



BOBBING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Wednesday 8th April 2026

Present:

Cllr. G. Randall	Cllr. R. Richardson arrived 19.05
Sarah Poole - Clerk	Cllr. M. Bencych left 21.20
Cllr. S. Chapman	Cllr. L. Blake-Knowles left 20.12
Cllr. M. Baldock left 21.12	

In attendance: Four parishioners (two arrived 19.26) and one left at 21.02, and one left at 21.20 and PC Divers and PC Adam Blakeman left at 20.19

BPCM25/26 – 213 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Cllr. G. Randall welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked all present for attending.

Apologies were also received from Cllr. N. Twardochleb (family reasons), Cllr. K. Watson (Mayoral duties), Cllr. A. Cavanagh and the PC Boosey. **RESOLVED:** That apologies for absence be accepted.

BPCM25/26 – 214 Councillors Vacancy

- a. *To consider the co-option of Uwe Koepsel for the vacancy arising from the resignation of Cllr. Peter French***

Councillors considered the application received from Mr Uwe Koepsel .

Cllr. Randall proposed that Mr Koepsel be co-opted to the position of Parish Councillor, noting Mr Koepsel's active contribution to the local community and the Village Hall. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. Baldock. **Resolved:** That Uwe Koepsel be co-opted as a Parish Councillor.

Following the resolution, the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and the Register of Interests were completed and duly signed, and passed to the Clerk for witnessing.

BPCM25/26 – 215 Public Session

No comments were received.



BPCM25/26 – 216 To receive any report from Borough Councillors

Cllr. Mike Baldock advised that the report would be presented under the Planning section, for the land to the West of Bobbing 22/503654/OUT.

A written report was received from Cllr. Ann Cavanagh and had been circulated to Councillors.

No apologies were received from Cllr. Lloyd Chapman, Cllr. Roger Clarke and Cllr. James Hunt.

No further comments were received.

BPCM25/26 – 217 To receive any report from County Councillor

A report from Cllr. R. Palmer (Kent County Councillor – Swale West) was received and read out by the Clerk regarding planning application reference **22/503654/EIOUT** (Land to the West of Bobbing, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 8QL).

The report provided an update following the Swale Borough Council Planning Committee meeting held on 26th March 2026, at which the application for up to 2,500 dwellings was considered. It was noted that the Committee did not accept the officer's recommendation to approve the application and resolved to defer the decision in order to seek further information.

Cllr. Palmer raised concerns regarding the conduct of the meeting, specifically that cumulative traffic impacts relating to the North West Sittingbourne allocation (1,190 dwellings) had not been fully considered. Cllr. Palmer advised that a formal complaint had been submitted to the Monitoring Officer and Chief Executive, stating that such cumulative impacts should be taken into account in accordance with planning law.

It was further noted that the proposed development is not allocated within the Swale Borough Council Local Plan (Bearing Fruits 2017).

Cllr. Palmer confirmed that the application is expected to return to Planning Committee for reconsideration and that Cllr. Palmer will continue to oppose the application.

Parish Councils were encouraged to submit or strengthen formal objections, particularly in relation to highways impact, infrastructure pressures, loss of agricultural land, and conflict with the Local Plan.

Cllr. Baldock advised that the Committee did not vote to reject the application, but instead voted not to accept the officer's recommendation, resulting in the deferral to obtain further information.

The update was noted.



BPCM25/26 – 218 **To receive any report from:**

Cllr. Randall conveyed the Parish Council's best wishes for a speedy recovery to the relevant officer who has been absent for some time. A card, signed by all Councillors, was passed to the officers in attendance for onward delivery.

An update from **PC 30724 Jacob Boosey** (Archers Park and The Meads) was received. The report advised that there were no significant or emerging crime patterns, with the majority of incidents being domestic-related. A recent residential burglary was noted, and residents were reminded to remain vigilant and follow appropriate crime prevention advice. Concerns were also raised regarding vehicles being driven at speed within the estate, and residents were encouraged to report incidents, providing supporting evidence where possible.

An update from **PC 13812 Adam Blakeman** (Iwade and Bobbing) was received. The report highlighted issues including counterfeit currency in circulation and the outcome of a targeted traffic operation (Operation Fold) addressing road safety. Key policing priorities identified for the area include fly tipping, the use of catapults, and e-scooters/nuisance bikes, with increased patrols, enforcement activity, and community engagement in place.

No reports were received from **PC Atherton** (Borden and Grove Park) or **PC 13369 Jez Chittim** (Kemsley and Milton Regis).

The reports were noted.

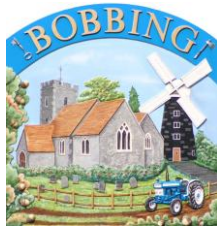
During discussion, Cllr. Bencych raised a query regarding recent police activity at Pigeon Farm. Due to the sensitive nature of the matter, including GDPR and data protection considerations, and as this remains an ongoing investigation, no further information could be provided.

