



8/25

Meeting of IGHTHAM PARISH held on Thursday 21 August 2025 at 7.00pm at Ightham Village Hall

MINUTES

Present: Cllr Willingham (Chair), Cllr Holden (Vice Chair), Cllr Emmett, Cllr Gunson, Cllr Hall, Cllr Hogarth, Cllr Mitchem, The Parish Clerk, County Cllr Rayner, Borough Cllr Betts.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Cllr Clark, Cllr Burgham

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS - None

3. PUBLIC *No members of the public were present*

4. MINUTES - The Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 22 July 2025 were approved and signed as a true record.

5. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR & BOROUGH COUNCILLOR – County Cllr Rayner reported that on local government reorganisation (LGR), the current administration has announced that they would like a countywide unitary authority, with a mayoral authority within it, combined with 3 sub-divisions. They have not specified what those divisions would be, however, they are likely to be similar to what was proposed before. Medway has put forward a 4-unitary model with some changes. TMBC has put forward a West Kent Unitary comprising Tonbridge & Malling, Tunbridge Wells, Sevenoaks and Maidstone.

The proposals will be considered by the Minister in November and are currently taking up all resources at County Hall. Cllr Rayner raised concerns that there has been no consultation with the public and there seems to be little appetite for public interest. A decision isn't due until Spring 2026 which leaves little time for organising the new arrangements in time for the new arrangements to start in May 2028. Cost hasn't been mentioned and with KCC already having £1bn debt, it is a concern. Cllr Rayner said that he would put some details together for the Parish magazine.

Cllr Emmett said that he had contacted KCC regarding Old Lane and hadn't had a response so would be contacting Maidstone Magistrates. Cllr Rayner said that he would be happy to be a witness if required.

Cllr Betts reported that there was uncertainty in planning for capital projects at TMBC with local government reorganisation. TMBC is looking at what can be achieved before reorganisation takes place. Projects such as the Angel Centre and new temporary housing at Bluebell Hill are in jeopardy unless contracts can be organised quickly.

Cllr Betts reported that there is a second phase of the West Kent Rural Grants Scheme which offers matched funding up to a maximum of £20k. There may be further rounds of funding until the money runs out.

TMBC offices are being refurbished at Gibson East, Kings Hill and staff have been moved into Gibson West. Once completed, Gibson West will be sold off; it is a listed building and costs approx. £1/4 million to run each year.

A recent survey of residents to determine whether Tonbridge should have a separate town council showed 72% were in favour, 23% opposed and 5% were unsure. Only 12% residents voted. TMBC will be meeting next week to discuss the next steps. Cllr Rayner reported that the Minister had just announced that there would be no new councils until LGR.

Cllr Betts announced that a new enforcement officer had started at TMBC.

Cllr Betts reported that he had information on litter, following a query raised by Cllr Mitchem: The budget for 2025/2026 is £1m which covers street cleaning, litter picking, bin emptying, highways sweeping and fly-tipping. Areas are zoned according to a national code. Cllr Betts was unsure of frequency. The greatest challenge for rural areas is safety of litter pickers where there are no

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



footpaths. Cllr Holden commented that these are the areas that residents are concerned about and risk their own safety cleaning up.

There will be a meeting to discuss the Local Plan next week, Cllr Betts estimated that the call for sites (Reg 18B) would happen in October.

Cllr Willingham asked Cllr Rayner about the sale of KCC offices. Cllr Rayner said that the refurbishment of Invicta House has been halted, and it will be sold off making savings of £14 million. Sessions House will be retained but it costs £4m a year to run. Any further spending in advance of LGR will only exacerbate KCC's debt.

Cllrs Rayner and Betts left the meeting at 7.45pm.

6. MATTERS ARISING

Highways & PROW Matters – HIP update – The **20mph scheme** at Oldbury is currently with the Head of Service at Highways awaiting sign off under delegated authority and we should hear about the next steps soon. We enquired about sites to put a pedestrian warning signs on **A227** but have been informed that there isn't enough publicly maintainable verge to allow additional signs. The traffic calming scheme on A227 will therefore include a realigned junction warning sign near to Field House, vegetation cut back, SLOW markings on the carriageway and a pedestrian in road warning sign near to The Limes.

Old Lane – Highways have informed us that there is likely to be a prohibition of motor vehicles restriction along the full length of Old Lane except for residents' access. We have passed on information about the current use, and this has been passed to the maintenance team.

