

DODDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in Doddington Village Hall on
Monday 11 May 2026

Present: Cllr Steve Coates (Chairman), Cllr Colin Jones (Vice Chairman), Cllr Kevin Attwood, Cllr Kirsty Clark, Cllr Graham Cuthbert, Cllr Kevin Fraser and Cllr Linda Lumsden:
and Mrs Wendy Licence (Clerk).

Also present were three members of the public

Cllr Coates welcomed everyone to the meeting

1. APOLOGIES

All Members were present.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Cllr Fraser **PROPOSED** Cllr Coates to the office of Chairman; **SECONDED** by Cllr Cuthbert: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Cllr Coates signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Clerk.

3. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Cllr Fraser **PROPOSED** Cllr Jones to the office of Vice Chairman; **SECONDED** by Cllr Cuthbert: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Cllr Jones signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Clerk.

4. TO APPOINT REPRESENTATIVES TO EXTERNAL BODIES

i. To confirm - Representatives at KALC Swale Committee Meetings

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** that Cllr Coates be the KALC Swale Area Committee representative.

ii. To confirm – Representative of Swale Eastern Area Committee

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** that Cllr Fraser be the Swale Eastern Area Committee representative

iii. To confirm and update - Councillors areas of Interest

Councillors' areas of interest were **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** as follows:

Finance- Cllr Coates (Chairman), Cllr Cuthbert and Cllr Lumsden

Playing Field- Cllr Fraser and Cllr Clark

Highways- Cllr Jones

Defibrillator- Cllr Coates

Speed Watch- Cllr Fraser (Lead Member), Cllr Coates and Cllr Jones

HR Manager- Cllr Lumsden

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were declared

6. TO DETERMINE WHETHER ANY ITEMS SHOULD BE DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION

It was agreed to move item 19 Staffing Matters to closed session.

7. MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 13 APRIL 2026

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept the minutes as a true record of the meeting. Cllr Coates duly signed the minutes.

8. MATTERS ARISING

Cllr Coates reported that he had been unable to access the safe, a locksmith has serviced the safe and the lock is in good condition.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to allow the Wychling, Doddington and Newnham History Group to access historic papers.

8. POLICE REPORT

PC Chittim was unable to attend and submitted a report that there had been a theft of a motor vehicle on 23/04/26 from a property in The Street. There were no reports of anti social behaviour.

10. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No matters were raised.

11. HIGHWAYS

Cllr Jones reported that the road sweep still has not been carried out; Swale Borough Council was investigating why it was not done and now they are investigating why the investigation was not carried out. The Parish Council has asked the Ward Councillor to assist with this matter.

KCC Highways changed contractors on 1 May and they are unable to confirm a date for the inspection of the drains in the Old Lenham Road.

Cllr Coates thanked Cllr Jones for his report.

12. PLANNING MATTERS

i. Proposed Highsted Park

Ref: 21/503914/EIOUT Location: Land South And East Of Sittingbourne Kent

Ref: 21/503906/EIOUT Location: Land To The West Of Teynham London Road Teynham

Awaiting the Inspector's report.

ii. Any planning matter received by 12 May 2025

25/503851/PNQCLA Address: Orchard Barn Chequers Hill Doddington Kent ME9 0JW

Prior notification for the change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from agricultural to 1no. residential dwellinghouse and associated operational development. For its prior approval to: - Transport and Highways impacts of the development. - Noise impacts of the development. - Contamination risks on the site. - Flooding risks on the site. - Whether the location or siting of the building makes it otherwise impractical or undesirable for the use of the building to change from agricultural use to C3 (dwellinghouses). - Design and external appearance impacts on the building. - Provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouses.

Awaiting decision

13. FINANCE

i. Parish Council Allowances: To agree allowances for the year

It was **AGREED** that mileage be 45p per mile.

ii. Councillors Expenses

There were none.

iii. Precept - To confirm receipt

£4,840.50- 1st instalment received

iv. Invoices for Payment

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to pay the HugoFox for website provision £143.86 (cheque no 1443).