Cllr. Knowles reminded those present of ongoing issues within the carpark/park at Quinton.

Cllr. Richardson raised concerns regarding the level of fly tipping at Raspberry Farm. Officers confirmed that this matter is subject to a live investigation involving Swale Borough Council and the Environment Agency.

Police Officers advised that Councillors and residents are not restricted to engaging with their designated ward officer and may attend any local police surgery to speak with an officer. It was also emphasised that all incidents should be reported via **101**, where appropriate.

PC Divers explained a rating system where areas receive scores depending on crime level. These numbers do not mean numbers of incidents but increase according to the seriousness of incidents. He advised that they have increased significantly, from 4 to 40 officers. He gave examples of current figures of areas are between 3075-24. In this scale, Bobbing has a score of 70. It was noted



that overall figures range across wider reporting areas and may vary depending on the nature and classification of individual incidents.

PC Divers advised that details regarding the Rural Task Force will be provided to the Clerk and gave a brief overview of the work undertaken by the team.

The Clerk further advised that Police Officers will be attending upcoming police surgeries to be held during the Friendship Café sessions at the end of the month.

BPCM25/26 – 219 **For Members to make or receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary Interests in regard to any items on the agenda under the Council’s adopted Code of Conduct**

Councillors were invited to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary Interests in respect of items on the agenda, in accordance with the Council’s adopted Code of Conduct.

Cllr. S. Chapman (Booking Secretary of Bobbing Village Hall), Cllr. R. Richardson (Chair), Cllr. G. Randall (Vice-Chair), and Cllr. U. Koepsel (Trustee) declared an interest in items BPCM25/26 – 221(a) and BPCM25/26 – 229(n) and would abstain from voting on these items.

BPCM25/26 – 220 **Approval and Adoption of Minutes from the previous meetings Minutes of the Council Meeting on 4th March 2026.**

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4th March 2026, having been circulated in advance, were considered.

Cllr. M. Baldock proposed that the Minutes be approved and adopted as a true and accurate record of the meeting. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. M. Bencych. **Resolved:** That the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4th March 2026 be approved and adopted. The Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

It was noted that this item commenced at 20:12, following the discussion of the Planning item which had been brought forward. The meeting then returned to BPCM25/26 – 221 (Matters Arising).

BPCM25/26 – 221 **Matters arising from the minutes not covered by other agenda items.**

a. *Kitchen quote – Bobbing Village Hall*

Cllr. R. Richardson provided an update on the proposed kitchen works at Bobbing Village Hall, advising that indicative costs range between £18,000 and £33,000 depending on the specification, with the higher estimate relating to a commercial-standard kitchen.



The Clerk reminded Councillors that Swale Borough Council Environmental Health Officers must be consulted prior to any works being undertaken, as compliance with food hygiene regulations will require formal approval.

Cllr. M. Baldock and Cllr. M. Bencych confirmed that they would not support the proposal at this time, noting that funding for such improvements has been identified within a Section 106 agreement linked to the Bobbing Garden Village development, and that it would be necessary to demonstrate need before progressing any works.

Cllr. U. Koepsel stated that the Village Hall has experienced a loss of bookings due to the current condition of the kitchen.

Cllr. M. Baldock reminded the meeting that, where a declaration of interest has been made, the Councillor must not participate in the discussion or speak in any external capacity in relation to that item.

BPCM25/26 – 222 Community Engagement

a. *Feedback on Repair Café and Friendship Café*

An update was provided regarding the Repair Café held on 14th March 2026, which takes place on the second Saturday of each month between 10:00 and 14:00.

Cllr. U. Koepsel reported that the initiative continues to run well and is positively received by the community. It was noted that additional volunteers would be beneficial to assist with the repair of items.

Councillors were advised that the next session is scheduled to take place on the upcoming Saturday between 10:00 and 14:00.

b. *Report on Loneliness Project (Friendship Café)*

An update was provided on the Loneliness Project (Friendship Café), with the session held on 28th March 2026 between 10:30 and 14:30.

The Clerk reported that the project continues to run well and remains positively received. It was noted that the sessions, held on the last Saturday of each month, are currently trialling extended opening hours from 10:30 to 14:30. However, attendance patterns indicate that the majority of attendees, with the exception of two individuals, had departed by approximately 12:45. This will continue to be monitored.

The Clerk further reported that attendees have expressed positive feedback, highlighting the value of the sessions in building friendships and reducing social



isolation, with some attendees noting that the sessions are an important part of their week or month.

c. *Bobbing in Bloom Awards night 30th July @ 19.00*

The Clerk reported that arrangements for the Bobbing in Bloom Awards Night are currently being made by Cllr. Watson and the Clerk.

The Clerk asked which Councillors would be willing to participate in judging the competition. It was proposed that the youngest member of the Repair Café be invited to take part in the judging process. Cllr. M. Bencych agreed to make the enquiry.

