



12/24

Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 17 December 2024 at 7.30pm at Ightham Village Hall

MINUTES

Present: Cllr Willingham (Chair), Cllr Holden (Vice Chair), Cllr Burgham, Cllr Clark, Cllr Emmett, Cllr Fielder, The Parish Clerk, County Cllr Rayner, Borough Cllr Betts and Paula Freeman (Governor Ightham Primary School and Chair Ightham Village Hall)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Cllr Hall, Cllr Hogarth

2. PRESENTATION OF KALC COMMUNITY AWARD - Councillor Willingham presented Paula Freeman with the KALC Community Award for services to the community. Councillor Willingham thanked Paula for everything she does for Ightham Village Hall and the school. Paula gave an update on the Ightham Village Hall (IVH): the gutters have now been fixed and the leak in the WI storage cupboard has been fixed. The door to the lower hall needs replacing and Paula asked whether this should be a fire door or a standard door, Councillor Willingham will confirm. Regarding the water leak earlier in the year, they are still waiting to hear back from Castle Water about receiving a contribution towards the bill however Castle Water have replaced the water metre because they found it was faulty. IVH are planning to move from Castle Water once the water bill is agreed. Paula reported that bookings are going well with hires every day.

Paula reported that the school academisation is going smoothly. There are some issues with the lease around drainage so the deadline for the conversion has been delayed until the 1st of February 2025. The lease for the annex with the Parish Council and KCC has a break clause in August 2025. The rent is paid until September 2025 and The Academy will contact the Parish Council to discuss taking over the lease and clauses therein, such as a requesting a reduction in the rent and redecoration. Councillor Holden asked whether the school did the due diligence on the Academy? Paula said that the school did carry out comprehensive due diligence which is ongoing. The Academy has 17 schools including some in Kent and their financial background is solid. Councillor Willingham gave thanks to Paula.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS - None

4. PUBLIC *no members of the public were present*

5. MINUTES - Approval of the Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 19 November 2024 - The Minutes were approved with a few changes from councillor Mitchem. The Clark will make the amendments and pass to Councillor Willingham to sign.

6. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND BOROUGH COUNCILLOR – County

Councillor Rayner reported that KCC has consolidated a Local Transport Plan for Kent. Within this, is the continuation of support for east facing slips in the vicinity of Junction 5 M25 and this will go hand in hand with the third Thames crossing on which the Secretary of State for Transport will make a decision in May 2026. There are plans for an upgrade of the roads between the M2 and M20 around Bluebell Hill to improve links and move traffic away from West Kent. The A227 remains as an A road but Tom Tugendhat has begun the process of questioning whether the A227 needs to remain as an A road if Junction 5 slips go ahead. Ightham residents held a meeting in the Spring to start the process of downgrading and this is reflected in the Local Plan.

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Bus services will continue for the next 15 months, and funding has come through from Central Government which should sustain them through to July 2026.

KCC has £500k funding available to help to address fuel poverty following the withdrawal of the winter fuel allowance. Pensioners in the income bracket £12-£18k who are just outside the eligibility cut off can apply for help.

There are significant changes in Kent with regards to Local Government. A white paper published on the 16th of December 2024 announced that Kent will become a Mayoral Authority. Kent and Medway and all the 12 districts within have written to the Government to say they're in favour of this. If Kent is one of the Counties to be fast tracked, it is likely to take effect in Spring 2026. KCC and TMBC will cease to exist and a Mayor will take over. Below the Mayoral authority, there will be two to four Unitary Authorities. Councillor Rayner thought that a potential West Unitary Authority would encompass Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge and Malling, Sevenoaks and part of Maidstone. If Kent is fast tracked to become a Mayoral Authority, and there will be a decision by the 10th of January, then the County elections in May 2026 will be postponed. The Mayor will have responsibility for the whole of Kent and the Unitaries will be under him. The Mayor will have responsibilities for buses, trains, strategic housing. Unitaries will have responsibility for child and adult services. Councillor Fielder asked whether this would mean more money to spend on services? Councillor Rayner said that maximum savings would come by having less Unitaries; there are currently 14 Councils in Kent so there are substantial savings to be made from offices and salaries.

