

PARISH COUNCIL OF BENENDEN

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 20th July 2026, 7pm, Memorial Hall

Present	Parish Cllrs Beveridge, Cochrane, Grant, Ham, Lewis, McMillan, Taylor, Thomas. C Levett, Clerk. Borough Cllr Dawlings and County Cllr Russell.	
Item		Action Responsibility
1. APOLOGIES	Apologies were received from Borough Councillors Neville and Palmer.	
2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	No declarations of interest.	
3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	The minutes from the Parish Council Meeting held on 15 th June 2026 were unanimously approved as a correct record of the meeting.	
4. REPORTS BY COUNTY/ BOROUGH COUNCILLORS	Appendix A.	
5. REPORTS BY CHAIR AND PARISH COUNCILLORS	<u>a. KALC Area Meetings</u> ❖ Cllr Thomas attending a meeting on 22nd July. ❖ The Chair of the KALC Area Committee has asked if Benenden would be willing to host a meeting. ❖ It was agreed that the Quinlan Centre is likely the best venue and parish councillors offered to help with refreshments. ❖ Cllr Thomas to confirm dates with the Committee Chair and revert. <u>b. Local Government Reorganisation</u> ❖ The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government has announced there will be four unitary councils in Kent from April 2028. ❖ Option 4b was selected, which mirrors the West Kent boundaries set out in Option 3a. ❖ Tunbridge Wells will be part of West Kent along with Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling and Maidstone council areas. ❖ Initially, the four district/borough councils and Kent County Council will work together, under voluntary joint committee arrangements before moving to a formal joint committee, ahead of the first West Kent elections in May 2027. ❖ Following these elections, the joint committee will hand over to a shadow council made up newly elected West Kent Councillors. The new council will come into being on 1 April 2028.	NT
6. PLANNING	<u>a. Applications</u> • 26/01345/FULL and 26/01346/LBC Burnt House Farm, Walkhurst Road. Rear extension and new front porch. ❖ SITE CONSTRAINTS: 9 in total. ❖ SITE HISTORY: 96/01624/LBC Demolition of side chimney. 15/507897/LBC Underpinning and repairs to ground floor external wall. Both approved. ❖ LISTED BUILDINGS IN PROXIMITY: Grade II - Burnt House Farm Grade II (subject property); Scribbins; Little Walkhurst. ❖ HERITAGE STATEMENT INFO: Rebuild rear extension and conservatory. Relocate kitchen to new rear extension. Remove ground floor walls and partitions to create family room and utility room, with double doors into living room. Re-order partitions at first floor to create ensuite and bathroom facilities with associated alteration to a rear window. Replace entrance lobby with new front door to create covered open porch. Restore a ground floor casement window on north elevation to match existing. ❖ GENERAL COMMENTS: Conservation Officer has requested further information. The Parish Council unanimously agreed to raise concerns about the loss of the catslide roof. • 26/01485/TPO Green Briars, Cranbrook Road. TREES: Yew (T2) fell to ground level; Oak (T3) fell and treat stump with eco plugs. ❖ Trees located on Green Briars side of boundary with Stoney Footways. Found to be cause of subsidence to foundation of Stoney Footways. ❖ Felling rather than crown reduction or pruning is specifically recommended. ❖ Two replacement trees to be planted at Green Briars to offset loss at far end of garden of Green Briars at a distance to any building foundations to avoid recurrence. The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application. • 26/01499/FULL and 26/01500/LBC White Chimneys, Nineveh Lane. Single-storey rear extension; alterations to fenestration, external materials & hard landscaping; re-cladding of extension and alterations to roof; replacement of rooflight & rainwater goods; internal	

Chairman..... Date.....