The clerk will contact the Mayor regarding attendance.

It was noted that judging will take place on a Saturday, to be confirmed, between late June and early July, from 10:00 to 12:00. Councillors were reminded that there are four competition categories.

d. *Annual Parish Meeting Date 13th May @ 19.00*

The Clerk advised that correspondence will be issued to all non-profit organisations and regular users of community facilities within the parish, including the Village Hall, Church, Gore Court, and Newington Cricket Club (Bobbing-based), inviting them to provide reports.

Guest speakers are to be confirmed in due course.

The Clerk reminded Councillors that this meeting is non Parish Council meeting.

Apologies were received from Cllr. U. Koepsel.

e. *Annual Parish Council Meeting Date 6th May @ 19.00*

Apologies were received from Cllr. U. Koepsel and Cllr. M. Bencych, both of whom will be absent.

It was noted that this meeting will include the re-election of Councillors to working parties and the completion of required governance documentation.

f. *Newsletter information*

Councillors noted that the recent newsletter distribution had primarily covered Archers Park and newly developed areas which the Parish Council is seeking to incorporate. It was confirmed that only Archers Park has been fully delivered to date.



Cllr. G. Randall reported that a significant number of newsletters had been distributed to new areas, with limited coverage in existing parts of the parish. The Clerk reminded Councillors that all parishioners within Bobbing should receive the newsletter, as it is funded through the precept.

It was proposed that a special edition of the newsletter be produced to ensure full parish coverage. Cllr. R. Richardson proposed that this edition be reduced to 16 pages and produced with an increased print run of approximately 3,000 copies. Councillors discussed content amendments, including updating information and incorporating current consultations and parish updates.

It was agreed that the core content should remain consistent, with revisions to advertisements and the inclusion of updated information, including Community Governance Review updates, Rose Hill, Village Hall improvements (including roof, solar panels, and disabled toilet), and other key parish matters.

Cllr. M. Baldock agreed to provide updated information relating to Rose Hill. Councillors reviewed specific pages for amendment, consolidation, or removal, and the Clerk was instructed to implement the agreed changes.

The Clerk confirmed that printing is undertaken externally by Swale Borough Council and advised that in-house production would not be practical due to time and resource constraints. It was also noted that Parish Council software and subscriptions cannot be shared with external organisations.

It was agreed that the revised newsletter be prepared for print, with the aim of collection from Swale Borough Council on or around 17th April 2026. **Resolved:** That a special 16-page newsletter be produced and printed, with an increased print run of approximately 3,000 copies, incorporating updated content as agreed.

g. Allotment Project

Cllr. R. Richardson reported on the project following a site visit on 14th March 2026. It was noted that the sheds obtained from the school are not fit for purpose or suitable for assembly.

Cllr. R. Richardson further advised that progress has been made in preparing the site, including levelling the ground and moving a significant amount of material.

Concern was expressed by Cllr. R. Richardson that the project is not progressing at the required pace, particularly as the planting season is approaching and seeds have not yet been planted.

Cllr. R. Richardson advised that volunteer support is required, particularly for manual tasks including constructing planters from materials on site and further ground levelling.



It was noted that Cllr. S. Chapman is the lead Councillor for this project.

A parishioner offered assistance with the project. Cllr. S. Chapman confirmed that she will liaise with the parishioner following the meeting to discuss how support can be provided.

Cllr. M. Baldock advised the parishioner that relevant project sessions and activities typically take place on the second Saturday and the last Saturday of each month.

Cllr. S. Chapman advised that a shed may be available free of charge; however, assistance would be required to dismantle and reassemble it at the site.

h. Litter Picking Project

No feedback was available from the litter pick held on 21st March 2026 in conjunction with St Bartholomew Church, as no Councillors were in attendance.

BPCM25/26 – 223

General matters raised by Parish Councillor’s Reports for discussion.

Prior to leaving the meeting, Cllr. Blake Knowles thanked Councillors for their continued work during the period of absence due to personal reasons and expressed appreciation to the Clerk for maintaining contact. Cllr. Blake Knowles further commended the Parish Council newsletter, recognising the significant amount of work being undertaken, and expressed optimism for future initiatives.

Cllr. U. Koepsel reported attendance at Kent Resilience Team Flood Warden training held at Minster Parish Council offices, with four other attendees present. Cllr. Koepsel emphasised the importance of establishing a Parish Resilience Plan. The Clerk reminded Councillors that details of the pilot scheme, including login information, had previously been circulated and confirmed this information will be reissued to all Councillors. Cllr. U. Koepsel and Cllr. R. Richardson expressed an interest in being involved, and the Clerk will arrange a meeting.

Cllr. S. Chapman advised that there was no report, as the Joint Transportation Board meeting was cancelled due to Kent County Council non-attendance.

Cllr. M. Bencych reported attendance at the Swale Borough Council Planning Committee meeting regarding the Bobbing Garden Village, as well as the Full Council meeting at Swale House.

