

Linton Parish Council
The Minutes of the Meeting of Linton Parish Council held in Linton Village Hall
on Monday 13th April 2026 at 7.30pm

Councillors present: Patricia Burden
Bernard Cresswell
Patrick Gerrish
Peter Paterson
Caroline Richer

Also present: Mrs. Sherrie Babington (Parish Clerk), MBC Ward Councillors Brain Clarke and Simon Wales and 2 members of the public.

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Cresswell.

1. Apologies.

Members who cannot attend a meeting shall tender their apologies to the Parish Clerk prior to the meetings, under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. The members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence shall be accepted.

Apologies were received and accepted from:

- Cllr DiMarco (unwell)

2. Declarations of Interest.

To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers.

No declarations of interest were made.

To consider any Dispensation requests received by the Parish Clerk and not previously considered.

No dispensations were considered.

3. Parish Councillor Vacancy.

No applications had been received for the councillor vacancy.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting.

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 12th January 2026 were circulated and approved as a true record.

Proposed by Cllr Gerrish, seconded by Cllr Paterson.

Signed and dated by the Chairman of the meeting.

5. Matters Arising.

Members noted the actions from the previous meeting.

There were no further matters arising not otherwise covered on the agenda.

6. Public Participation.

The Chairman welcomed those present and introduced the Borough Ward Councillors to the members of public.

A member of the public attended in relation to planning matters and remained present for the agenda item.

7. Clerk's Report & Correspondence.

The Clerk advised that there was nothing further to bring to Members' attention that had not already been circulated by email.

8. Local Government Reorganisation / Community Governance Review.

Members received an update on the Local Government Review and Community Governance Review.

It was reported that the Council was still awaiting the Government's decision as to which option would be progressed.

Members also noted that the town council proposal had received a sufficient vote in favour and was progressing.

9. KCC & MBC Ward Councillor Reports.

Ward Councillors Clarke and Wales gave a detailed report to Members.

Section 106 / Highways Infrastructure Funding

Cllr Clarke referred back to previous discussions regarding the financial update received from Kent County Council and advised that there appeared to be approximately £5.5 million of unspent developer contribution funding for highway works which Kent County Council was not progressing. It was reported that this position had taken considerable time to establish.

Cllr Clarke advised that Linton Crossroads remained one of the most important local priorities and that, in his view, there was a strong case for any available mitigation funding from development in the wider South Maidstone area to be considered for this location. It was noted that Kent County Council's preferred approach had been to seek to redirect monies towards M20 junction improvements around Junction 8, however Members heard that Section 106 funding should ordinarily be used to mitigate the harm arising from the development from which it was collected.

Maidstone Local Plan Update

Cllr Clarke explained that the Borough Council had recently agreed to move forward with a further Local Plan update. He outlined the background to the 2017 Local Plan and the 2024 update, and the importance of maintaining a deliverable five-year housing land supply. It was explained that where a local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, there is a significant risk that planning appeals may be allowed by inspectors even where harm is accepted, because the benefit of additional housing supply can outweigh those harms.

Members were advised that this was the final realistic opportunity for Maidstone Borough Council, prior to local government reorganisation and the establishment of a future unitary authority, to retain some control over where development should go. If the work were delayed until after reorganisation, it was considered likely that priorities of a larger successor authority could override Maidstone's local position, particularly given the presence of Green Belt in neighbouring districts and the relative pressure this could place on non-Green Belt areas such as Maidstone.

It was reported that the Borough Council would shortly be issuing a further Call for Sites, likely in May, and that this would invite landowners and promoters to bring sites forward for consideration. Cllr Clarke emphasised

that continuing this work gave the Council at least some material planning weight in resisting speculative proposals by showing that there was an emerging plan process underway.

Members raised ongoing concerns that infrastructure was not keeping pace with housing growth, with particular concern expressed about the Linton Crossroads, local schools, health services, water supply and traffic congestion.

Cllr Clarke explained that under the current planning framework the burden is effectively placed on the statutory infrastructure bodies to respond to development once permission is granted, rather than development being strictly dependent on infrastructure already being in place. He acknowledged, however, that in practice this was extremely challenging.