Borough Councillor Betts reported that Tonbridge and Malling would be sucked up into a Unitary authority which leaves them in limbo on current projects and decisions will have to be made as to whether they should go ahead.

The 2 buildings at TMBC Gibson headquarters in Tonbridge and Malling are being consolidated. Contractors have been lined up to move all staff to Gibson East, which will be refurbished. This will become a carbon neutral building.

The upgrade of Larkfield leisure centre starts in the new year and the gas boilers will be converted to air source heat pumps. They're looking at a contractor to provide solar panels to run the building.

Tonbridge town centre regeneration is going ahead and approved master plan consultant, Mace, will provide detailed plans for the Sainsbury's and Angel centre site. The development will be a mixture of housing, including 40% affordable housing, GP surgeries a hotel. Councillor Willingham asked where the money was coming from? Councillor Betts said funding will come from development contributions, cash reserves, and grants and the project will be self-funding with a significant amount coming from leisure services. Planning permission has been approved for Sainsbury's to become a flagship store; they will take over the Beales site next door. This will be a multi-million-pound investment and will secure over 50 jobs for Tonbridge. This will be in tandem with the regeneration project.

The Green Business Grants ended 3 weeks ago along with the West Kent rural grant scheme. Both schemes were very successful, and Councillor Betts is putting pressure on TMBC to come up with a new package for 2025.

There are big investment plans by the London Golf Club to become one of the top centres for sport and leisure facilities in Kent. This includes a spa and 240 room hotel. Cllr Betts said the designs look stunning. There are plans for a 4G pitch for Millwall Academy, equestrian facilities, a sports and turf

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Academy and this will also incorporate Brands Hatch. The application will be determined by Sevenoaks and TMBC.

Councillor Willingham asked about the effect on Parishes of devolution plans. Councillor Rayner said that parishes will become Tier 2 authorities and recommended that KALC should make representations now to make sure that they have representation within the Unitaries.

Councillor Betts and Councillor Rayner left at 8:25 PM.

7. MATTERS ARISING

Highways & PROW Matters – Update HIP - No update on the highways improvement plan. The Clerk will request the Automatic Traffic Count results at Common Road, Sevenoaks Road and The Street. Councillor Emmett reported that the lines in Common Road were positioned too close to the junction so wouldn't record the speeding cars; The Clerk explained that the aim was to get lower speed recordings as this would give us more chance of getting a 20mph limit as lower speeds mean greater chance of compliance which is the criteria set by Highways. The Clerk reported that the new pedestrian sign at Fen Pond Road has been removed as it wasn't on KCC land, this will be reinstalled in the new year. **DYL Proposal at Dark Hill** - the Clerk reported that Kent Highways (KH) had sent a proposal for double yellow lines (DYL) off all spurs of the Dark Hill roundabout to prevent HGV parking as it is dangerous. Counsellor Mike Taylor at Borough Green had written back to KH say this was not what we asked for as we were trying to achieve limited parking for HGV's but also keep areas clear for pedestrians crossing the road and around Hazelbourne Estate. It was agreed that we should support Councillor Mike Taylor and offer funding if that was an issue. It was agreed that double yellow lines off the spurs of Dark Hill roundabout would be a waste of money. **Police speed checks** –The Clerk has been in contact with KCC about police speed checks on Borough Green Road, they have sent details of who we need to contact to set this up and we will organise this in the new year. **Old Lane declassification** - This will be postponed until after the appeal hearing for Woodford. **Speedwatch** The Clerk reported that the Speedwatch will meet in the new year. Councillor Clark reported that the steps at the footpath from Trycewell Lane were worn away. The Clerk said she has already reported this but will rereport to PROW. Councillor Fielder reported a tree was down near Chapel Farm, and this has been reported to PROW. The salt bin in Mill Lane is empty. The Clerk will report. Councillor Clark reported branches trapped under the Busty Bridge, Cllr Willingham will speak to a contractor to remove these. **Winter salt** - The Clerk will order some 20 KG salt bags for the recreation ground in the new year. Councillor Fielder reported that the dog bins in the recreation ground were full. It was reported that the sign for the trees had been knocked off The Clerk was asked to remove the stake. The sign needs to be reinstalled.