Cllr. M. Baldock reported attendance at both the Planning Committee and Full Council meetings at Swale House. Cllr. Baldock suggested that correspondence be sent to Swale CVS to consider renaming “loneliness”



initiatives to “friendship training”. Cllr. Baldock also requested that the provision of “chat benches” be included on a future agenda.

Cllr. R. Richardson reported attendance at the Swale Borough Council Planning Committee meeting regarding the Bobbing Garden Village and the Full Council meeting.

Cllr. G. Randall reported attendance at the Swale Borough Council Planning Committee meeting regarding the Bobbing Garden Village and the Full Council meeting. Cllr. Randall enquired about progress relating to the Gore Court toilets and whether they could be reinstated as a disabled Changing Places facility. The Clerk confirmed this would be followed up with Swale Borough Council.

BPCM25/26 – 224 Financial Statement and Authorisation of Payments

The Clerk/RFO reported that payments would be made under delegated authority where appropriate and presented the schedule of payments for approval.

Councillors noted that financial transactions are recorded on the Scribe accounting system, to which Cllr. R. Richardson has full access, including reconciliations and payment records.

Councillors further noted that the Parish Council has funded the purchase of a defibrillator, and that a contribution of £1,700.00 has been confirmed from Swale Borough Councillors’ Grants towards two projects.

Several payments made by Direct Debit and Standing Order had already been processed under delegated authority.

The remaining payments for approval were proposed by Cllr. M. Baldock and seconded by Cllr. M. Bencych. **Resolved:** That all payments be approved and authorised.

The Clerk reported that the Unity Trust Bank balance prior to payments stood at £70,183.21. Councillors with banking access were requested to complete the necessary authorisations.

The Clerk reminded Councillors that the 2025/26 accounting period must be formally closed before processing April payments, in accordance with the Council’s receipts and payments accounting system.



BPCM24/25 – 225 AGAR

a. *Update from Internal Auditor.*

It was noted that this item commenced at 21:12, following the earlier discussion of the Planning item which had been brought forward. The meeting then returned to **BPCM25/26 – 225 (a) (Internal Auditor)**.

The Clerk reported that the Internal Auditor attended on 1st April 2026 and reviewed all required documentation. The Internal Auditor has signed off the relevant section of the AGAR, which will now be submitted to Mazars, the External Auditors.

It was noted that a written report of recommendations will be provided in due course.

The Internal Auditor verbally raised concerns regarding the timeliness of staff salary payments and highlighted that Councillors appear not to be undertaking sufficient training, reminding Councillors of their legal responsibilities.

Cllr. M. Bencych queried the implications of Councillors not completing the required training. The Clerk advised that failure to undertake appropriate training could result in decisions being made without sufficient understanding of legal requirements, which may impact the lawfulness of those decisions.

b. *Sign off Annual Governance Statement 2025/26*

The Clerk read the Annual Governance Statement to Councillors. Cllr. G. Randall completed the document as appropriate.

It was proposed by Cllr. G. Randall and seconded by Cllr. M. Baldock that the Statement be approved and signed by the Chairman.

Resolved: That the Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 be approved. The Chairman duly signed the document.

c. *Sign off Accounting Statement 2025/26*

The Clerk read out the Accounting Statements, prepared using the Scribe accounting system.

It was proposed by Cllr. M. Bencych and seconded by Cllr. R. Richardson that the Statements be approved and signed by the Chairman.

Resolved: That the Accounting Statements 2025/26 be approved. The Chairman duly signed the document.



It was proposed by Cllr. G. Randall and seconded by Cllr. M. Baldock that this item be brought forward to 20:45. **Resolved:** That the item be brought forward to 20:45.

BPCM25/26 – 226 Planning Application – viewable on: Swale:

<http://pa.midkent.gov.uk/onlineapplications>;

a. *Report on the planning meeting 26th March:*

Application No: 22/503654/EIOUT

Location: Land to the West of Bobbing, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 8QL

Proposal: Outline application (all matters reserved except for access) for a mixed-use development comprising up to 2,500 dwellings, a 5.21ha commercial employment zone (including doctors' surgery), a 4.35ha sports hub (and sports pitches), a 3FE primary school, community facilities, local retail provision, public open space, children's play areas, and associated infrastructure.

Cllr. G. Randall thanked all those who attended the Planning Committee meeting on 26th March 2026 at Swale House, including those who spoke against the proposal. It was noted that representation was made not only by Bobbing Parish Council, but also by two Parish Councils from the Isle of Sheppey and Borden Parish Council.

Cllr. M. Baldock expressed concerns regarding both the Planning Committee meeting and the subsequent Full Council meeting at which the Local Plan was adopted (Option 4). Cllr. Baldock stated that the process was seriously flawed, citing concerns of undue influence by officers and a misunderstanding presented to Members that Option 6 did not meet housing targets.