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These minutes are not a verbatim record of the meeting, but a summary of discussion and decisions taken at the meeting.

	alterations at ground & first floor; reinstatement of historic structure in dining room ceiling; addition of wood burner; replacement of barn hip with a gable end. ❖ Pre-app feedback: Small infill extension acceptable; wall between main dwelling and modern extension is encouraged to be retained; extent of glazing causes concern and reduction is encouraged. ❖ Proposal addresses the concerns in particular the lack of differentiation in architectural style between the historic and the extension. ❖ Previous application under 23/00482/FULL & 23/00483/LBC for a large single storey rear extension refused by TWBC and dismissed on appeal on grounds it would be harmful to significance of listed building by complicating original form and layout of the listed building. The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support these applications subject to the works being satisfactory to the Conservation Officer. • 26/01571/FULL White Lea, Standen Street. Front & rear dormer windows. ❖ SITE CONSTRAINTS: 9 constraints in total. ❖ SITE HISTORY: 86/00811/FULL Side and front extension. Approved. ❖ LISTED BUILDINGS IN PROXIMITY: None ❖ GENERAL COMMENTS: Currently a 2-bed bungalow. Proposal to create additional bedroom with ensuite in attic space by installing dormer windows to front and rear elevations. Ground floor internal remodelling to create better living space. The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application. • 26/01546/FULL Pypmne Manor, Pypmne Road. Ground mounted solar PV array. ❖ SITE CONSTRAINTS: 10 in total. ❖ SITE HISTORY: 16 applications since 2019. All approved by TWBC and supported by BPC. ❖ LISTED BUILDINGS IN PROXIMITY: Subject property is Grade II* and the Barn is Grade II. ❖ GENERAL COMMENTS: Proposed location to west of agricultural buildings to rear of farm. Total 66 solar panels arranged in 3 rows of 22 panels. Screened by trees and not visible from public footpaths or roads. Electrical cable will connect to batteries installed adjacent to existing plant room. Generated electricity will be used solely and entirely by Pypmne Manor. BNG will be delivered in area to SE of panels by a new species rich hedgerow and neutral grassland. Complies with BNDP Landscape policies and BD8 b) renewable energy technology. The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application. <u>b. Other Planning Matters</u> • TW Local Plan Review/Benenden Neighbourhood Development Plan ❖ TWBC has published a timetable for the Local Plan Review which will unlikely come to fruition before devolution and the new unitary authority will start its own Local Plan review. ❖ Cllr Dawlings advised that Maidstone and Tonbridge and Malling are working to have their Local Plans adopted before the new authority is in place and it is likely that each area will continue to operate its own local plan until a harmonised plan can be created for the whole area. ❖ BPC discussed when a review of BNDP might most effectively take place. ❖ There is merit in trying to align with TWBC's review. ❖ If BPC chooses to allocate sites a new BNDP will be required and not just a review of the existing Plan. ❖ BPC Planning Group to start considering the BNDP while waiting for the outcome of the Call For Sites, the consultation for which ends on 3rd August.	GB/PG/NT
7. HIGHWAYS, FOOTPATHS & TRANSPORT	a. <u>Highways Group</u> • Cllrs Lewis and Taylor and the Clerk meeting on 3rd August to review Highways matters. b. <u>Rural Parish Grant</u> • Communication received from Highways advising that KCC and TWBC are continuing to work closely to determine the most effective way forward for the schemes agreed. • Both authorities are actively seeking additional funding sources. c. <u>Road closures</u> • The Clerk had raised the issues of the impacts of road closures particularly on Walkhurst Road and Goddards Green Road. • Highways had responded that the closure of Goddards Green Road is necessary as a major Section 278 highway works to facilitate the installation of highway drainage, the construction of new footways, and the resurfacing of the carriageway. • Regarding the repairs in Walkhurst Road, KCC cannot recharge the cost of these works to the	JL/MT/CL

