

MINUTES
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF
COLLIER STREET PARISH COUNCIL
Orchard Room, St Margaret's School
on Monday 3rd FEBRUARY 2025
commencing at 19.00PM
In attendance

Cllr Andrew Papas [AP] Chair	Parish Clerk – Michelle Rumble [MR]
Cllr Jack Highwood [JH] Vice-chair	
Cllr Deborah Papas [DP]	Borough Councillor – Claudine Russell [CR]
Cllr Charlie Cooper [CC]	3 Members of the Public
Cllr Kelly Rigden [KR]	

25.02.01 APOLOGIES	Cllr Ben Ward, Cllr Steve Barham, Borough Councillor Cllr Mike Summersgill, Cllr Grace Couch, County Councillor Lottie Parfitt-Reid	
25.02.02 DECLARATION OF INTEREST	There were not any Declarations declared in any item on the agenda	
25.02.03 MINUTES	MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6th JANUARY 2025 TO BE APPROVED.	
	It was RESOLVED by all members present to accept the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting, they were therefore signed by the Chair of the meeting.	
25.02.04	EXTERNAL REPORTS Borough Councillor Russell arrive at the meeting at 19.32pm Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation This work, started by central government continues at pace and Kent and Medway have submitted a bid to become a Mayoral combined authority with an elected mayor, not much of a choice here as this is the Labour governments preferred way of dealing with the areas. Underneath the mayoral strategic layer will sit a number (unconfirmed but need to be approximately 500,000 residents) of unitary authorities, it is looking likely that there will be 3. At present, Maidstone seem to be in the grouping of Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge and Malling and Maidstone. The responsibilities are not yet clear, and any funding is even less clear. If we are a priority area, this will mean that the KCC elections in May might be cancelled, and we will elect a mayor for the new authority in 2026 followed by elections to the new unitary. Every day brings more news so the picture will become clearly as we head into 2025 and certainly by May. Cllr Russell also spoke on the Budget; she will be putting forward some amendments that she would like to see happen.	

Green Party Councillors' Report of January 2025, for Marden & Yalding Ward Parishes –

In a busy period within the Borough Council, high-level discussions on the Budget for 2025/26 and the implications of the new Corporate Strategy (and the medium-term Financial Strategy to 2030) continued; these were 'signed off' by the Cabinet and reviewed by Overview & Scrutiny Committee (for finalising and approval at Council on 19th Feb). Matters continue to be being complicated by the new Government, as it seeks to introduce significant Planning changes (with more housing numbers) after 'consultation', and also sorts out how & when it wishes to create single Authorities (with Mayors) in County areas – but no final decisions have emerged as to whether there will be County elections this May in Kent, so plans for next year's spending may or may not change!

At Cabinet on 22nd January, in addition to these financial matters (and fixing the tax base for next year), it was agreed to propose and extension to the Kent Downs National Landscape to include the Greensand Ridge, to refresh the local history gallery at the Museum (significantly funded by Trusts), and to progress with the former Postal Sorting Office building project design/tender work stage.

Mike's focus has been on discussing our building decarbonisation schemes and solar installation projects with various Officers, but chiefly on finalising the mid-term update to the Biodiversity & Climate Change Strategic Plan so it can be thoroughly refreshed and re-assessed for its final five years; this is due to go to Cabinet in March. I have continued liaising with four Parishes about small parcels of land that MBC own and may have potential for thirty years of natural biodiversity gain management (including one in Yalding), and approved a grant for 110 trees in Nettlestead Green.

While there were few events in January, there will be a lantern parade festival in town on Friday 7th February; see details at <https://onemairstone.com/event/light-up-mairstone/>. And as part of the national 'Green Week', Mairstone is organising a 'Big Day Out' on 14th June; see www.bigdayout.info

Parish Matters –

Collier Street – nothing to report, and we both missed the recent monthly meeting due to holidays.

Hunton – Liaison continues over potential pre-Condition submission construction activity on a large 'agricultural' site, and recent changes to planning consent are being contested by residents. Worked to erect Flood Warnings signs on 6th January, in combination with the Chainhurst Warden, and then chased KCC Drainage about evident blocked culverts (some have been blocked since 2022 & 2023).