Cllr. Baldock advised that this was not accurate, confirming that sufficient numbers existed to meet the Local Plan housing target; however, the requirement for a full 5% buffer had not been met. It was further noted that Option 6 was approximately 1,000 dwellings below the required level due to permissions already granted but not yet fully accounted for within the Local Plan.

Cllr. Baldock further advised that there are over 1,000 dwellings with existing planning permission which have not currently been included within the housing figures, as officers are required to review and verify these permissions. It was noted that this process is expected to take approximately four months. Concern was expressed that these permissions should already be taken into account, and it was noted that the purpose of the 5% buffer is to provide flexibility where sites do not come forward as anticipated.



Cllr. Baldock also raised concerns regarding the conduct of the meetings, stating that, in Cllr. Baldock's view, the process may have been unlawful. It was further noted that clarification is required as to why Members who opposed the development at Planning Committee subsequently supported its inclusion within the Local Plan at Full Council.

Cllr. Baldock expressed the view that the Parish Council should seek legal advice in relation to the handling of the Full Council Local Plan decision and the concerns regarding the lawfulness of the process. Cllr. Randall supported this approach, advising that legal advice should be obtained prior to considering any potential Judicial Review.

Cllr. Baldock raised additional concerns regarding the lack of evidence for an independent traffic assessment and suggested that this may constitute further grounds for seeking legal advice. Reference was also made to potential external influence and the possibility of pursuing a Judicial Review.

Cllr. R. Richardson proposed that funds be allocated from the £11,000.00 previously set aside by the Parish Council for legal matters to seek professional legal advice from the same company previously engaged in relation to Highsted.

Cllr. M. Baldock proposed that the Parish Council seek legal advice with a view to submitting a claim for Judicial Review. It was noted that the initial stage would involve submission to an independent panel to assess whether there are sufficient grounds and merit for the case to proceed, with a full Judicial Review only following if this threshold is met.

It was further proposed that:

The Parish Council formally write to Swale Borough Council advising that legal advice is being sought;

No further comments be submitted on the matter until such advice has been received; and

The independent traffic assessment be formally challenged.

Cllr. Baldock raised further concerns regarding the handling of highways matters, noting that where there are controversial highways impacts, Swale Borough Council would normally obtain an independent traffic assessment. It was the view that no such independent assessment had been undertaken in this case.

It was further noted that correspondence received shortly before the Planning Committee meeting challenged the highways analysis, and that the officer's report relied on assurances without clearly demonstrating how these



conclusions were reached. Concern was expressed that decisions of this nature should be supported by robust and transparent evidence.

Cllr. Randall proposed that the Clerk contact neighbouring Parish Councils, including Newington, Lower Halstow, Borden and Iwade, with a view to challenging the independent traffic assessment and exploring a coordinated response.

Cllr. M. Bencych proposed that the matter be progressed without delay and that a barrister be instructed within the next few days to obtain legal advice.

Cllr. M. Baldock advised that the initial stage of submitting a Judicial Review claim would involve a relatively modest court fee, approximately £200, with further costs likely should the matter proceed beyond the initial permission stage.

It was further agreed that the Clerk will liaise with neighbouring Parish Councils to establish whether a joint approach and shared funding arrangements may be appropriate.

Cllr. Blake Knowles raised concerns regarding developers altering commitments post-planning approval, particularly in relation to affordable housing and infrastructure provision, and the potential impact this may have on local communities.

Cllr. Baldock emphasised the urgency of the matter and proposed that authority be delegated to the Clerk, in consultation with Cllr. G. Randall, Cllr. M. Baldock, and Cllr. M. Bencych, to progress correspondence and seek initial legal and planning advice.

The proposal was seconded by Cllr. Blake Knowles.

It was noted that Cllr. Small (Borden Parish Council), who was in attendance, advised that the matter would be placed on the agenda for consideration at the next Borden Parish Council meeting. **Resolved:** That legal advice be sought using allocated Parish Council funds;

That no further comments be submitted until legal advice has been obtained;

That the independent traffic assessment be formally challenged; and

That the Clerk liaise with neighbouring Parish Councils regarding a potential joint approach.

It was further agreed that a working group be established comprising Cllr. M. Baldock, Cllr. G. Randall, Cllr. M. Bencych, and the Clerk, to progress matters including drafting correspondence and coordinating next steps.



It was noted that this item concluded at 20:06, at which point the meeting returned to BPCM25/26 – 221 (Matters Arising).

It was noted that this item commenced at 21:12, following the earlier discussion of BPCM25/26 – 225 (a) (Internal Auditor), which had been returned to after the previously brought-forward Planning item and the Village Hall funding item. The meeting then proceeded to BPCM25/26 – 227 (Appeals).

BPCM25/26 – 227 Appeals:

No appeals were received.

BPCM25/26 – 228 Consultations

a. *Swale Community Governance Review (Stage 2)*

Councillors noted correspondence received regarding the Swale Community Governance Review (Stage 2).