Members also discussed the difficulty around health infrastructure, where contributions may be sought on the assumption that local surgeries can be expanded, despite physical constraints on existing sites and wider NHS resource limitations. Concern was also expressed that schools had not expanded in line with surrounding development and that local families were increasingly unable to secure places at nearby schools.

Cllr Wales commented more generally on the wider difficulty in delivering affordable housing and the increasing challenge for developers in securing Registered Providers to take on affordable units.

Members thanked Cllrs Clarke and Wales for their attendance and detailed report.

10. Financial Matters.

a. Financial Statement.

Members considered the current financial position to date.

Members considered the financial statement for the new financial year.

No queries were raised in respect of the financial position presented.

Resolved:

That the financial statement be approved.

Proposed by: Cllr Gerrish

Seconded by: Cllr Richer

Agreed by all present.

11. Highways Matters and PROW.

To discuss highway related matters.

The Clerk advised that further detail was required in order to progress the Parish Council's Highways Improvement Plan submission.

The three areas previously identified remained:

- Speed Indicator Device options, including both fixed and mobile units
- parking and verge issues along Wheeler's Lane
- verge parking on the lower section of Linton Hill

Members discussed the need to complete the HIP form so that the priorities could be set out clearly and then progressed formally with KCC.

Resolved:

That the Clerk circulate the relevant Highways Improvement Plan form to Members for completion and input.

Action: Clerk to circulate HIP form to Members.

Mirror Installed on Parish Council Land

Members discussed a mirror which had been erected on Parish Council land to improve the visibility from a resident's driveway near the allotments.

The Clerk advised that Kent County Council did not support the use of mirrors because of associated liability issues and confirmed that, as the mirror was on Parish Council land, the liability may rest with the Parish Council should an accident arise.

Resolved:

That the mirror erected on Parish Council land be required to be removed.

Action: Cllr Gerrish to forward details to the Clerk to enable her to write to the resident should formal action be required.

No further Public Rights of Way matters were raised.

12. Planning Matters.

a. Planning Applications.

26/500832/FULL - Cuckoo Field House Linton Park Linton Kent ME17 4AN

Erection of two storey rear extension and addition of a flat roof over the existing courtyard between the main house and the outbuilding creating a single storey habitable space. Addition of fenestration and internal alterations.

The applicant was present and briefly explained the proposal to Members, advising that the intention was to construct a two-storey rear extension and infill between the existing dwelling and garage/outbuilding with a single-storey element. It was noted that the development would not have a significant visual impact from below, although the side aspect would appear deeper.

Members considered the proposal and raised no objection, noting that the main consideration appeared to be whether the final appearance would remain in keeping with the existing property.

Resolved:

That no objection be raised to application 26/500832/FULL.

26/501154/LAWPRO - 1 Cornwallis Cottages Heath Road Linton Kent ME17 4NR

Lawful Development Certificate for the placement of a caravan with the curtilage of the property
Awaiting decision

No PC comment was made.

26/501242/PNQCLA - Burford Farm Redwall Lane Linton Kent ME17 4BD

Prior notification for the change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from agricultural to 5no. dwellinghouses and associated operational development. For its prior approval to: - Transport and Highways impacts of the development. - Noise impacts of the development. - Contamination risks on the site. - Flooding risks on the site. - Whether the location or siting of the building makes it otherwise impractical or undesirable for the use of the building to change from agricultural use to C3 (dwellinghouses). - Design and external appearance impacts on the building. - Provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouses.

Awaiting decision

No PC comment was made.

b. Planning Decisions

26/500627/AGRIC

Loddington Farm Loddington Lane Linton Kent ME17 4AG

Prior notification for the erection of an agricultural barn to provide additional agricultural storage. For its prior approval to: - Siting, design and external appearance.

Prior Approval Granted

26/500287/PNQCLA

Burford Farm Redwall Lane Linton Kent ME17 4BD

Prior notification for the change of use of existing agricultural buildings (The Hay Barn), land within its curtilage, as shown on the accompanying plan, into five residential dwellings and associated operation development.

