

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

Present were: Cllr A Staples
Cllr S Murray
Cllr J Tuke
Cllr M Viviers
Cllr R Vernon
Cllr L Gosbee

In attendance: Mrs E Nightingale (Clerk) & two members of the public

In the absence of Cllr Lawrence (Chair), the meeting was chaired by Cllr Staples (Vice-Chair).

PUBLIC FORUM:

A resident raised concerns over the new road layout outside the Canham Homes development on Cranbrook Road which, in their view, created potential for dangerous situations where the priority system was not adhered to. The resident asked the Parish Council if it would intervene with the Local Authority to have the build out removed and the road layout restored to what it was before.

Another resident spoke on the same issue. They observed that a vehicle had already gone into the hedge due to the new road layout, the position of the metal barriers meant that the hedge could no longer be cut or the ditch maintained, and the camber of the road was wrong meaning that water was now pooling on the road where it didn't before the layout changes. The resident had undertaken extensive research into the decision-making process which led to the new road layout and felt that the community had been misled as to why the pavement had been built out into the road in the first place. They have raised complaints with KCC which would be escalated to the Local Government Ombudsman, Borough and County Councillors and Katie Lam MP. In the meantime, they felt that the narrowed section was too long for a priority system to be effective and Speedwatch data had shown that it did not serve to slow down traffic entering the Village. Vehicles coming from the direction of Cranbrook were unable to judge whether they needed to stop for incoming vehicles who had priority and, as a result, they were continuing along the narrowed section when it was unsafe to do so, meaning that vehicles were having to mount the verge to pass each other. The situation was exacerbated by the junction with the new road into the Canham Homes development. The resident noted that KCC had told them that they couldn't compel Canham Homes to restore the previous layout and either culvert the ditch to make space for the pavement or put the pavement behind the hedge, which the landowner was happy to allow, being the only viable solutions in the resident's opinion.

The resident also asked if there was a way of speeding up the publication of Parish Council minutes as, at present, interested parties could not view the minutes of a meeting until they had been approved at the following month's meeting.

Cllr Staples noted the considerable efforts made by Cllr Lawrence to address this issue, about which no notice had been given until the works to build out the pavement had been completed.

Cllr Vernon explained that, from the Parish Council's perspective, once it was aware of the road narrowing resulting from the Canham works, the first priority was to make the road as safe as the new layout allowed. Its initial efforts were directed at getting signage erected as a temporary measure and it continues to liaise with Cllr Russell to get KCC to address the lack of adequate / functioning lighting. It has focused on making the best of a bad job but it was agreed that the current layout / priority system was not without flaws. Cllr Vernon stated that, in his personal opinion, the road

remained dangerous. The issue would be put on the agenda for consideration when the Council next met. In the meantime, it was noted that KCC had offered a meeting.

Cllr Staples wished to correct one point made by the resident. Speedwatch data showed that there had been in reduction of speed since the priority system had been put in place. Of the 107 vehicles recorded from their position outside Chestnut Close, only 3 had been exceeding the 30mph speed limit and each of those had been going in the 30's, which was lower than the levels they were seeing before the layout changes.

Cllr Vernon noted that it might assist to have a record of incidents or near misses at the new priority system.

Cllr Staples agreed that the Council should look at whether draft minutes might be published in advance of being approved and directed the Clerk to include this as an item of the agenda for the next meeting of the Parish Council.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr G Lawrence, Cllr C Russell (County), Cllr A Fairwether (Borough), Cllr N Warne (Borough)

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

None.

3. BOROUGH COUNCILLOR UPDATE

None

4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 2ND DECEMBER 2025

It was proposed by Cllr Vernon, seconded by Cllr Tuke, and **RESOLVED** (1 abstention) that the Minutes from the Council meeting on 2nd December 2025 are a true and accurate record of that meeting. That being so, Cllr Staples signed the said Minutes as acting Chair.

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

Local Plan

Cllr Staples noted that the new Local Plan was adopted by TWBC at a meeting on 10th December 2025.

Agenda Items

The following items will be added to the agenda for the next council meeting:

- Cllr Lawrence to report on a costed proposal for the tennis court fence
- Cllr Lawrence to report on quote for signage

6. UPDATE FROM HANDS OFF OUR HERITAGE WORKING GROUP

Cllr Vernon reported that the Working Group had been working with a Highway Consultant and a Heritage Consultant. Once those consultants had reported, the Working Group would put together a draft response for circulation in advance of the Planning Meeting on 19th January 2026.

Cllr Staples noted that the application had been called in. This meant that it would be determined by the Planning Committee of TWBC rather than a planning officer under delegated authority.