It was reported that Full Council considered the proposals on 1st April 2026, following discussion at the Policy and Resources Committee. The second stage of consultation commenced on 7th April 2026 and will close on 2nd June 2026.

Councillors noted that the consultation includes proposals affecting parish arrangements, including a potential boundary change between Bobbing Parish and Iwade Parish. Residents are being invited to provide their views via an online questionnaire, with supporting information, maps, and materials available on the Swale Borough Council website.

It was further noted that Swale Borough Council will be promoting the consultation through various channels, including social media, public events, and printed materials, and that Parish Councils are encouraged to assist in raising awareness locally.

The availability of paper consultation forms, posters, and leaflets was noted, along with the offer from Swale Borough Council officers and Members to attend Parish Council meetings if required.

Councillors agreed to support the promotion of the consultation within the parish.

b. *Swale Local plan*

Councillors discussed the adoption of the Swale Local Plan and recent related meetings held at Swale Borough Council full council meeting 1st April. .



Concerns were raised regarding the process by which the Local Plan was agreed, including the selection of Option 4 and the information presented to Members at the time of decision-making. Particular reference was made to the implications for development within the parish, including the proposed Bobbing Garden Village.

It was noted that the Local Plan, once adopted, will guide development within the Borough for a significant period. The discussion was noted.

At 21.19, Cllr. G. Randall proposed that Standing Orders be suspended after 21:30. This was seconded by Cllr. R. Richardson. **Resolved:** That Standing Orders be suspended after 21:00.

c. *Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Consultation*

Councillors noted correspondence regarding the Swale Borough Council consultation on the Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

It was noted that the consultation commenced on 30th March 2026 and will close on 29th April 2026.

Councillors were advised that the SPD aims to provide guidance to support the assessment of HMO planning applications, ensure developments are appropriate to their surroundings, minimise impacts on neighbouring properties, and improve living standards for occupants.

The consultation also seeks to address key issues including parking, waste management, and the overall character of local areas, while balancing the need for affordable accommodation.

Councillors noted that residents, landlords, and stakeholders are invited to provide feedback via an online questionnaire or by direct submission to Swale Borough Council. The consultation was noted.

d) *Designation of an Area of Special Control of Advertisements (ASCA)*

Councillors noted correspondence from Swale Borough Council regarding a public consultation on the proposed designation of an Area of Special Control of Advertisements (ASCA) within parts of the Borough.

It was noted that the purpose of an ASCA is to introduce additional controls over outdoor advertisements in areas requiring special protection due to their scenic, historic, architectural, or cultural significance.

Councillors were advised that the proposal follows the adoption of the Heritage Strategy (2020) and subsequent Conservation Area reviews, identifying eight Conservation Areas where the historic character is considered vulnerable.



These include Faversham Town, Milton Regis, Newington High Street, Sittingbourne, and others within the Borough.

The proposed measures would introduce stricter controls on advertisement size, height, proportion of frontage coverage, and illuminated signage, with the aim of preserving the character of historic areas.

It was noted that the consultation commenced on 1st April 2026 and will close in 26th May 2026, with opportunities for stakeholders to provide feedback on the proposed areas and controls. The consultation was noted.

BPCM25/26 – 229 Correspondence

a) *Report on the Swale CVS – Loneliness Community Champion Training*

Councillors noted correspondence from Swale Community and Voluntary Services regarding the Community Activities Directory, which now includes over 200 activities across the Borough, aimed at supporting residents to remain connected and reduce social isolation.

The importance of promoting local activities and improving access to community information was acknowledged. Councillors were encouraged to review and update any Parish Council listings and to support promotion of the directory within the community.

b) *Bobbing Parish Council Website*

Councillors were reminded that the draft Parish Council website had been circulated on 31st March 2026 for review. No comments had been received to date. It was noted that the website cannot be signed off until all Councillors have had the opportunity to review and agree the content.

c) *A249 Traffic Management*

Councillors noted recent and upcoming traffic management arrangements relating to the A249 and surrounding road network, including temporary closures, diversions, and the activation of permanent traffic lights at the Key Street gyratory.

d) *Key Street Newsletter – March 2026*

Councillors noted the update confirming that works at Key Street Roundabout are scheduled for completion in April 2026, subject to final snagging works and potential additional night-time closures.



e) *The Circuit – Defibrillator check at Grove Park*

Councillors noted correspondence regarding available training dates for defibrillator use, which are open to both parishioners and Councillors. Cllr. U. Koepsel expressed an interest in attending the training. The Clerk advised that there are currently 12 spaces available.

It was further noted that the defibrillator located at the Welcome Co-op, Grove Park, was inspected and serviced on 2nd March 2026 and confirmed to be operational and compliant with required performance standards.

f) *Kent Resilience Team – Proposal to establish a Parish Council working group*

Councillors noted the proposal to establish a Parish Council working group in relation to resilience planning.

