – King's Award for Voluntary Service**

Information was circulated from Kent Volunteers promoting nominations for the King's Award for Voluntary Service, recognising exceptional contributions made by volunteer groups within local communities. Councillors noted the opportunity and agreed to share the details via parish communication channels and social media.

**BPCM25/26 – 103 Training Reports**

Cllr Chapman and the Clerk attended a Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) training session delivered by KALC on 8th September 2025. The Clerk commented that investing a small amount of time in training helps ensure sharper decision-making and improved service to the community.

The Clerk provided details of a range of upcoming training opportunities available through KALC, Breakthrough Communications, Parkinson Partnership, Worknest, Cloudy IT, and Scribe. These include sessions covering *Planning and Enforcement*, *Climate Change*, *Design Codes*, *Parish Governance*, *Employment*, *Cemetery and Allotment Management*, and *Financial Administration*. Councillors were encouraged to select and attend at least one session relevant to their role, particularly from the planning series.

The Clerk also attended a Kent Resilience Team online briefing introducing a new Community Preparedness Project for Swale and encouraged councillors to attend future sessions.



Councillors were encouraged to attend the forthcoming Open Spaces Society online course, “*Protecting Commons, Greens and Open Spaces*,” scheduled for 14th–15th October 2025, which provides practical guidance on safeguarding community open spaces.

It was noted that the Clerk is unable to attend the upcoming KALC Annual General Meeting, to be held at the Rochester Corn Exchange on 22nd November 2025. Members were reminded that a calendar of training events for 2025/26–2026/27 will be circulated once available.

Councillors were also encouraged to register for ScribeFest 2025, a free online conference for Town, Parish, and Community Councils taking place on 9th October 2025, and to explore the Scribe Academy for on-demand training resources. The Clerk particularly recommended this event to Cllr Chapman, who has expressed an interest in developing a community allotment project.

#### **BPCM25/26 – 104      Reports from representatives**

a.    **Village Hall Committee:**

Cllr Randall reported that the next Village Hall Committee meeting will be held on 3rd November 2025, which will also serve as the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

He expressed thanks to Cllr Chapman and Uwe for their valuable assistance with recent improvements and changes to the hall.

Cllr Richardson advised that the meeting originally scheduled for 22nd October will now be held immediately following the AGM on 3rd November.

b.    **Local KALC – Rural Parishes:**

The next meeting of the Swale Area Committee of KALC will take place on Monday, 20th October 2025 at 7:00pm, at Bobbing Village Hall.

This will be an Extraordinary Meeting to elect a Chairman and fill a number of vacant positions, including roles on the General Purposes Committee, KALC Executive Committee, JTB Representative for Sittingbourne, and the Standards Committee.

Councillors were encouraged to attend and to consider standing for election to support the continuation of the Committee.

Cllr. N. Twardochleb, Cllr. Chapman , Cllr. Randall and the Clerk will be present.

c.    **Friends of Rose Hill:** Cllr. Baldock

No report received.

d.    **The Meads Community Woodland:**

No report was received.



e. **Joint Transportation Board (JTB):**

Cllr Bencych will be attending along with the Clerk online to the JTB meeting on 6th October 2025 at 5:30pm. The agenda and supporting documents were circulated to all Councillors.

f. **Western Area Committee:**

Cllr Bencych and the Clerk attended the Western Area Committee meeting held on 9th September 2025 at 7:00pm at Swale House.

Cllr Bencych reported that the condition of the memorial baby plaques in King George Park had been discussed following damage, and that the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) was also considered during the meeting.

g. **Swale Liaison Forum 24<sup>th</sup> September 2025 @ 19.00 Online**

At the Liaison Forum on 24 September 2025, the Clerk learned more about how the Local Plan process and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) are unfolding, including the roles of Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 consultations, and which possible council groupings are under consideration for Swale.

What are Regulation 18 and Regulation 19?

- **Regulation 18:** This is the early stage of preparing or revising a Local Plan. At this point, the public, organisations, and authorities are invited to comment on issues, options, vision, and objectives. It is the stage where views can most influence content, policies, and direction.
- **Regulation 19:** After an initial draft is developed, the Regulation 19 consultation is the pre-submission stage. The draft plan is published and people can submit formal responses about whether the plan is sound (i.e., lawful, justified, deliverable) and meets legal requirements. At this point, changes are more constrained, and representations must focus on tests of soundness.

After the Reg 19 consultation closes, the plan is submitted for independent examination, where a planning inspector may require modifications before it can be adopted.

What options are being considered for Swale under LGR?

Swale is part of a wider review in Kent to move from the existing two-tier system (county council + borough/district councils) to unitary authorities (single councils responsible for all local services).

Some key points:

- Kent leaders have shortlisted two models to take forward to full business case:
- Model 3 – a three-unitary model, in which Swale would be grouped with Medway, Gravesham, and Dartford



- Model 4b – a four-unitary model, grouping Swale with Ashford and Folkestone & Hythe
- The final decision will rest with Government ministers, with business cases due by 28 November 2025.
- The new unitary councils (if approved) would likely begin delivering services as a new structure by 2028.
- Swale's grouping options are not yet final, so local voices (parish councils, residents) still have scope to influence which model is adopted.
- The forthcoming Regulation 18 consultation will give parish councils and residents the first formal chance to comment on direction and options; the Regulation 19 consultation will follow, with a more complete proposal open for detailed feedback.

**BPCM25/26 – 105      Recommendations to next Full Council**

- **Clerk's Overtime Hours** – to be discussed in closed session.
- **Apologies received from** Cllr. M. Bencych Cllr. N. Twardochleb

The meeting closed to the public at 21.33

**CLOSED SESSION – No Public allowed during this session.**

**BPCM25/26 – 106      Review of the Clerks Salary and Hours**

Cllr. Randall explained to all councillors what was discussed at the Finance Working Group and it was proposed by Cllr. Bencych and Cllr. Richardson and a letter will be written to the Clerk from Cllr. Randall. All agreed, **RESOLVED** Accepted.

**BPCM25/26 – 107      Dates of Next Meeting:**

Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2025. 19.00

**BPCM25/26 – 108      Closure of Meeting**

The meeting closed at 21.33

**These minutes are certified to be a true and just record.**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_