



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 3 February 2026 in the Meeting Room, Detling Village Hall

Present: Cllr Clive English (Chairman), Cllr Steve Jubb, Cllr Laura Maclaren and;
and Mrs Wendy Licence (Clerk).

Also present were eight members of the public.

Cllr English welcomed everyone to the meeting

Public Time

The meeting was adjourned for the Public Time

A question was raised about the Queensway footpath; the condition of The Street and pot holes in Hockers Lane.

The meeting was reconvened

1. Councillor Vacancy

No applications had been received.

2. Apologies.

Apologies had been received from Cllr Chris Houlihan (at another meeting); Cllr Stephen Thompson (at another meeting); and Cllr Bianca Willmott (holiday): noted.

Apologies had also been received from County Councillor Sarah Emberson (at another meeting).

3. Declaration of Interest or Lobbying

None declared.

4. Dispensations

None.

5. Items to be taken in closed session

It was agreed that item 17. *Villager of the Year* be taken in closed session.

6. Approval of the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 6 January 2026

a) To consider the minutes of the previous meeting and if in order sign as a true record.

Cllr Maclaren **PROPOSED** to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 6 January 2026 as a true record; **SECONDED** by Cllr Jubb: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**. The minutes were duly signed by Cllr English.

b) Matters arising from the minutes (except those issues appearing under specific headings)
All matters on the agenda.

7. Highways

a) To receive an update

Cllr Maclaren reported that the Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) 2026/27 has been submitted to KCC Highways. Items include the outstanding matters from the previous HIP: parking; 20mph speed limit; new signs for Hockers Lane warning of pedestrians in the carriageway; and a parking solution. New items include an item for the potential (subject to consultation results) restricted access at Jades Crossing; extension of the footpath on the bend outside the public house with double yellow lines at the junction; the reinstatement of double yellow lines outside Tudor Gate bungalow; and corresponding double white lines. A request has been made for KCC Highways to evaluate traffic calming and design features for the management of speed reduction and volumes using Hockers Lane to improve road safety. In addition, to look specifically at accident reduction in White Hill Road.

The KCC Highways design team has now submitted its latest plan and costings. Subject to two minor outstanding items being confirmed then the scheme is due to be progressed, as soon as possible.

The Highways and Transportation Working Group (H&TWG) will investigate finding an acceptable solution for parking issues in the village. Funding of a car park and the logistics of finding a suitable location, installation costs and maintenance must be considered. Residents are requested to park in safe locations and to be considerate to the needs and safety of other road users and pedestrians.

The pole for the Speed Indicator Device (SID) has now been installed outside 16 Hockers Lane, and the delivery of the equipment is imminent. Late correspondence from KCC Highways suggests that, because of recent accidents, they think that this is not a suitably safe location for the SID.

Road safety on Hockers Lane bends remains an ongoing issue and meetings have been held with KCC Highways to highlight the need for a safe footpath out of the village and for improved safety for pedestrians on the bends. New warning signs have been approved and await installation. A reduced speed limit has currently not been approved. Helen Whately MP recently circulated a national petition for lower speed limits on single track lanes. The need for safety improvements has again been raised on the HIP for 2026/27, and discussions continue with KCC Highways.

Road safety in White Hill Road has been discussed with KCC Highways and is on the HIP for 2026/27 to try to find ways to reduce accidents and improve visibility for motorists.

The results of the consultation on restricting access from the A249 southbound by having a no left turn into the village at Jades Crossing, except for buses and emergency vehicles, were unequivocally in favour. This matter will now be pursued with KCC Highways, However, to fund this KCC Highways needs to bid for funding, which would not be possible until 2027, followed by a minimum installation period of six to eight months, so not before 2027/28. The Council will formally write to KCC Highways to indicate the parish's wish to progress this matter. This will be at no cost to the Parish. For the interim, KCC Highways has offered to replace the signage in the current locations, with reduced times, to enable enforcement also at no cost to the parish.