Allotments – Nothing to report.

Recreation Ground – Wicksteed repairs due 19 December. **Repainting swings** – The Clerk has arranged to meet a contractor in January. **Light repairs school path** - Councillor Willingham to chase up. **Repairs to Drainage** – Southern Water - The Clerk will pick this up with Councillor Mike Taylor at Borough Green.

Village Hall - Update - Solar Panels – update Councillor Holden had reviewed the electricity bills for the village hall over the last 27 months and the average monthly bill came to £117, he didn't think that this justified the capital outlay for solar panels, however, asked whether there were gas bills as well? The Clerk will ask the Treasurer. Councillor Willingham agreed to speak to Paula Freeman about the new door and it was agreed that we should pay for it. **Damage to railings** - No update. **UKPN** –The Lease is completed and will be kept in Warners strong room. **Feasibility Study** - We will look at this in the new year. **Downstairs toilet & heater repair/removal** - It was agreed that we should remove the downstairs toilet and we'll ask Paula to obtain a quote.

Councillor Burgham left at 9:00 PM

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Flooding – Busty Stream & drainage mapping - Nothing to report.

Tennis Club - We have received requests for a new padel court and footpath path from the Tennis Club. This will be deferred to the January meeting.

Oldbury Annexe – We will await comments on the lease from the new Academy.

MOTO - Parish Alliance Funding - Following last month's meeting, The Clerk confirmed with Wrotham Parish that Ightham's contribution towards legal fees would be .£3,640. The hearing is due to be held on the 9th and 10th of January. MOTO have requested a six-day hearing with counsel and have applied to the Inspector. We are waiting for the outcome of this.

8. FINANCE & POLICY

8.1 The following accounts were submitted for payment: Proposed by Councillor Mitchem and Seconded by Councillor Emmet

Edward Tyrrell- Deposit for fence repairs (paid 2/12/24)	£207.00
Lester Brown Limited – Emergency electrical repairs at lower village hall (Paid 2/12/24)	£66.00
Clerks Salary & Expenses	£962.74
Tax & NI	£4.40
Gel Creative - (Standing Order)	£50.00
Gel Creative – Domain renewal	£50.00
EDF – Electricity Pavilion (Direct Debit)	£215.15
Zen Internet – Broadband at the Pavilion	£54.61
Anthony Edwards	£1,168.53
We are Beams - Request for Donation	£50.00
Heart of Kent Hospice – Request for Donation	£50.00
Victim Support – Request for Donation	£50.00
Scribe – Deposit for ne finance package	£478.80
TMBC – New dog bin at The Street	£335.10
Clerks & Councils Direct	£15.50

8.2 Confirmation Internal Auditor appointment – Julia Weller

8.3 Agreement of budget and precept 2025/26 - The Finance Committee will be meeting on the 10th of January to discuss the budget.

9 PLANNING

9.1 LOCAL PLAN – Reg 18B

9.2 PLANNING APPEALS

24/00204/PA Woodford, Old Lane, Ightham, Sevenoaks, TN15 9AH. Change of Use of land to use as a residential caravan site for 5 gypsy/traveller households, including the stationing of 8 caravans for residential purposes of which no more than 5 shall be static caravans/mobile homes, together with extension of existing hardstanding. Planning Inspectorate's Ref:

APP/H2265/W/24/3352986. Appeal start date: 26-Nov-2024. Hearing. The Clerk has confirmed with the Inspector that will be making representations and has requested to attend the site meeting. The Hearing will be on 4t February.

24/00914/PA Sunfield House, Tonbridge Road, Ightham, Sevenoaks, TN15 9AR. Demolition of existing two storey flat roof extension and erection of a new two storey wrap-around extension to side and rear of property. Existing double garage to be reduced in size.

APP/H2265/D/24/3356339. Appeal start date:10-Dec-2024. Written representations.

9.3 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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24/01898/PA - Little Holt, Copt Hall Road, Ightham, Sevenoaks, TN15 9DU. Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: Two storey front extension (not fronting highway) and single storey side extension (not fronting highway).