For its prior approval to: Transport and Highways impact of the development. Noise impacts of the development. Contamination risks on the site. Flooding risks on the site. Whether the location or siting of the building makes it otherwise impractical or undesirable for the use of the building to change from agricultural use to C3 (dwellinghouses). Design and external appearance impact on the building. Provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouses.

Prior Approval Refused

25/504113/NMAMD

Land Adjacent to Greensand Health Centre Heath Road Linton Kent ME17 4NU

Non-material amendment to application 23/505091/HYBRID for the erection of a 73-unit Extra Care Home (Class C2), erection of a 14-unit block for Autistic Adults, extensive tree planting and landscaping, access, drainage infrastructure and all other associated and ancillary works; and (ii) Outline Planning Application for erection of a new Hospice building with In-Patient and Out-Patient facilities and provision of up to 52 no. 100% affordable retirement bungalows

Application Permitted

25/504089/HYBRID

Greensand Health Centre Heath Road Linton Kent ME17 4NU

Section 73 - Application to vary 25/502236/FULL for minor material amendment to approved plans condition 3 (to remove the zebra crossing plan), variation of condition 18 (to allow the drainage strategy to be approved for each phase rather than for the whole site, including the details for phases 1, 2, and 3), and variation of condition 31 (to remove the requirement for 2 interactive speed signs on Heath Road) pursuant to 23/505091/HYBRID (Hybrid planning application: (i) Full planning application for the erection of a 73-unit extra care home (Class C2), erection of a 14-unit block for autistic adults, extensive tree planting and landscaping, access, drainage infrastructure and all other associated and ancillary works; and (ii) Outline planning application for erection of a new hospice building with in-patient and out-patient facilities and provision of up to 52 no. 100% affordable retirement bungalows (all matters, except for access, to be reserved for future determination) with related off-site s278 highway works to Heath Road).

Application Permitted

25/502094/SUB

Land Adjacent to Greensand Health Centre Heath Road Linton Kent ME17 4NU

Submission of details for Access Road and Care Home, part pursuant to condition 19 (Surface Water Drainage) in relation to planning permission 23/505091/HYBRID.

Application Withdrawn

c. Other Planning Matters.

Members were advised, informally and ahead of public consultation, that a potential future application for development may be coming forward in relation to two parcels of land adjoining the area up towards Linton Crossroads.

A general discussion took place regarding the location and likely traffic implications. Members expressed significant concern about the cumulative impact of further development on traffic, schools, doctors' services and wider local infrastructure.

It was recognised, however, that no formal planning application had yet been submitted and therefore the Parish Council was not in a position to form a formal view.

Resolved:

That the Parish Council note the information provided regarding the potential proposal for approximately 55 dwellings but reserve any formal comments until such time as a planning application is received and the Parish Council is formally consulted.

13. Other Reports.

a. Allotments:

Cllr Gerrish reported that the spring allotment tidy-up was scheduled for Saturday 18th April at 10.00am, having been postponed from the previous weekend due to the weather forecast.

H reported that all plots had now been let and the allotment site was looking very good.

Further discussion took place regarding plot measurements, standardisation and rent review. Cllr Gerrish advised that whilst the issue was not currently causing practical difficulty, he would like to simplify arrangements in due course so that plots and invoicing could be made more straightforward.

The Clerk advised that a rent review should be considered in June /July.

b. KALC:

No updates were received.

c. Playground:

Members discussed possible improvements to the play area using grant funding. It was noted that the current grant opportunity allowed for expenditure up to £5,000 on a project basis, and that the Parish Council had the remainder of the financial year in which to finalise its proposal.

Members remained of the view that picnic benches were a good option, but there was uncertainty as to whether anything additional for older children should also be considered.

It was agreed that a site visit would be beneficial to consider the space properly in daylight and assess what might work best.

There was also discussion around using an aerial image or online satellite image to assist consideration of the layout.