Ightham Common 30mph scheme – Highways have carried out a review and have circulated proposals for a 30mph scheme on various roads at Ightham Common to include; Common Road, Copt Hall Road, Redwell Lane, Nutfields, Ismays Road, Sandy Lane. The scheme will not include Back Lane as it doesn't fit with their criteria. It was agreed that we would like to proceed with the scheme. The Clerk was asked to respond to Highways to say that we would like to go ahead with the caveat that we would not want roundels painted on the road and that we will revisit other roads in the village with national speed limit later. The Clerk was asked to raise Back Lane again as this would be the only section of road in Ightham Common that would remain with the national speed limit. Cllr Holden said that he would be opposed to national speed limit signage at Back Lane.

Velocity – update – Velocity have asked us to pass on details of our contact at KCC so that they can liaise with them and the DfT to see whether a trial 20mph scheme would be viable at The Street. The Clerk has written to our contact to obtain consent and is awaiting a response. **Mirror on Back Lane junction** – The Clerk has obtained quotes for 2 single mirrors and a two-way mirror, both were reasonably priced. The Clerk will look at whether it would be feasible to attach it to the roof of the bus shelter or alternatively one of the existing posts at the bus stop. **Back Lane bus stop** – update - The Clerk is meeting a contractor next week to get a quote for cleaning it. If it can't be cleaned it was suggested that we try and get some new perspex. The Clerk said that there was a current KCC grant available for replacement or refurbishment of bus stops. Cllr Mitchem said that she has an alternative contact who could do it and has also suggested cleaning the back of the village hall which is covered in algae. (to go onto the next agenda). **Openreach Temporary Road Closure** - Mill Lane, 3rd -17th September.

Allotments - Cllr Emmett reported that there was a tree down at the allotment but he would deal with it.

Recreation Ground – Playground repairs – The Clerk will contact Wicksteed to carry out repairs to the equipment. The Clerk has ordered a new gate latch and Cllr Emmet offered to fix it. The Clerk will contact Tyrrells about the fence repairs and has spoken to the groundsman about weeding the wetpour. We need to soil and reseeding in the play area and by the tennis courts and Cllr Holden suggested contacting Planet Plants for a quote. Surfacing quotes – The Clerk has received recommendations from other Clerks and will contact them for a quote. Cllr Hall reported that Shipbourne school had just had a new surface, the Clerk will find out who they used. Cllr Willingham

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



reported that the lights would be fixed in time for autumn. **Ightham Sign** – update – The Clerk reported that a pre-application had gone to TMBC and we are awaiting a response.

Village Hall – We have had a quote to clean the back of the building for £450, we will raise this at the next committee meeting. Update on the rebuild –discussed under Part 2. The Clerk will set up a meeting of the village hall committee.

Flooding – Busty Stream. Drainage mapping - Nothing to report.

Oldbury Annexe –New lease – The Clerk has emailed the Chair of Governors as we have heard nothing further on the lease. The Clerk was asked to write and say that the building couldn't be used until the lease had been signed and the insurance is in place.

Archive - Replacement archivist – We have had one expression of interest. The Clerk reported that the archive room and lower hall needed some refurbishment and will raise this with the village hall committee.

Nature Reserve on Ismays Road, Cllr Willingham reported that he hadn't had chance to contact the new owners. Cllr Hall reported that he understood that there was a restrictive covenant to prevent building on the land.

TMBC ASB Enforcement Team – The Clerk said that the ASB team would patrol Oldbury once term starts to look at parking. Parking at weekends at the Plough was also raised and it was noted that the parking spaces at the front of the pub had been removed. The Clerk was asked to check whether planning permission necessitated the provision of parking spaces.

Churchyard – Update – Cllr Hall said that he would write to the Warden to follow up on the schedule of work at the churchyard for Anthony Edwards as we haven't received anything.

7. FINANCE

7.1 The following accounts were submitted for payment: Proposed by Cllr Emmett, seconded Cllr Gunson

Clerks Salary & Expenses	£951.55
Clerks Pension	£30.37
Employer Tax (direct Debit 24/7/25)	£210.63
Gel Creative - (Standing Order)	£50.00
EDF – Electricity Pavilion (Direct Debit)*	£276.90
Zen Internet – Broadband at the Pavilion	£54.61
Anthony Edwards -Parish and Churchyard maintenance	£1,579.40
James Hayward - trees and hedges July	£1,704.00
Scribe – New Finance Package DD	£62.40
Business Stream - Water rates for pavilion DD	£28.00
KALC – Cllr Gunson Training *reimburse	£60.00
KALC – Clerk Training	£12.00
KALC – Clerk attending Finance Conference	£84.00
Bank Charges	£6.00

The Clerk thanked Cllr Emmett who donated the wreath for the VJ Day.