KCCllr Emberson has supported the Council in trying to get the reinstatement of a grit lorry through the village to ensure the bus service remains safe and operational.

There are grit bins in the village but during inclement weather these take time for KCC Highways to refill. A supply of grit is critical for all in the village; the grit is for use on the roads and pavements and is not for private use. The damaged bin in Scragged Oak Road has been reported and a replacement bin requested; it has been requested that the grit bins be replenished.

Cllr Maclaren said that an update of the footpath at Queensway needs to be requested.

ACTION: Clerk

Cllr Maclaren said that KCC Highways has changed its policy regarding reporting potholes.

ACTION: Clerk to contact County Councillor Spencer Dixon, Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

Cllr English thanked Cllr Maclaren for her sterling work and comprehensive report.

b) To consider quotation for 20mph scheme.

Councillors **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept the estimate of £18,500 from KCC Highways for the scheme.

c) To consider baseline traffic management survey

Cllr Maclaren said that this had been raised by Cllr Thompson and is a good tool for assessing the problems in Detling. A single Automatic Traffic Count survey (ATC) was offered by KCC Highways, but an isolated ATC would not assess adequately the issues, and more comprehensive approach is needed, over an extended period. KCC Highways was sent suggested locations for such a survey but as yet no response has been received.

8. Open Spaces

a) To receive an update

Cllr Maclaren reported that the play area Inspection was completed in January and no issues of concern were raised.

A meeting with the Conservation Officer regarding maintenance of the of the Tudor Gate has been scheduled for the 12 February.

KCC Highways and Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) have been contacted regarding a litter bin for Jades Crossing.

A notice board awaits installation opposite the shop, behind the fence beside the footpath on the play area.

The Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) is encouraging Parish Councils to find out what assets in their parish are owned by Kent County Council or Maidstone Borough Council to ensure they bid (not financially) for the assets to be transferred to the Parish Council before Local Government Reorganisation.

ACTION: Clerk to forward correspondence regarding parking area in St Martins Close.

b) Sewage issues

Cllr Maclaren informed members that Monks Meadow has had to be closed on two occasions in the last month, for health and safety reasons, due to sewage overflows. The area is reopened as soon as the spills have been cleaned and is safe for use. Sewage overflows are becoming a frequent and unacceptable issue affecting public open spaces with four serious overflows in Monks Meadow in the last three months. There have also been two spills and problems with sewage in Church Lane. Last year the pumping station failed due to being at capacity and the village endured a week of tankers pumping out the station 24/7. In addition, to reporting and getting the spills cleaned up, the Parish Council has written to Southern Water to request that a full and comprehensive review be undertaken and to survey all drainage and to find out what the issues are. This includes looking at the capacity, mix of surface and sewage into the same drainage system, the pipe fitness and any other potential problems. To assist with assessing the problem the Parish Council has requested copies of the drainage mapping for Detling.

Southern Water has attended Horish Woods and has caused considerable damage when emptying a reserve reservoir. The Parish Council intends to take this matter up with Southern Water to get repairs undertaken to the area. The Council is grateful to Daren and Donna for keeping us informed and for all the hard work they put in maintaining our open spaces at both Horish Woods and Monks Meadow.

Cllr English thanked Cllr Maclaren for her sterling work.

c) To consider quotation for grounds maintenance

Cllr English **PROPOSED** to accept the quotation for grounds maintenance from P Waring; **SECONDED** by Cllr Maclaren: **AGREED UNANIMOUS.**

9. Visitors

a) Police

Cllr Maclaren informed Members that she had reported issues with youths on bikes to the police.

Cllr English reported that there was a discussion regarding the Ward Cluster Meetings and how useful they are.

b) Borough Councillor

MBCllr Thompson was unable to attend the meeting and sent the following report:

The two Boxley Downs Ward Councillors will be making representations to the MBC committee on Wednesday 4 February to ask for further improvements to the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the Lidsing Development. This includes even more robust proposals to ensure that the transport assessments and planning that ought to be done in the early stages actually get done. These measures are primarily aimed at Bredhurst and Boxley, but Detling and Stockbury are also mentioned as the wider effects of this development must be properly considered in all directions.