7. REINSTATING MEMBERSHIP OF WEALD OF KENT PROTECTION SOCIETY

The Parish Council had previously been members of WKPS but that membership had lapsed. Cllr Lawrence had noted that WKPS had been of assistance to the HOOH Working Group and had also commented on other planning applications in the Parish. The membership fee £50 per annum. It was proposed by Cllr Staples, seconded by Cllr Viviers and **RESOLVED** by all member present that the Council's membership of WKPS should be reinstated.

8. MEETING DATES

It was proposed by Cllr Vernon, seconded by Cllr Gosbee, and **RESOLVED** by all members present that meetings will take place on the dates set out in Annex 1.

Cllr Staples requested that the Annual Parish Assembly be put on the agenda for the next meeting of the Council for discussion about how to promote greater community engagement with this event.

9. UPDATING FPC BOARD IN MEMORIAL HALL

It was proposed by Cllr Tuke, seconded by Cllr Murray, and **RESOLVED** by all members present that the Clerk be instructed to engage a signwriter to update the board to include Cllr Lawrence as Chair from 2024.

10. VILLAGE FETE 2026

Cllr Viviers reported that another two volunteers had joined the organising group. Thereafter, Cllr Gosbee also proposed another volunteer to make a total of five members, which Cllr Viviers felt would be sufficient. Cllr Viviers would shortly be arranging the first meeting of the group and would also be making contact with one of the organisers of Benenden's village fete to get the benefit of their experience. He will be publishing an article in February's Parish Magazine and will then look at sponsorship.

11. SPEEDWATCH

Cllr Staples reported that there have been 5 sessions of Speedwatch since the last Council meeting. 25 out of 226 vehicles had been recorded at speeds of 35mph or greater. 2 letters had been sent out and 1 persistent offender was now under active enforcement. The highest speed recorded was 50mph. That was in respect of a foreign registered vehicle travelling on Biddenden Road.

12. PLAYGROUND INSPECTIONS / EQUIPMENT

Cllr Gosbee reported that the playground has been checked. He noted that the excessive use of Parish Council supplied dog bags appeared to have ceased.

13. ROAD REPORT

Cllr Gosbee reported that the mattress that had been fly tipped had been collected but the waste tipped on Dig Dog Lane was yet to be collected because it contained tyres and that required a different waste disposal contractor to be used.

Cllr Gosbee continued to press KCC to get the drains cleared out. He had sent a memo to KCC and had received a reply which suggested that this might be done when the relevant contractor was clearing other drains in the area. Unfortunately, no indication was given as to when that might be.

In advance of the meeting, the Clerk had circulated an email received from a resident who enquired whether the Parish Council might employ a private contractor to grit the roads that KCC did not during periods of icy weather. Cllr Gosbee had discussed this with Paul Catt of KCC but he did not know of any contractors who did that and did not think that KCC would supply the necessary salt/grit. Cllr Gosbee noted that he had previously gone around the main routes spreading salt/grit from the village's salt bins when icy weather was forecast, but he was no longer physically able to do so. There was also the fact that two of the village's salt bins had been stolen and the salt bin by Satins Hill was full of water. This had been reported to Paul Catt.

Cllr Gosbee had been told that, because the bin by Little Brook Wood had been provided by the Parish Council, not KCC, it would not be replaced by KCC. It was agreed that the road there was particularly bad in icy conditions and that it might help Cllr Gosbee's efforts to get the salt bin replaced by KCC if there was a record of accidents at that location. Cars were regularly pulled from the ditch but it was unlikely that any of those incidents were ever reported to the police. It was suggested that anyone who was involved in or witnessed an accident there should take a photograph, date it and send it to the Parish Council.

The Clerk reported that she had written to the Clerks to all the Parish Councils in the borough asking what arrangements they had for gritting roads not covered by KCC. From the responses received to date, it was clear that Parish Councils only used private contractors to grit land which they owned (e.g. car parks, pavements outside Town / Village Halls etc) and it was doubted whether KCC would permit private contractors to grit roads for which they, as the Highway Authority, were primarily responsible. However, a number of Clerks had expressed an interest in looking at whether a cooperative of Parish Councils might be formed to address this issue, particularly once the planned Local Government reorganisation had taken place and a unitary authority was responsible for all facets of local government. In the meantime, the Clerk had written to KCC asking: (a) if permission would be granted to allow the Parish Council to make its own arrangements as to gritting public roads not covered by KCC's gritters; and (b) whether they could provide details of any contractors who might provide that service to the Parish Council.

