A Meeting of the Parish Council was held at The Memorial Hall, The Street, Frittenden on Tuesday 6th October 2026 at 7.30pm.

Present were: Cllr R Vernon
Cllr A Staples
Cllr L Gosbee
Cllr S Murray

In attendance: Mrs E Nightingale (Clerk)

PUBLIC FORUM:

.
None

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr J Tuke, Cllr M Viviers, Cllr C Russell (County), Cllr A Ellison (Borough) & Cllr A Fairweather (Borough)

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct Part 2)

None.

3. COUNTY & BOROUGH COUNCILLOR UPDATE

None.

4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 1ST SEPTEMBER 2026 AND THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING MEETING ON 29TH SEPTEMBER 2026

It was proposed by Cllr Vernon, seconded by Cllr Gosbee, and **RESOLVED** by all members present that the Minutes from the Council Meeting on 1st September 2026 and the Minutes from the Planning Meeting on 29th September 2026 are a true and accurate record of those meetings, save for two typographical errors which were duly amended. That being so, Cllr Vernon signed the said Minutes as Chair.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

Misleading road closure signage
The Clerk is yet to receive a response from KCC's Street Works department.

Parish Chairs Meeting
This meeting focused on the process for the proposed changes to local government. Cllr Staples will circulate the agenda which provides detailed information in that regard.

6. PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2027

The Clerk noted that the current Parish Council was nearing the end of its current 4-year term and a new Parish Council would be constituted in May 2027. All 7 seats on the Council would be up for contention. Those wishing to stand, to include current members of the Council, would need to submit nomination forms to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) in accordance with the

prescribed timetable (to be published in due course). Each nomination needed to be supported by two residents of the Parish who were registered as voters on the electoral roll (a proposer and seconder). If more than 7 nominations were received, TWBC would call an election and those elected as Parish Councillors would be determined by a vote. If 7 or fewer nominations were received, those nominated would automatically be appointed to the Council and there would not be an election. Thereafter, if fewer than 7 Councillors had been appointed, the Council could, if it chose to do so, co-opt additional members to make the number of Councillors up to 7.

There are currently 6 Councillors and it is possible that 2 of those may stand down in May 2027. There must be at least 3 Councillors at any meeting of the Council for it to be quorate and so the Council wished to encourage anyone who was interested in serving on the Council to come along to its regular monthly meetings to see what was involved. The Council meet on the first Tuesday of every month except in August.

7. HGV ROUTES TO/FROM WEALD BUSINESS PARK

A resident had expressed concern to Cllr Vernon about an uptick in the number of HGV's using Sand Lane, Biddenden Road and The Street to access / egress the Weald Business Park on Dig Dog Lane. Cllr Vernon had himself witnessed a large lorry turn left out of Sand Lane and make its way through the village to Grandshore Lane and the A229 beyond. This was clearly inappropriate, particularly given the number of parked cars on Biddenden Road and the Street narrowing both roads to single track in places. The Clerk noted that she had approached both businesses operating from the business park in the past. The fencing business had confirmed that drivers making deliveries to / from its premises were expressly told to use Grandshore Lane and Dig Dog Lane only. No response had been received from the other business, Pure Foods. It was therefore proposed by Cllr Vernon, seconded by Cllr Gosbee, and **RESOLVED** by all members present that the Clerk be directed to write to Pure Foods asking that those instructions also be issued to those delivering to / from its premises.

8. VILLAGE CLEAN UP ON 19TH SEPTEMBER 2026

Cllr Vernon reported that 27 volunteers had collected 29 bags of rubbish, together with a tyre, a tabletop, a single crutch, a desktop computer, a fold-down gazebo and a full bottle of Baileys. The Council expressed its thanks to Tim Matthews who arranged for 7 members of a local geocaching group to come along and help with the clean-up. The Council's thanks were also given to Howard Lilley for providing transport and a site to store the rubbish collected pending pick up by TWBC, Iden Signs for providing signage free of charge and the Bell & Jorrocks for once again providing headquarters.

9. PARISH FIELD HEDGE BEHIND THE TENNIS COURT

Cllr Vernon reported that the hedge had been removed. It had turned out to be a much more difficult job than anticipated because of a substantial amount of wire and concrete was found to be buried under / amongst the hedge. The Council wished to thank Ben Hatcher for the truly fantastic job he did in clearing the area, particularly in removing all the wire which was not at all easy.

Prior to the above work being carried out, Cllr Vernon met with the owner of the adjacent fence. He was accompanied by a fencing contractor who examined both the hedge and fence. The Council is advised that it is not at all clear that the hedge has caused damage to the neighbouring fence, rather than simply the passage of time, as suggested. However, it could at least be argued that 8 fence posts and 1 fence panel required replacing. A quote had been received for the materials required at £287.60 plus VAT, to which additional labour costs would need to be added. It was proposed by Cllr Vernon, seconded by Cllr Murray, and **RESOLVED** by all members present that in order to preserve goodwill and neighbourly relations, and without any acceptance of liability, the Council would offer to arrange for the 8 posts and 1 fence panel identified by the

Council's contractor to be replaced at its own expense. The Clerk will write to the owner of the fence in that regard.

Cllr Vernon also reported that the removal of the hedge had revealed an amount of accumulated garden rubbish which may have come from neighbouring property. It was therefore proposed by Cllr Vernon, seconded by Cllr Staples, and **RESOLVED** by all members present that the clerk be instructed to write to the owners asking that they refrain from leaving garden waste on the Parish Field.

10. HIP SPEED ATTENUATION SCHEME DELIVERY UPDATE

The clerk had received confirmation that the works approved by Kent County Council (KCC) would be commenced on a date to be confirmed between February and July 2027.