	contractor who closed New Pond Lane, as there is no definitive way of proving that the traffic that caused the damage was traffic using the route as an alternative to New Pond Lane, and not travelling down the lane anyhow, as all traffic has the right to use the public highway, and as such the costs of the repairs will be borne by KCC. d. <u>Footpath Request</u> • Cllr Cochrane has been approached by a parishioner requesting a footpath from the village to the footpath coming off New Pond Road to the footpath around Benenden School. • It would be highly unlikely that this proposal would gain any form of consent. When the Uphill development is complete there will be a new footpath from the development to the crossroads and the 30mph limit will be extended further along New Pond Road.																																																																																																																																																															
8. RESOURCING/ FINANCE	a. <u>Monthly Finance</u> TRANSACTIONS FROM 1st June 2026 <table><tr><td>Brought Forward Current Account</td><td></td><td></td><td>18969.51</td></tr><tr><td>Brought Forward Savings Account</td><td></td><td></td><td>63287.16</td></tr><tr><td>Brought forward</td><td></td><td></td><td>82256.67</td></tr><tr><td>Income</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Payee</td><td>Reference</td><td>Amount</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Unity Trust Bank</td><td>Interest</td><td>307.68</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>HMRC</td><td>VAT reclaim</td><td>4953.56</td></tr><tr><td>TOTAL</td><td></td><td></td><td>5261.24</td></tr><tr><td>Expenditure</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Supplier</td><td>Reference</td><td>Amount</td></tr><tr><td>DD</td><td>HugoFox</td><td>Website</td><td>23.99</td></tr><tr><td>DD</td><td>HugoFox</td><td>Emails</td><td>20.99</td></tr><tr><td>FEE</td><td>Unity Trust Bank</td><td>Monthly Charge</td><td>7.00</td></tr><tr><td>BACS</td><td>Employee</td><td>Staffing Costs</td><td>1206.79</td></tr><tr><td>BACS</td><td>o2</td><td>Telephone</td><td>15.68</td></tr><tr><td>BACS</td><td>F&C Cleaning Services</td><td>Public Toilet Cleaning</td><td>789.32</td></tr><tr><td>BACS</td><td>Tompsett Landscaping</td><td>Grounds Maintenance BVT</td><td>343.20</td></tr><tr><td>BACS</td><td>Tompsett Landscaping</td><td>Grounds Maintenance BPC</td><td>632.79</td></tr><tr><td>BACS</td><td>HMRC</td><td>Employer Contributions Q1</td><td>664.01</td></tr><tr><td>BACS</td><td>Julie Lewis</td><td>Annual Assembly Refreshments</td><td>87.55</td></tr><tr><td>TOTAL</td><td></td><td></td><td>3791.32</td></tr><tr><td>Balance</td><td></td><td></td><td>83726.59</td></tr><tr><td>Current account bank statement 122 30th June 2026</td><td></td><td></td><td>20131.75</td></tr><tr><td>Savings account bank statement 026 30th June 2026</td><td></td><td></td><td>63594.84</td></tr><tr><td>Reconciled</td><td></td><td></td><td>83726.59</td></tr><tr><td>July 2026 Approved Payments</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>DD</td><td>HugoFox</td><td>Website</td><td>23.99</td></tr><tr><td>DD</td><td>HugoFox</td><td>Emails</td><td>20.99</td></tr><tr><td>DD</td><td>Nest</td><td>Pension</td><td>120.87</td></tr><tr><td>DD</td><td>Nest</td><td>Pension</td><td>120.87</td></tr><tr><td>FEE</td><td>Unity Trust Bank</td><td>Monthly Charge</td><td>7.00</td></tr><tr><td>BACS</td><td>Employee</td><td>Staffing Costs</td><td>1206.59</td></tr><tr><td>BACS</td><td>o2</td><td>Telephone</td><td>15.68</td></tr><tr><td>BACS</td><td>F&C Cleaning Services</td><td>Public Toilet Cleaning</td><td>770.18</td></tr><tr><td>BACS</td><td>Tompsett Landscaping</td><td>Grounds Maintenance BVT</td><td>343.20</td></tr><tr><td>BACS</td><td>Tompsett Landscaping</td><td>Grounds Maintenance BPC</td><td>632.79</td></tr><tr><td>BACS</td><td>EDF</td><td>Public Toilet Electricity</td><td>79.37</td></tr><tr><td>BACS</td><td>Iden Green Pavilion</td><td>Meeting Hire</td><td>18.00</td></tr><tr><td>BACS</td><td>TP Jones</td><td>Payroll Q1</td><td>63.40</td></tr></table>			Brought Forward Current Account			18969.51	Brought Forward Savings Account			63287.16	Brought forward			82256.67	Income					Payee	Reference	Amount		Unity Trust Bank	Interest	307.68		HMRC	VAT reclaim	4953.56	TOTAL			5261.24	Expenditure					Supplier	Reference	