	<p>Marden – Mike has been involved again in chasing Southern Water over sewer plans and approvals, after the Maynards manhole overflowed again on 5th January. At last, a Plan has been provided...</p> <p>Nettlestead – very little to report; noted that the Hop Pole PH was boarded up early in month.</p> <p>Yalding – Mike attended the Parish meeting on 21st Jan. The Repair Café event in March is gaining strength, and Mike purchased a steam iron for them to use (I’m hoping to find out what it is for?!). Mike also visited the Crest Nicholson exhibition about new homes at Paddock Wood on 24th Jan.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Borough Councillors Grace Couch & Mike Summersgill – 4th February 2025</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emails: michaelsummersgill@maidstone.gov.uk, gracecouch@maidstone.gov.uk</p>	
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	<p>COUNTY COUNCILLOR Cllr Lottie Parfitt-Reid was not in attendance, and no report was received prior to the meeting.</p>	
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25.02.05
PUBLIC FORUM
MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The meeting was adjourned at 19.05pm, to hear from an agent for the planning application 25/500038/FULL - Mulberry Barn

The agent stated that the Stables at Mulberry Barn are under used and therefore they would like to convert them to a Holiday Let. The Stables are not used and are not listed, they are not visible from the road, they would be converted into 2 units but could be used as one unit. There will be a fire protection door and, on an L, shaped Stable Footprint. There will be EV Points and fourteen Solar Panels on the roof.

Cllr Highwood asked if it was going to be registered as a Commercial Property. The Stables will be removed and the Footprint used. The Parish Council would like to see a Planning condition on the property so that it can't be used as a Residential property.

The Parish Council would like a site visit, so this has been arranged for Saturday 8th February at 1pm.

The meeting was reconvened at 19.15pm
The members of the public then left the meeting at 19.17pm

25.02.06
PLANNING
NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS

APPLICATION REFERENCE 25/500038/FULL
LOCATION: Mulberry Barn, Martins Farm, Collier Street
PROPOSAL: Change of use of equestrian land and stable building with the erection of a single-storey low-profile mono pitch roof two bed holiday accommodation including extension of brick paving for the provision of two no parking spaces.
COMMENTS DUE BY: 11 FEBRUARY 2025
CASE OFFICER: SAM COWDRY

The Parish Council have arranged a site visit with the owner of the property, once they have visited the site they will decide.

APPLICATION REFERENCE - 25/500211/FULL

ADDRESS: Land at Lawton Place, Benover Road, Yalding. ME18 6AU

PROPOSAL: Proposed change of use from Agricultural Land to a Storage facility for Touring Caravans (B8) with new access.

COMMENTS DUE BY: 24 FEBRUARY 2025

CASE OFFICER: WILLIAM FLETCHER.

It was **RESOLVED** by all members present to Object to this application and Cllr Highwood will write up the Objection outside of the meeting and the Clerk will then upload to the Planning Officer on this application.

25.02.07

PLANNING

DECISIONS BY MBC

APPLICATION REFERENCE - 24/504105/FULL

ADDRESS: Horns Lodge, Claygate Road, Marden

PROPOSAL: Demolition of agricultural barn and erection of one no dwelling with associated parking, garden land, landscaping, and biodiversity enhancements (alternative scheme to 23/503763/PNQCLA)

APPLICATION WITHDRAWN

25.02.08

PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE

There was no planning correspondence.

25.02.09

HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS

[DP] stated that the old Car Park sign had been removed, and a new Car Parking FREE sign has been installed. [DP] also reported a sign which has been damaged by a Lorry (under investigation). The Give way sign opposite the school is down to be re-painted.

There were no further reports.

25.02.10

CIL MONIES

[DP] updated that amount of CIL Monies available is £34,516.31 - £16,132.05 must be spent by 06/11/2025.

No income received since the last meeting.

25.02.11

FINANCE

25.02.11.01 BANK RECONCILIATION - There was no Bank Reconciliation available yet

25.02.11.02 BANK STATEMENTS - **There** was no Bank Reconciliation available yet

25.02.11.03 TRIAL BALANCE TO DATE

It was **RESOLVED** by all members present to accept the Trial Balance Report

25.02.11.04 BUDGET REPORT YTD

It was **RESOLVED** by all members present to accept the Trial Balance Report

25.02.11.05 PAYMENTS FOR FEBRUARY

It was Proposed by [DP] seconded by [KR], and **RESOLVED** by all members present to approve the Following payments-

03/02/2025 MRS MICHELLE RUMBLE £654.33 CLERKS SALARY - FEBRUARY
03/02/2025 MRS MICHELLE RUMBLE £70.49 CLERKS EXPENSES - FEBRUARY
03/02/2025 CAPEL GROUND CARE £48.00 PLAY INSPECTION FOR JANUARY
03/02/2025 SP AND LJ HIGHWOOD £420.00 REPAIRS TO PLAY EQUIPMENT

25.02.11.06 TO APPROVE THE BUDGET AND SET THE PRECEPT FOR 2025/2026

[DP] The Clerk confirmed that the Precept for 2025/2026 had been submitted for £23,800, this was **RESOLVED** by all members. The Budget for 2025/2026 was also circulated and this was also **RESOLVED** to be approved by all members present.