11. UPDATE FROM HANDS OFF OUR HERITAGE WORKING GROUP

Cllr Vernon noted that TWBC had now published its latest housing land supply figure, which is 4.7 years. This falls short of the 5 years required and means that the balance will be tilted in favour of development when new planning applications are considered by TWBC and/or the Planning Inspector. In practice, this means that if planning applications are to be successfully opposed, it would be necessary to show that there would be significant harm which outweighs the benefits of development. The HOOH Working Group had not received any news about when a revised proposal for the development of Bell View might be submitted to TWBC. When that happened, a new public consultation period would be triggered during which the Council and residents would have an opportunity to comment on whatever revised plans were submitted.

12. SPEEDWATCH

Cllr Staples reported that there had been 3 sessions of Speedwatch since the last meeting (with 2 sessions having been cancelled due to bad weather). 15 offenders had been recorded out of 127 vehicles, being a c.11.5% offending rate. 2 letters had been sent out by Kent Police. The highest speed recorded was 43 mph. Cllr Staples noted that 9 out of the 15 offenders had been recorded exceeding the 30mph speed limit on Biddenden Road between 8:30am and 9:30am (being around one third of the vehicles passing in that time slot).

Cllr Staples noted that Speedwatch would welcome additional volunteers. Training is given and the time commitment is limited to around 2 hours a month split across 2 sessions.

13. PLAYGROUND INSPECTIONS

Cllr Gosbee had met with the contractors on site on 5th October immediately before work began to renovate the mound / slide and replace one of the rockers. He had nothing further to report.

14. ROAD REPORT

Cllr Gosbee noted that a teacher's car had been hit by a van on 22nd September and felt that parked cars at school drop off / pick up contributed to such incidents because it caused the road to be narrowed.

The road had subsided near to the sewage works. This had been reported to KCC who considered it not yet bad enough to warrant repair. A water leak on Biddenden Road had also been reported.

The Council noted that the pothole repairs recently carried out on Biddenden Road had been completed to a high standard. However, the eroded road edges along Staplehurst Road had not

been dealt with and continued to deteriorate. Cllr Gosbee had reported this issue on numerous occasions to no effect but he will continue to press for action to be taken.

The white lines outside the school were worn and needed to be repainted. Again, this had been reported by Cllr Gosbee.

Cllr Vernon noted that the surface water drains on Biddenden Road were already filled with mud, leaves and other debris. Cllr Gosbee had been trying to get them cleared and would continue his efforts in that regard. The clerk will also follow this up.

15. PLANNING

New Applications

- None

Outcome of Previous applications

- None

Planning appeals

- None

16. GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

- The clerk noted that KCC was interested in running a 'Safer Road Users Mature Drivers & Passengers' course in Frittenden and had asked whether the Council might consider funding the cost of hiring the Memorial Hall for that purpose. Whilst the Council is always willing to support road safety initiatives, it was unsure whether such a course would attract sufficient numbers of attendees to make it viable. The clerk will make further enquiries of KCC as to how many attendees it would require and to whom / how it intended to publicise such an event.
- The clerk had been asked by TWBC to verify data it had collected about the village as part of its upcoming 2026 Settlement Role and Function Study. The clerk was able to comment on most things included in the data set but was unsure whether the village still benefited from a mobile library service.
- Cllr Vernon had been approached by a resident about wheely bins being left on the pavement for extended periods after they had been emptied. This caused pavements to be obstructed and was particularly problematic for wheelchair users or those pushing prams / pushchairs. It was agreed that this would be raised as part of the Council's summary report in the next edition of the Parish Magazine. That summary would also highlight the call for Speedwatch volunteers and nominations for the 2027 Parish Council elections.

17. FINANCE

- It was proposed by Cllr Vernon, seconded by Cllr Staples, and **RESOLVED** by all members present to pay the accounts as follows:

FRITTENDEN PAYMENTS – OCTOBER 2026				

Cheque Number	GROSS	VAT	NET	SUPPLIER	DETAILS
BACS	£32.00	Nil	£32.00	Frittenden Memorial Hall	Room Hire (2 x meeting room sessions on 29/9 & 6/10)
BACS	£55.40	Nil	£55.40	Mrs E Nightingale	Clerk's Expenses – Oct
BACS	£308.01	Nil	£308.01	Mrs E Nightingale	Clerk's Salary – Oct (inc. backpay following 26/27 pay award)
BACS	£76.80	Nil	£76.80	HMRC	PAYE
BACS	£6,942.60*	£1,157.10	£5,785.50	Everyday Play Ltd	Pre-start invoice re: playground renovations
BACS	£113.78	£18.96	£94.82	FCC Waste Management Ltd	Litter Bins – Aug & Sept
DD	£11.99	£2.00	£9.99	Hugo Fox	Website Hosting
DD	£20.99	£3.50	£17.49	Hugo Fox	Domain & 5 x email addresses
DD	tbc	tbc	tbc	NPower	Electricity for streetlighting
Total	**£8,875.81**	**£1,400.56**	**£7,475.01**		

*Payment approved at planning meeting on 29.09.26 & made on 01.10.26

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr Gosbee had attended the latest meeting of the Headcorn Aerodrome Consultative Committee. Around 10 complaints had been received over the summer. With 3 of those complaints coming from the Big Cat Sanctury. Headcorn Aerodrome was now the busiest airfield in the South East. The committee was told that the parachute plane does not fly as far south as Frittenden but that did not accord with reports made by residents. It was noted by Cllr Vernon that the Aerodrome was yet to respond to the Council's correspondence in that regard. Cllr Gosbee noted that the most used plane was the aerobatic / wing walking plane but that only flew on Fridays to Mondays.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 20:50pm.

Chairman's Signature:_____
Date:_____