Resolved:

That a site visit be arranged to review the play area and consider the final scope of the grant project.

d. Website:

Cllr Gerrish advised that Cllr DiMarco was currently unwell and had therefore not been able to progress website matters at present. Therefore, he was willing to work on this. This was agreed.

The Clerk confirmed that routine governance documents such as minutes, agendas and financial information should remain untouched, but that outdated material could be removed where necessary.

Members also discussed the wider issue of branding and presentation, including the need for a better Parish Council / village logo for use on publicity and council materials. It was agreed that Cllr Gerrish could look to designing a new logo.

Members discussed website matters and data protection and that updates continue via the Clerk.

- e. Speed Watch:
Discussion took place under Highways. No additional report was received.
- f. Neighbourhood Watch:
No matters were reported.
- g. Linton Village Hall:
No matters were reported.
- h. Parish Annual Report:
Members discussed the Parish Annual Report and noted that this would now replace the previous newsletter approach.

It was agreed that the report would be prepared in May/June and that Members would be asked at the next meeting to submit anything they wished to be included. The intention remained to produce a more formal annual communication for delivery within the parish.

- i. Parish Litter Pick:

Cllr Richer provided an update on litter picking matters.

Members discussed proposed changes to litter collection arrangements, including the suggestion that litter be separated at the point of collection between general waste and recyclable material. Concerns were raised as to how practical such a system would be in a rural parish such as Linton, particularly on narrow lanes and where volunteers typically walk both sides of the road.

It was noted that whilst Members supported the principle of recycling, there was concern that overly complicated arrangements could deter volunteers and make litter picking harder to organise. There was discussion about clear bags, green bags, trolleys and how this might work in practice, but Members considered that more information was needed.

Members also raised concern about increased litter on the east side of Linton Hill and on stretches of road beyond Redwall Lane. It was felt that in some areas the volume of litter and traffic now made it impractical and potentially unsafe for volunteers to deal with, and that the local authority should be asked to undertake a clearance.

Resolved:

That the Clerk make enquiries with the relevant authority regarding the proposed recycling / separation arrangements for parish litter picks and seek clarification as to how these are intended to operate in a rural setting.

That the Clerk also request a further roadside litter clearance in the worst affected areas, particularly Linton Hill and other identified stretches.

Action: Clerk to make enquiries and raise the matter with the relevant authority.

14. Other Matters and Items for the Next Agenda.

Cllr Gerrish reported that the parish noticeboards had now been updated and cleaned where possible, but one remained in poor condition and Members discussed the possibility of grant funding for replacements or improvements. The Clerk agreed to check with Maidstone Borough Council whether any grant funding was available in the new financial year.

Members also discussed what information should be displayed on the noticeboards, including councillor details and meeting dates. It was agreed that contact information should be kept sensible and proportionate, with email details preferred over personal phone numbers where possible.

Action: Clerk to check whether any grant funding is available for noticeboards.

Historic Parish Records Digitisation

Cllr Cresswell updated Members on the digitisation project for historic parish records and photographs. He advised that he wished to bring the project to conclusion and now proposed collecting the photographs and other materials so they could all be digitised together. The latest quotation for the full work, including photographs, was approximately £1,600 plus VAT, being only around £100 more than the cost previously discussed for minutes and records alone.

Members were advised that around £500 in contributions had already been identified and Cllr Cresswell asked whether the remaining balance could be supported from Community Infrastructure Levy funds in order to complete the project for the benefit of the parish.

The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council did hold CIL monies and that, subject to the project meeting the required community benefit tests, this could potentially be used.

Resolved:

That the digitisation project be progressed and that the shortfall be met from CIL funding.

Action: Cllr Cresswell to progress.

Meeting Date Amendment

The Clerk asked that the June meeting date be brought forward by one week.

Resolved:

That the June 2026 meeting be moved to Monday 1st June 2026.

15. Date of Next Meeting.

The next meeting to be held on Monday 11th May 2026 at 7.30pm in Linton Village Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.05 pm.

Signed: _____
(Chairman)

Date: _____