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to reimburse Cllr Cuthbert for the KALC Award trophy £58.90 (cheque no 1444).

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to pay Mr N Haddock £210.00 to service the safe (cheque no 1445).

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to reimburse Cllr Coates for the APM drinks £55.10 (cheque no 1446).

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to pay Lushland Ltd for the tree survey £395.00 (cheque no 1447).

v. To consider Insurance quotation

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to pay Clear Management Insurance Ltd £719.45 (cheque no 1447); year two of a three-year long-term agreement.

vi. To consider request for a grant from Heart of Kent Hospice

Councillors considered the request and noted that the Council is receiving a lot of generic grant requests from charities. It was agreed not to make a grant.

14. PARISH COUNCIL POLICIES

i. Review of Standing Orders

ii. Review of Finance Regulations

Councillors **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to adopt the revised policies.

15. SPEED WATCH

Cllr Fraser reported that the Speed Watch sessions continue with encouraging results and is having the desired effect of educating drivers. The Speed Watch team is well supported by the Police who hold their own enforcement sessions. Unfortunately, no one is able to attend the Speed Watch AGM this year.

Cllr Coates thanked Cllr Fraser for his report.

16. PLAYING FIELD

i. Cllr Fraser's monthly report

Cllr Fraser reported that the moss control continues with encouraging results. Three years ago the Council agreed to allow the verge between the Playing Field fence and the footway to grow wild to encourage it as a nature haven; unfortunately, only stinging nettles and an elder has grown; the Council needs to consider if it wants to allow the area to continue to grow wild. It has been bad for queen bees when coming out of hibernation as they are killed by vehicles.

Cllr Coates thanked Cllr Fraser for his report and his work at the Playing Field.

ii. ii. To consider arboricultural report

Cllr Coates said the inspection took place on 20 April and the Council is yet to receive the report.

iii. Playing Field ownership

Cllr Coates informed Members that Mr Leigh-Pemberton had raised a question of ownership as the Parish Council had requested permission for a permit for the Wychling, Doddington and Newnham History Group's dig. A 1929 document has been stored in the safe and this confirms the land was donated to the Parish Council with a covenant for it to be used for children up to the age of fourteen years; however, it is not mortmain which gives the perpetual inalienable ownership on condition that the land cannot be sold. There was an amendment to the covenant that the land can be used for football; any changes to usage has to be referred to the family.

ACTION: Cllr Clark to peruse the document.

17. CORRESPONDENCE

1. 17.04.26- KCC Kent Plan Bee No Mow May survey
2. 17.04.26- NALC CEO bulletin
3. 17.04.26- KALC bulletin
4. 24.04.26- NALC CEO bulletin
5. 27.04.26- SBC: policy round-up
6. 28.04.26- KCC Highways: Emergency Road Closure - Old Lenham Road, Doddington - 27 April 2026
7. 30.04.26- NALC CEO bulletin
8. 01.05.26- KALC training bulletin
9. 05.07.26- NALC CEO bulletin

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr Coates informed Councillors that a member of the public has suggested that he and Cllr Emma Turner, Chair of Newnham Parish Council, should give a short interview on the role of Parish Councillors.

Cllr Coates thanked Cllr Fraser for his help with setting up the hall for the Annual Parish Meeting and thanked Cllr Clark for her excellent catering.

19. STAFFING MATTERS

Clerk's annual appraisal.

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 it was resolved that, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the Clerk's annual appraisal.

Cllr Coates **PROPOSED** the Clerk is paid monthly: **SECONDED** by Cllr Fraser: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Cllr Lumsden reported back on the Clerk's appraisal and **PROPOSED** a 1-SCP increase: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Date of next Meeting:- Monday 9 June 2025

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.35pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting

Chairman

Date: 9 June 2026