It was proposed by Cllr. M. Baldock and seconded by Cllr. M. Bencych that this item be brought (n) forward to 20:59. **Resolved:** All agreed.

n) *Update information of the request for funding for the Village Hall from Cllr. Randall and Cllr. Richardson*

Cllr. R. Richardson provided an update regarding ongoing works to the Village Hall, advising that an issue had been identified with a structural element within the new disabled toilet facilities, which may require removal at an estimated cost of approximately £1,000.

It was further reported that a parishioner, who is a builder, had also inspected the area and advised that, in his view, the issue is unlikely to be structural. However, it was noted that Swale Borough Council must be informed before any works are undertaken.

Cllr. R. Richardson further advised that there is an urgent requirement for fire safety improvements, including fire stopping works, a fire door to the chair store (estimated at £2,000), and a shutter for the kitchen (estimated at £1,000).

It was reported that Cllr. M. Baldock attended the site with Cllr. R. Richardson and Cllr. M. Bencych. During the visit, an incident occurred whereby Cllr. Baldock stepped onto wet cement and slipped, resulting in damage to personal property. It was noted that this matter should be raised with the contractor. Cllr. R. Richardson confirmed that no barriers or signage were in place to indicate that the area was unsafe or that wet works were in progress.

Cllr. R. Richardson advised that overall support required for the Village Hall is £4,000.



Cllr. M. Baldock proposed that £4,000 be awarded as a donation towards the Village Hall works. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. M. Bencych. All others abstained as a conflict of interest. **Resolved:** That £4,000 be awarded as a donation to support Village Hall improvements.

It was noted that this item concluded at 21:12, at which point the meeting returned to **BPCM25/26 – 225 (a) (Internal Auditor)**.

o. Road Safety and Active Travel Group – Newsletter Issue 8 and Seminar

Councillors noted receipt of the Road Safety and Active Travel Group (RSATG) Newsletter Issue 8, covering the period January to March 2026.

The newsletter highlighted ongoing work across Kent, including delivery of Highway Improvement Plan (HIP) schemes, community engagement, and road safety initiatives. It was noted that between April 2025 and March 2026, 226 HIP meetings were held and over £195,000 of schemes were delivered across the county .

Councillors also noted updates on active travel initiatives, including the launch of the *WeRoam* app promoting walking, wheeling and cycling, and improvements to road safety education programmes for young drivers.

Details of the RSATG Seminar were also noted, with sessions covering topics such as Vision Zero, Community Speedwatch, safety cameras, and Highway Improvement Plans. It was noted that the Maidstone event was fully booked, with availability remaining at Betteshanger Park.

p. Zurich Insurance Renewal

It was proposed by Cllr. Kosepel and seconded by Cllr. Randall that the Parish Council accept the Zurich Insurance quotation in the sum of £455.07. **Resolved:** That the Zurich Insurance policy be renewed at a cost of £455.07.

q. Kent County Council Trading Standards Alerts

Councillors noted a series of alerts issued by Kent County Council Trading Standards regarding recent scams and rogue trading activity affecting residents across Kent. These included:

- Doorstep criminals targeting residents with poor quality or unnecessary home maintenance services
- Investment scams via messaging platforms
- Fraudulent phone calls impersonating police or banks
- Online marketplace and social media scams
- Fake delivery messages and phishing attempts



Residents are advised to remain vigilant, avoid engaging with cold callers, and report concerns via appropriate channels including Kent Police, CrimeStoppers, and the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline.

Councillors agreed that these warnings should be shared with residents where appropriate to raise awareness and help protect vulnerable members of the community.

r. *Complaint from Parishioner – Stickfast Lane HGV Movements and Response from Raspberry Farm (RWE)*

Councillors noted a complaint received from a parishioner regarding the increase in HGV movements along Stickfast Lane, Bobbing, and the associated safety concerns.

The correspondence highlighted issues including excessive vehicle speeds, unsuitable routing of HGVs, failure to observe existing signage, and incidents involving vehicles overshooting the junction with Sheppey Way. Concerns were also raised regarding damage to property, the suitability of the lane for two-way HGV traffic, and a recent incident where a lorry left the road resulting in a prolonged road closure.

The parishioner suggested that measures such as improved signage, better communication with operating companies, implementation of traffic management (including a potential one-way system), and the installation of traffic monitoring equipment should be considered.

Councillors noted the Clerk's response, confirming that the concerns had been acknowledged and raised with the relevant parties, including RWE, and that the Parish Council would continue to pursue the matter.

A response from Raspberry Farm (RWE) was also noted. RWE confirmed that they were aware of sensitivities relating to HGV movements in the area and had briefed contractors to exercise additional care when using the local road network. RWE further advised that they are willing to arrange a site visit or meeting with their construction team should the issues persist.

s. *Donation Query – Bobbing Church*

Councillors noted correspondence received from a representative of Bobbing Church regarding a potential donation towards a local project.

It was advised that the Church is considering end-of-year giving and has expressed an interest in supporting the Community Allotment Project, subject to confirmation as to whether additional funding or specific items are required.