Income

NatWest Interest £259.51

Allotment Rent £50.00

Balances 31.7.25 Current accounts: Unity **£81,977.66**, NatWest **£ 38,156.36**

NatWest Deposit account **£284,278.57**

8.2 POLICY – The Clerk reported that we are now legally required to have a GOV.UK website and GOV.UK email addresses in time for our next audit. She has spoken to an organisation recommended by KALC who can help us and they have provided the background information and a quote. The Clerk will circulate this for discussion at the next meeting. Review of: Financial Regs/Standing Orders/ Emergency Report - Clerk to review and circulate. The Clerk reported that the

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fixed rate tariff for the pavilion was coming to an end on 9th September and will call EDF to find out what the best available tariff is thereafter.

9 PLANNING

9.1 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

25/01304/PA THREE BIRCHES, COMMON ROAD, IGHTHAM, SEVENOAKS, TN15 9DY. T1

(Applicants ref) Oak - Crown reduce to previous pruning points (2-3m reduction). Work is to reduce it to where it was previously pruned, maintaining it at a favourable size. Standing in Group A1 of TPO

25/01227/PA IVORS, HIGH CROSS ROAD, IVY HATCH, SEVENOAKS, TN15 0NR. Proposed new build dwelling with associated landscape works. "Objection on grounds of harm to the greenbelt" (full details on TMBC website)

25/01267/PA OLDBURY HOUSE, OLDBURY LANE, IGHTHAM, SEVENOAKS, TN15 9DE. T1

Sycamore - Dismantle to near ground level and replant with a smaller ornamental.

25/01216/PA COPTHALL, ISMAYS ROAD, Ightham, SEVENOAKS, TN15 9BB

T 1 (Applicants ref)- Mature sweet chestnut- remove epicormic growth - remove major dead wood- reduce weight from lateral branch on north/east side of crown to prevent failure. T4 of TPO

25/01182/PA OAKFIELD HOUSE, COPT HALL ROAD, IGHTHAM, SEVENOAKS, TN15 9DU. Details of condition 3 (archaeology) and 4 (slab levels) submitted pursuant to planning permission TM/24/01581/PA (Demolition of existing dwelling house and erection of replacement dwelling house).

25/01347/PA GLEBE COTTAGE, Oldbury Lane, Ightham, SEVENOAKS, TN15 9DG. 3x Oak trees (T1 - T2 - T3 applicants ref) reduce the canopy by 1-2 meters, thin out and remove epicormic growth from the stem. To maintain the shape and size of the trees and allow more light into the garden.

9.2 PLANNING DECISIONS – APPROVED

25/01122/PA 2 ELIM COTTAGES, BUSTY LANE, IGHTHAM, SEVENOAKS, TN15 9HP1 x Horse Chestnut T1 (Applicant reference) - Reduction in height from 15.5m to 12.5m. Reduce spread from 10m to 8m. Crown thin 20%.

25/01112/PA The Grange, Redwell Lane, Ightham, Sevenoaks, TN15 9EE. T1 (Applicants ref.) Pine-Crown lift first lower ring of branches and remove the codominant stem (highlighted in red on the photograph).

25/00917/PA MIDSUMMER MEADOW, Sevenoaks Road, Ightham, Sevenoaks, TN15 9AD, Lawful Development Certificate Existing: Use of former annex as independent residential dwelling and erection of extension.

10. CORRESPONDENCE – (* circulated in advance)

KALC News August 2025*

KALC Training Bulletin & Weekly Briefings

Road Safety & Active Travel Group Newsletter

PPP – 28th August & 20th November TMBC Offices or via Teams – Cllr Hogarth to attend 28th August meeting via Teams.

KCC Budget consultation - visit <https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/budget-consultation-2026-27>

KALC - Call for Motions for KALC AGM (Deadline Monday 29th September 2025)

TMBC - Community Grants & Community Awards for the voluntary sector - £2,500

TMBC – Voting Monthly alterations

NALC Star Council Awards 2025/26 – Councillor of the Year

KCC National Highways & Transport Network - Public Satisfaction Surveys

KALC Local Government Reorganisation Survey

Parish Bus Stop Shelter Grant 2025/2026 – 31 October 2025

KCC – Updated Highways Information pack

11. AOB

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Cllr Mitchem has reported a car parked on A227 outside Fir Cottage for the last month, to TMBC and police.

Cllr Holden asked what was happening with the Amhurst as he had seen lights on. No-one had any information.

Cllr Hogarth reported another leak on Bates Hill.

Cllr Hall reported overgrown hedges along Ismays and the damages dog bin and salt bin on Coach Road, the Clerk said that she had reported this.

Cllr Gunson said that we should query the response by KCC to our report that the new bollards on Common Road are too big. They have said that they are compliant whereas several councillors have said that they are dangerous as they block the sight lines.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 16th September at 7pm

The meeting went into Part 2 and closed at 10.00pm

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