14. PLANNING

New Applications

25/02874/FULL	Bellview, Headcorn Road, Frittenden Demolition of existing property; erection of 18 dwellings with car port & garages; associated open space, access, LAP & landscape alterations This application will be considered at a Planning Meeting on 19th January 2026
25/02866/FULL	Little Bubhurst Barn, Bubhurst Lane, Frittenden Variation of Condition 9 of Planning Permission 25/01617/FULL – (Flood Risk Assessment); additional roof lights Proposed by Cllr Vernon, Seconded by Cllr Murray RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL

25/02927/FULL	Pound Hill Oast, Biddenden Road, Frittenden Variation of Condition 2 to Planning Permission 25/01383/FULL - enlarge first floor rear extension and additional dormer window Proposed by Cllr Vernon, Seconded by Cllr Gosbee RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL
25/02960/LBC	Catherine Wheel Barn, Sand Lane, Frittenden Listed Building Consent (works completed) – Conversion of the barn into a dwelling Proposed by Cllr Vernon, Seconded by Cllr Murray RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND THAT CONSENT BE GRANTED

Outcome of Previous applications

25/02499/FULL	Catherine Wheel Barn, Sand Lane, Frittenden Listed Building Consent – Window replacement to north-west elevation. CONSENT GRANTED
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Planning appeals

- None

15. GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

- The Clerk noted that notification had been received of the deadline for submission of applications or the Parish Highway Improvement Grant to be offered by TWBC. However, any application required a designed and costed scheme to have been prepared by KCC. Had submitted our HIP and identified the scheme to be developed by KCC but were yet to receive anything from them. The Clerk will therefore chase.
- The Clerk reported that a final payment had been received from the executors of the late Colin Bullock's estate, meaning that his total bequest was £7,205. The Council, once again, expressed its gratitude to Colin for his generosity. The funds would be applied to improvements to the children's playground in accordance with his wishes.

16. FINANCE

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

FRITTENDEN PAYMENTS – JANUARY 2025					
Cheque Number	GROSS	VAT	NET	SUPPLIER	DETAILS
BACS	£49.00	Nil	£49.00	Frittenden Memorial Hall	Hall Hire (1 x meeting room session & winter surcharge, 1 x Hall session & winter surcharge)
BACS	£54.94	£9.46	£45.78	FCC Waste Management Ltd	Litterbins (Dec)
BACS	£51.80	Nil	£51.80	Mrs E Nightingale	Clerk's Expenses - Jan

BACS	£138.67	Nil	£138.67	Mrs E Nightingale	Clerk's Salary - Jan
BACS	£34.80	Nil	£34.80	HMRC	PAYE
BACS	£250.00	Nil	£250.00	KSS Air Ambulance	S137 Donation
BACS	£200.00	Nil	£200.00	Frittenden School	S137 Donation
BACS	£200.00	Nil	£200.00	Frittenden Preschool	S137 Donation
BACS	£225.00	Nil	£225.00	Heart of Kent Hospice	S137 Donation
BACS	£225.00	Nil	£225.00	Hospice in the Weald	S137 Donation
BACS	£100.00	Nil	£100.00	Hawkhurst Cottage Hospital League of Friends	S137 Donation
BACS	£50.00	Nil	£50.00	Victim Support	S137 Donation
BACS	£50.00	Nil	£50.00	Tunbridge Wells CAB	S137 Donation
BACS	£50.00	Nil	£50.00	Samaritans	S137 Donation
BACS	£50.00	Nil	£50.00	Relate	S137 Donation
BACS	£50.00	Nil	£50.00	Snowfields Academy Farm	S137 Donation
BACS	£350.00	Nil	£350.00	Frittenden PCC	S137 Donation
BACS	£3,963.60	£660.60	£3,303.00	Transport Planning Associates Ltd	Professional Fees re: Bellview planning application
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	£91.75	£4.37	£87.38	NPower	Electricity for streetlighting
Total	£6,217.54	£679.93	£5,537.91		

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.32pm.

Chairman's Signature: _____

Date: _____

ANNEX 1

MEETING DATES 2026

TUESDAY 6th JANUARY

TUESDAY 3rd FEBRUARY

TUESDAY 3rd MARCH

TUESDAY 7th APRIL

TUESDAY 5th MAY

ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY 13th MAY

TUESDAY 2nd JUNE

TUESDAY 7th JULY

TUESDAY 1st SEPTEMBER

TUESDAY 6th OCTOBER

TUESDAY 3rd NOVEMBER

TUESDAY 1st DECEMBER