We note that a great number of the consultation responses put in by councillors and residents have led to substantial improvements to the draft SPD. That encourages us that further changes can be made. The developer has already been to a 'pre-planning' meeting with Planning Committee councillors (last Thursday), with the next scheduled for April, before the actual application submission, they told us.

The government is advancing plans to vastly reduce planning protections, through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and removing SPDs as a strategy to control future development proposals. This underlines the importance of getting the current SPDs right, while we and MBC still have the opportunity to do so.

I was able to bring forward planning for Air Quality Management in rural areas at the recent meeting with the officer team, including at KCC. This will be of great interest to Detling residents who have been persistently asking for more support. The national regulations for nitrogen oxides and particulates are becoming more and more rigorous over the coming years, so there is policy support for these health improvement measures.

Police colleagues have reported their interventions with youngsters on bikes in the area.

KALC Maidstone Area Committee Meeting

Cllr Maclaren reported that the Area Committee had produced a comprehensive response to the Gypsy and Traveller consultation. The Parish Services Scheme is likely to end this year and Councils will need to consider this for their budgets in 2027-28. Concern was raised regarding planning applications being repeated if turned down, there is a lack of consultation with utilities and KCC Highways.

Cllr English said the problem is that water companies are not statutory consultees.

Cllr English thanked Cllr Maclaren for attending the meeting and for her report.

10. Correspondence

Lynch Bank issues

Cllr English reported that he is liaising with Maidstone Borough Council.

Update on litter bin near Queensway

Cllr English informed Members that he has a meeting with the officer on Friday and will report back to the resident after that.

11. Planning

a) Ref: 25/505284/FULL

Address: Ash Farm Scragged Oak Road Detling Kent ME14 3HN

Proposal: Demolition of existing conservatory and outbuilding, and erection of new single storey rear extension with vertical timber cladding to existing walls, and erection of a detached outbuilding.

Councillors considered the application and had no objections to the proposal.

12. Financial Matters:

a) Finance report

The Clerk reported that expenditure is within the budget and that some budget lines will be carried forward. Bearsted Parish Council has confirmed that there is nothing to pay towards the shopper bus as there was a small amount left over from the previous two years grant funding and Council contributions, Cllr Hall had been able to secure enough funding for the bus service for two further years.

b) To set the Precept for 2026-27

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to set the precept at £43,075.

c) Invoices for payment

Cheque no	Payee	Reason	Nett	VAT	Total
500270	DCK Payroll	Payroll	31.50	6.30	£37.80
500271	Forvis Mazars	Limited Assurance Review	315.00	63.00	£378.00
500272	P Waring	Grounds maintenance	542.05	108.41	£650.46
500273	Administration	Expenses			£73.25
500274-5	Staff costs				
500276	Detling Village Hall	Room hire			£24.00

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to make the payments.

13. Village Hall Lease

Cllr English informed members that the matter is finally being progressed.

14. Speedwatch

Cllr Jubb reported that there had been no sessions due to inclement weather.

15. Community Resilience

Cllr Maclaren reported that Thurnham and surrounding villages had been affected by recent water supply outages, only the top of Detling was affected twice with the lower village areas being unaffected. The problems did highlight the difficulties vulnerable residents would experience, in trying to access remote water stations. The matter needs to be raised so that representations and plans can be considered for resilience for our residents.

Cllr English said Alison Broom, Chief Executive Officer MBC, had asked if the water company could break down their water stations to smaller areas but they refused.

ACTION: Clerk to write to MP

16. To consider Assets of Value to the Community

Cllr English said the list needs to be finalised.

17. Villager of the Year

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 and because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press were excluded from the meeting during the consideration of Villager of the Year Award

Members approved the recipient for the 2025 Villager of the Year Award.

Date of next Parish Council Meeting– Tuesday 3 March 2026

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

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Chairman
Date: 3 March 2026