Councillors welcomed the offer of support of a shed or £850.00 to buy a shed for the project and agreed that the Clerk will respond.



t. Kent ACRE – Village Halls Initiative

Councillors noted correspondence from Kent ACRE regarding a new initiative to support and strengthen village halls across Kent and Medway.

The programme aims to develop village halls into community hubs providing services such as health and wellbeing support, social activities, and local engagement opportunities. Funding is being sought through a crowdfunded campaign, with parish councils invited to contribute or promote the initiative locally.

Councillors agreed to consider the request and whether the Parish Council wishes to support the initiative financially or by sharing the campaign within the community.

u. KCC Water Supply Inquiry

Councillors noted correspondence from Kent County Council regarding a Short-Focused Inquiry into water supply failures experienced during 2025 and 2026.

The inquiry aims to assess the causes, response, and impacts of disruptions, and to develop recommendations to improve resilience and customer protection.

It was agreed that the Parish Council will respond to the questionnaire as appropriate.

v. Goods Vehicle Operator’s Licence – J J Lee Transport Ltd

Councillors noted a concern raised by a parishioner regarding an application by J J Lee Transport Ltd to vary an operator’s licence at Basser Hill Farm, Iwade, to increase the number of goods vehicles.

The parishioner expressed concerns regarding potential links to alleged illegal waste activity at the site.

Councillors agreed that the matter should be reviewed and, if appropriate, concerns raised with the relevant authorities.

w. Citizens Advice Swale Funding Request

Councillors noted correspondence from Citizens Advice Swale requesting financial support towards their services.

It was reported that, within the Bobbing, Iwade and Lower Halstow ward, 577 issues were recorded in 2025, with key areas including benefits, energy, and



debt. Additional support included assistance with council tax arrears and threatened homelessness.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr. Richardson and seconded by Cllr. Randall that a donation of £100 be made. **RESOLVED** All agreed.

x. CPRE Kent Newsletter – March 2026

Councillors noted the CPRE Kent e-newsletter for March 2026, including updates on planning policy, countryside protection, and upcoming local events.

y. Pre-Planning Consultation – Telecommunications Mast, Sheppey Way

Councillors noted a pre-planning consultation for the installation of a telecommunications base station at Sheppey Way, Bobbing.

The proposal includes a 20-metre pole with associated cabinets to support network coverage, including 4G and future 5G services.

It was noted that the installation is required to replace an existing facility that is no longer available and that alternative sites have been assessed and discounted due to factors such as residential proximity and highway safety constraints. Councillors agreed to review the proposal and submit comments as appropriate.

z. NSPARC / DEFRA Community Resilience Research

Councillors noted an invitation to participate in government research exploring community resilience during disruptions to food and water supplies.

The research involves an online “Collective Intelligence Debate” to gather insights from parish and town councils, with findings intended to inform future policy development. Councillors agreed to note the opportunity.

BPCM25/26 – 230 Training Reports

Councillors were reminded that all Councillors should complete basic training within six months of taking office.

Councillors noted the range of upcoming training opportunities provided by the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC), including sessions on artificial intelligence, planning, handling difficult situations, employer responsibilities, and play park inspections.

Details were also provided regarding additional training available through partner organisations, including Breakthrough Communications, Parkinson Partnership, and Cloudy IT.



Councillors further noted the opportunity for Carbon Literacy Training for community leaders, delivered by Kent County Council, subject to sufficient interest.

BPCM25/26 – 231 Reports from representatives

a) *Village Hall Committee*

Cllr. Richardson and Cllr. Randall reported that works to the new roof are progressing well. Installation of the solar panels is scheduled for the current week. The disabled toilet works are also progressing, with the exception of the previously discussed issue relating to the lintel.

b) *KALC Rural Parishes*

No meeting had taken place.

c) *Friends of Rose Hill – Cllr. M. Baldock*

No update was provided, as Cllr. Baldock had left the meeting.

d) *The Meads Community Woodland*

No report was received.

e) *Joint Transportation Board – 9th March 2026 (Cllr. S. Chapman)*

It was noted that the meeting had been cancelled, due to non-attendance of KCC members

g) *Western Area Committee.*

No meeting had taken place.

h) *Swale Liaison Forum*

No meeting had taken place.

BPCM25/26 – 232 Recommendations to next Full Council

Cllr. Baldock requested that the provision of “chat benches” be included on a future agenda.

Cllr. Randall enquired about progress regarding the Gore Court toilets and whether these could be reinstated as a disabled Changing Places facility.



BPCM25/26 – 233 **Dates of Next Meeting:**

- a. **Annual Parish Council Meeting Date 6th May @ 19.00**
- b. **Annual Parish Meeting Date 13th May @ 19.00**

BPCM25/26 – 234 **Closure of Meeting**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21.45.

These minutes are certified to be a true and correct record.

Signed: _____

Date: _____