Amount	DD	HugoFox	Website	23.99	DD	HugoFox	Emails	20.99	FEE	Unity Trust Bank	Monthly Charge	7.00	BACS	Employee	Staffing Costs	1206.79	BACS	o2	Telephone	15.68	BACS	F&C Cleaning Services	Public Toilet Cleaning	789.32	BACS	Tompsett Landscaping	Grounds Maintenance BVT	343.20	BACS	Tompsett Landscaping	Grounds Maintenance BPC	632.79	BACS	HMRC	Employer Contributions Q1	664.01	BACS	Julie Lewis	Annual Assembly Refreshments	87.55	TOTAL			3791.32	Balance			83726.59	Current account bank statement 122 30th June 2026			20131.75	Savings account bank statement 026 30th June 2026			63594.84	Reconciled			83726.59	July 2026 Approved Payments				DD	HugoFox	Website	23.99	DD	HugoFox	Emails	20.99	DD	Nest	Pension	120.87	DD	Nest	Pension	120.87	FEE	Unity Trust Bank	Monthly Charge	7.00	BACS	Employee	Staffing Costs	1206.59	BACS	o2	Telephone	15.68	BACS	F&C Cleaning Services	Public Toilet Cleaning	770.18	BACS	Tompsett Landscaping	Grounds Maintenance BVT	343.20	BACS	Tompsett Landscaping	Grounds Maintenance BPC	632.79	BACS	EDF	Public Toilet Electricity	79.37	BACS	Iden Green Pavilion	Meeting Hire	18.00	BACS	TP Jones	Payroll Q1	63.40	
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	TOTAL 3422.93 <u>b. Resourcing Committee Meeting</u> ❖ The Resourcing Committee meets on 18th August. <u>c. Insurance Renewal</u> ❖ Insurance is due for renewal on 1st August and a quote had just been received from AJG Insurance Brokers. ❖ There is an increase in the premium of £36.57. ❖ The Policy remains with Hiscox Insurance Company Limited. ❖ The building, street furniture and war memorial sums insured have increased in line with index linking. ❖ Employer's and Public Liability remain at £10,000,000 and Officials' Indemnity remain at £500,000. ❖ The Resourcing Committee will consider insurance and BPC Asset Register in more detail at its meeting. ❖ The Parish Council unanimously agreed the renewal.	GB/SC/PM/NT/CL
9. ENVIRONMENT & MAINTENANCE	<u>a. Wildflower Meadow</u> ❖ Cllr Cochrane supports a parishioner's proposal to put 6-10 stakes around the saplings and attach a wire mesh to protect them from machinery. ❖ Parish Councillors agreed to this and Cllr Cochrane will advise the parishioner to go ahead. ❖ Cllr Cochrane will consider the mowing of the meadow once the stakes are installed.	SC
10. VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS/ COMMUNITY	<u>a. Parish Councillor Vacancy</u> • There have been no expressions of interest received. <u>b. Benenden Allotments</u> • BAA has requested a change to the agreed location of the Association's shed. The Parish Council agreed the new location at the bottom of the field, but closer to the bottom fence rather than the cottage side.	
11. CORRESPONDENCE /PARISHIONER QUESTIONS	<u>a. Waste</u> • Communication from a parishioner and between Cllr Dawlings and TWBC were circulated regarding the following: ❖ LITTER BINS • Concerns raised about the overflowing bins and rubbish scattered across the recreation ground and pavements. • Cllr Dawlings, BVT and the Clerk have raised this issue with TWBC over a number of years. The only suggestion which TWBC has so far made is to move one existing bin to another location. • TWBC is responsible for placing the litter bins and for emptying them, and BVT has requested larger bins and which are lidded in some form, with either BVT or BPC paying for these if necessary. • TWBC has not responded to this request nor has it been able to give a guarantee that new bins would be emptied. • Cllr Dawlings has also asked what TWBC do to prevent waste being scattered in other parts of the Borough. ❖ RECYCLING • Request for public recycling bins throughout the parish. • Cllr Dawlings has previously raised the fact that there should be a waste recycling centre in the High Weald to save 30 plus mile round trips to the KCC centre at North Farm and has suggested that perhaps a better geographical spread of recycling centres is a matter that could be picked up with Local Government Reorganisation. ❖ FLYTIPPING • Members of the public have been seen disposing of domestic waste in public bins. • This is flytipping and BPC encourages parishioners to report these incidents online to TWBC <u>Report fly-tipping</u>.	
15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING	Date of Next Meeting: Monday 21 st September, 7pm.	
	The meeting closed at 8.15pm.	