

MINSTER PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held at John Spanton Sports Pavilion

St Mildreds Road, Minster

on 7th January 2025 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: Quittenden, Smith, Webzell, Bates, Jones, Crow-Brown, Fordyce, Ingleton, Fleming, Local

Also present: Kyla Lamb (Parish Clerk), Clare Wilsdon (Assistant Clerk), Cllr Wright (KCC).

Prior to commencement of the meeting, a minutes silence was held for Rob Quinney who sadly passed away in December.

300. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs Cllr Smith and Bambridge (TDC), PC Andrew Howe.

301. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 3rd December 2024 be approved and signed.

302. MEMBERS INTERESTS

No members interests recorded.

303. POLICING AND COMMUNITY WARDEN REPORT

PC Andy Howe provided a report as follows:

- November statistics were lower than average but this is expected to increase for December.
- Most calls traffic related with a couple of poaching incidents also reported.
- A large number of arrests made for drink/drug driving.
- Any intelligence on vehicles relating to drug supply in the village would be appreciated.

304. COUNTY COUNCILLOR & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS

Cllr Crow-Brown reported as follows;

- Reform of current two-tier governance meeting to bring the changes expected as follows:
Parish councils in Thanet to remain unchanged with possibility of more funding and responsibility.
Borough and District councils, including TDC to be abolished.
KCC and Medway Unitary Authority to be abolished.
New Unitary councils to be created that would take over the functions of KCC and the district/borough councils.
There are many pros and cons to this change and the government has indicated that these changes will come whether local councils like it or not so Kent should be in the front line of shaping the debate.

Pros -

Saving of £1.5M per annum by reducing the number of councillors

Greater accountability for councillors

Many opportunities of scale e.g. refuse and recycling and procurement.

New elected Mayor would have significant authority to promote economic development and improve infrastructure.

Many council offices could be sold or re-purposed.

Cons –

A degree of upheaval in the early years.

Strong bonds that have developed between residents and their local council would be lost.

Two centuries of Kent having a County Council would be lost.

305. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman reported as follows:

- Christmas carol service was a great success.
- Community event went well at the village hall and by the lychgate with the school choir and Morris-Men.
- Community Christmas event raised £1336.66 for Thanet First Responders and this donation will be presented to them.

306. REPORT OF THE CLERK

Nothing to report.

307. DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION

None available.

308. OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18th December be received and the recommendations within them therein as below:-

To accept a quotation for £ 459 from Mirage Signs for fixings for all car park signs.

To go ahead with the 3G pitch mat replacement if possible in summer 2025 and cover the shortfall in the sinking fund and any further funding available from MPC reserves and replace from future income.

Cllr Ingleton suggested that consideration should be given to requirements of the village in the future that could be included in S106 agreements.

309. COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18th December be received and the recommendations within them therein.

Cllr Ingleton thanked the Clerks for updating this source of information available to the public.

310. POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Members reviewed the draft Policy and finance Committee minutes. Cllr Local had not been able to attend the meeting and raised several questions over the budget setting. He noted one error in the budget for the provision for the Pavilion utility bills and also felt consideration should be given to provide more funds for the provision of planning consultants if they are required for any future large planning applications that arise. He further proposed that the provision of £2000 for planning Consultants fees be increased to £20,000. The budget would be increased by £8,000 and a provision of £10,000 from general reserves would be allocated to earmarked reserves for Planning Consultant Fees.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Policy & Finance committee meeting held on 18th December 2024 be received and the recommendations within them be approved subject to the amendment to the budget to provide for pavilion utilities and the above £8000 further provision for planning consultants fees which are included in the revised budget and precept request below;

FEES & CHARGES 2025/26

RESOLVED: That the fees and charges be set at the levels contained within the report attached to the Policy and Finance Agenda circulated.

And

AGREED: Cemetery fees increase be considered at the March meeting when consideration can be given to the fees set by Thanet District Council

BUDGET PROCESS 2025/26

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the staff salaries be increased as per the budget.
- (ii) That Council approves the draft budget of £240,185 as submitted and amended, and to request from TDC a Precept sum of £118,940 for the year 2025/26. This would give an INCREASE of £12.60 pence per annum which represents an annual charge of £85.50 pence or 17.28% increase per annum on a band D property

311. PLANNING, HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18th December be received. Cllr Bates summarised the minutes for Members at the meeting.

312. KALC 2025 COMMUNITY AWARDS SCHEME

Members considered possible nominations for this scheme.

AGREED: A nomination would be made for Sara Tyler who voluntarily maintains the Kings Steps and various litter picking and sweeping in St Mildreds Road.

313. COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

Members received reports from representatives of the following bodies:

TALC

Cllr Quittenden reported as follows:

Next meeting is to be held on 27th February.

New WhatsApp group has been set up.

Attended a joint transport board meeting that included the proposed double yellow lines proposal for Norton Drive and Tothill Street.

Attended the Parish Forum with the Clerk. TDC did not seem concerned about the proposed government changes.

Minster School Cllr Fleming had nothing to report.

Village Hall. Cllr Smith had nothing to report.

314. REPORT OF THE RFO

RESOLVED:

- (a) the Bank balance statement be received and noted,**
- (b) the statement of Receipts and Payments for the month of December 2024 be approved.**
- (c) the budget income/expense report be received.**

315. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC/ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No members of the public were present.

Cllr Wright (KCC) reported that the planning application for the houses in Birchington had been passed. This land was included in the Local Plan.

Time concluded: 8.25pm

4th February 2025