24/01913/PA - The Street, Ightham, Sevenoaks All trees on raised bank from Bates Hill to opposite Chequers The Street – Lift crowns to clear 5m.

24/01922/PA - Glenwood, Spring Lane, Ightham, Sevenoaks, TN15 9DR. Non-Material Amendment to planning permission TM/23/01711/FL for fenestration changes including windows, doors, dormers and front entrance porch, alterations to entrance steps.

24/01798/PA Land Between Oldbury Hatch And Oldbury House, Oldbury Lane, Ightham, Sevenoaks. Non-Material Amendment to planning permission TM21/02649/FL to add a plans list condition.

24/01851/PA Church Of St Peter, Fen Pond Road, Ightham, Row of lime trees R1 - pollarded lime trees at the entrance. Remove all 8 to as close to ground level as possible, tree T1 semi mature sycamore – north-eastern boundary near the building. Remove to ground level. Tree is overhanging neighbour building and is becoming too large for the space. G1 - 2 x conifer trees overgrown and encroaching onto the graves to the west of the Remove to ground level. Final cut to be made as close to ground level as possible. *The Clerk was asked to find out whether there was a tree survey and whether we would be able to comment on this as it is a listed building and conservation area and suggest a condition for replanting.*

24/01965/PA Conservation Area Ightham Mote, Mote Road, Ivy Hatch, Sevenoaks. T3(Applicants ref) Yew - Dismantle in sections to near ground level, T4 (Applicants ref) Twin stemmed Cherry - Reduce crown by approx 20% to reduce leverage over tight union and lift crown over road to approx 5.5m to allow vehicle access to Mote Farm, T5(Applicants ref) Horse chestnut - Lift crown to approx 5.5m over road to allow traffic into Mote farm

24/01944/PA Redwell, Redwell Lane, Ightham, Sevenoaks, TN15 9EE. Proposed Installation of home 7kw Electric Vehicle charging point on wall at East side of property. *“No objection.”*

9.4 PLANNING DECISIONS

24/01035/PA Collingwood, Common Road, Ightham, Sevenoaks, TN15 9ED. Retrospective application for relocation of sandschool with associated engineering operations. **Approved.**

24/01768/PA The Town House, The Street, Ightham, Sevenoaks, TN15 9HH. Two conifer trees on the boundary to The Street, next to an outbuilding. Seeking permission to remove the two trees. Reason: Roots growing into the foundation of outbuilding and listed building (i.e. Town House) which has been assessed by a tree surgeon; also trees removal would greatly improve the aesthetics of the property. **No objection.**

24/01466/PA Little Holt, Copt Hall Road, Ightham, Sevenoaks, TN15 9DU. Proposed part two storey and part single storey side extensions to existing dwelling house. **Approved.**

10. CORRESPONDENCE – (* circulated in advance)

KALC News December 2024*

KALC Training Bulletin

KALC Weekly Briefings

NALC – salary scales – Clerk salary increase 60 pence per hour backdated to April 2024

KALC – Community Awards

Mallings Crime Report

Active Kent & Medway - Consultation on proposals for the Postural Stability Service in Kent

<https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/postural-stability>

Request for donation from the Counselling Centre it was agreed that we would donate £50,

KALC Chair's Networking Forum - 27th January at 6.30pm

My Community Voice & Fraud Alerts

Operation Brock – M20 15-22nd December

Signed.....Dated.....



New Electoral Register December 2024

TMBC Request to donate towards a Community Warden – The information wasn't clear - The Clerk will follow this up.

11. AOB Councillor Willingham gave thanks Counsellor Fielder for serving on the Parish Council. This will be Councillor Fielders last meeting. Councillor Mitchem reported that the litter collector had collected 10 extra bags of rubbish this morning that had been fly tipped in the lower car park. The Clerk will report this to TMBC and ask whether we can have a fly tipping sign and to request that the recycling centre sign is removed. Councillor Mitchem gave thanks to the Fairlawn Estate for the Christmas tree and to Tudor cottage for decorating it.

Date of next meeting Tuesday 21st January 2025.

The meeting went into Part 2 and closed at 10:15pm

Signed.....Dated.....



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