25.02.11.07 NEST PENSION

[DP] stated that due to the Clerks Salary, it was mandatory that the Parish Council offer a Pension. This was to be with NEST. The Clerk handed the Bank Mandate which needed to be signed by Cllr D Papas and Cllr S Barham.

25.02.11.08 NEST PENSION DD

The First payment of the Clerks will be 5% Employee and 3% Employer of the Clerks monthly salary.

25.02.12

RECREATION FIELD & CAR PARK

PLAY AREA INSPECTION

The Clerk forwarded the latest Play Inspection to all Councillors prior to the meeting. The Councillors wanted this item added to the next agenda to decide the future of the Play Equipment. The future of the Play Equipment was discussed in detail.

Cllr Highwood had a good meeting with Pete Bamford, main points raised:

- 1) we need to completely replace (or remove soon) the climbing frame as it is out of date and aging fast. I believe it has a production date of 2008 on its side.
- 2) the see saw is ok but needs replacing inside of 6 months.
- 3) the roundabout is level, but the floor is not. The floor here is uneven and we need to get quotes to either remove and replace the current rubber surface or to have a new surface laid on top. this new surface should be level and much closer to the roundabouts base.
- 4) the large swings legs need their feet replacing. a company should be able to put galvanised metal feet in the ground and attach it to the existing wooden legs. after which we can re attach the swings.

It was **RESOLVED** by all members present that until a decision can be made about the Future of the Play Equipment it would be prudent to Close off the Play Area. The Clerk will seek quotes for fencing to close off the Play Area.

25.02.13

FLOODING UPDATE

[JH] gave an update on Flooding.
His Report

- 1) This was not a major flooding event and was a good practice for organising the next better.
- 2) The ditching and clearing work that has been happening west of mock beggar obviously made a big difference there as the water from there was able to be held around the edge of my farm and then released slowly back. I will work with the drainage board and David Goff to encourage more activities like this elsewhere.
- 3) we observed water moving in directions it should not have done, and David Goff has since had P. Burke and his guys working on ditches east of the village and along green lane to clear blockages.

4) there is more work to be done increasing the co-ordination of closing roads and deploying signs and materials. David and I have agreed to meet and discuss how to improve the practical side of this as I have the machinery to get through flood (and store the materials here) and he has a fiesta and is feeling his age.

5) not one person said thank you for helping to pull them out of the water.

6) Cllr Cooper did an excellent job closing the road at David Goffs house, but we do need to have other people close other roads elsewhere. too many drivers just go into flood water like lemmings. long ends lane is a good example. it's boring and thankless work that costs us our wages, but it saves lives.

7) one of my tenants helps run a 4x4 off road recovery group. they have an MOU with Yalding parish council. I will investigate us working with them in the future. they love closing roads and drinking tea.

8) I have long said we should have a lifeboat, a shallow draft, inflatable boat and should train to use it. you don't need a boat until it floods over the main road, and we have to get people out. Another inch of snow and another inch of rain, think 24hrs more of the same weather, and we would have been wanting such a boat. We should discuss this.

9) after helping 5 people out of the flood waters I gave up and finally went to look at my animals. 31 sheep were pinned up against the fence as the Teise broke its banks and flooded their 10-acre field. I had spent all morning looking east, I had not looked west. Had to attach a trailer to the tractor and bansai over the water. Adam and I have never got 31 ewe lambs out of a field so easily! they wanted out! My learned lesson is checking my animals first before pulling Mercedes out of flooded ditches.

10) the subsequent hard frosts and lack of salt turned green lane and later Haviker street into an ice rink. I witnessed 5 accidents and the police handing out 3 tickets for careless driving. I'm sure there were more. like I said...lemmings.

Cllr Highwood also stated that he has two meetings coming up, the first one is with the River Trust and Kent River Trust.

25.02.14

CORRESPONDENCE

EMAIL FROM KALC re the Minutes and Agendas

EMAIL FROM KALC re Devolution.

25.02.15

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

[AP] confirmed that the next full Council meeting will be, in The Orchard Room, St Margaret's School on 3rd MARCH 2025 at 19.00pm

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.00pm

Prepared by | Michelle Rumble – Parish Clerk | Collier Street Parish Council