

**MINUTES OF WOULDHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING****TUESDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2025 AT 7.30PM****WOULDHAM VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllr Bell, Cllr Marr, Cllr Yard, Cllr Miles, Cllr Collier-Ward, Cllr Church,  
BCllr Dalton, T. Miles (Clerk/RFO) **3** Members of Public

1.	<b>APOLOGIES:</b> BCllr Davis	ACTION
2.	<b>MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING</b> The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6 <sup>th</sup> May, 2025 were proposed by Cllr Miles and seconded by Cllr Collier-Ward. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman The minutes of the Parish Council AGM, also held on 6 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 were proposed by Cllr Church and seconded by Cllr Yard. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman	
3.	<b>MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES</b> - None	
4.	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> - None	
5.	<b>EXTERNAL REPORTS</b>	
5.1	<b>Borough Council:</b> Received. To be published on our website. BCllr Dalton advised that the Enforcement Officer has attended a site in Wouldham and advised that no work being done that currently requires planning or any evidence that trees have been removed. He noted that if there is problem with noise, it needs to be reported to the Environmental Officer and a diary kept. Cllr Yard noted that previously, locals seem to do what they want with no regards to the rules and it has just been ignored and this is a situation we must try to reverse. Cllr Miles advised that clearance work is having a detrimental effect on the wildlife, as it is leaving the site. So, any future ecology surveys could potentially show a lack of wildlife leading to the area being unprotected. As the area is a registered Priority Habitat, she will contact DEFRA and Kent Wildlife Trust for advice on how to move forward. It was also queried why Gores Farm had to have planning permission to have containers on site, but it was acceptable with no planning here. BCllr Dalton advised that there are different planning rules for TMBC. He also noted that the Local Plan is still coming so must be kept in your mind.	JM
5.2	Cllr Bell noted that the government had passed new legislation banning parking on pavements, but the proviso was that local Borough/Town councils could enforce or not at their discretion and at present TMBC do not enforce. He asked, if this rule changes how will local residents be informed?	
6.	<b>Community Safety</b>	
6.1	<b>Police:</b> Not received	
6.2	<b>Neighbourhood Watch:</b> High Street – 20/5 -22/5. Somebody stole a white Ford Fiesta, EO63***, from a private car park. Crime Report No. 46/85956/25	
6.3	<b>Speedwatch:</b> Nothing to report.	
7.	<b>Administrative and Finance</b>	
7.1	Authorisation of payment request. Cllr Bell and Marr and Church signed the request.	CLERK
7.2	Internal auditors report and comment: Councillors had received the report via e-mail and it will be on our website. The Internal Auditor has signed off the accounts.	
7.3	The Council considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for 2024/5. The Chair and Clerk signed and dated the Statement on behalf of the Council. It will be published on our website.	CLERK
7.4	The Council considered and approved the Accounting Statements and supporting documents as provided by the Responsible Financial Officer who had, prior to the meeting, signed and dated section 2 of the AGAR for 2024/5. The Clerk explained the variances, which will be sent to the External Auditor. Cllr Bell then signed and dated the Accounting Statement on behalf of the Council.	
7.5	Clerk explained that a new 3-year contract for the gas and electric for the Village Hall has been reviewed by councillors and requested agreement to enter a new contract with British Gas, being the most cost effective. ALL AGREED	

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7.6	Clerk explained that, in order to open the new bank account, Metro require authorisation via the minutes. Therefore, Cllr Bell proposed to open a Community Current Account with Metro Bank, Maidstone. The key officials are Cllr Eddy Bell (Chair) Tina Miles (RFO) and Cllr Jane Miles (Vice Chair). Signatories will be Cllr Eddy Bell, Tina Miles, Cllr Andy Marr and Cllr Luke Church. The accounting rules to be followed are as set out in the PC Financial Regulations. These will be passed to the bank and signatories will need to visit the bank to verify their identity with their passport/driving licence and confirmation of address. ALL AGREED	CLERK
8.1	<b>Members of the Public</b> <b>MOP1:</b> Asked if the hedge on the allotment footpath can be cut back. Also, the barb wire fence needs urgent repair as people could climb into the allotments. Cllr Miles has had a look at it, but found it difficult to access it. Cllr Marr suggested getting a bolt which can go through the concrete post and re-attach the wire. MOP1 also advised that there is a plant sale on Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> June 12-2 and an open day on 15 <sup>th</sup> August at the allotments. All welcome.	JM
8.2		
8.3	<b>MOP 2:</b> Advised that planning progressing well for the Summer Fair is on the 30 <sup>th</sup> August with a Wild West theme. All welcome	
9	<b>Planning</b>	
9.1	<b>Planning applications considered or commented upon by the Planning</b> 25/00838/PA Ringshill Farm Consultation by Medway Council ref: MC/25/0850: Erection of agricultural storage. It was noted that this is well within the farm site and will be used to cover hay and silage. Therefore, no issues raised. <b>Planning Consent Issued:</b> 25/00655/PA PHASE 5 AREA 3C, Worrall Drive Details of condition 2 (materials) pursuant to planning permission TM/23/03547 (Approval of Reserved Matters relating to appearance, layout, landscaping and scale pursuant to Outline Permission 15/01485/OAEA for development of 10 homes (8 new) and re-orientation of 2 homes already approved under the 3B consent with associated parking and landscaping). 25/00654/PA PHASE 5 Area 3C, Worrall Drive, Details of condition 31 (materials) pursuant to planning permission TM/15/01485/OAEA (Grant of replacement planning permission for TM/05/00989/OAEA (Formation of development platforms and creation of new community including residential development, mixed use village centre (including A1, A3 and B1 use) community facilities and primary school and associated highway works) subject to a new time limit to allow a further period within which to submit applications for the approval of reserved matters.) <b>Planning applications refused/withdrawn: REFUSED</b> 25/00420/PA DOWNS FARM, PILGRIMS WAY Non-Material Amendment to planning permission TM/22/02876/FL to vary condition 2 (Approved plans) to extend the approved basement to encompass the entire underground level. (Not considered a non-material amendment) <b>Other Planning Issues:</b> BCllr Dalton asked to be excused and left the meeting.	ALL
10	<b>Roads, Footpaths &amp; Lighting (RFL)</b>	
10.1	Cllr Collier-Ward reported that the Metal railings were due to be done and asked if there was any update. It was noted that the recycling of the one from the Hall may need to be cut to size, but does have posts which can be bolted onto the sleepers and attached to the existing railings. Cllr Yard will chase up. Cllr Bell noted that he had put safety tape around the area in an attempt to stop people walking across the new garden.	TY
10.2	Cllr Bell noted that there were a lot of weeds around the pylons, the road to Winchester House needs clearing again and the pathway between School Lane and Oldfield is very overgrown. (reported 7/6 ref: 881532) Cllr Marr advised that he thought that Fields Path pylon had been done at the end of last week. Cllr Bell felt that maintaining the rear of the High Street it is not worth doing as too many residents use the space for bins, skips, cars etc, therefore they should be responsible for it. Clerk explained that this area is KCC and is in their contract, however, the misuse has been reported to KCC in the works report and to the Inspector. Cllr Collier-Ward asked who to report issues to. The Clerk advised that, if it is on our maintenance programme, it is our contractor and she is liaison, for other areas, i.e. pavements etc, it can be reported online to KCC at <a href="https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-or-track-a-problem-on-the-">https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-or-track-a-problem-on-the-</a>	CLERK

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10.3	<p><a href="#">road-or-pavement</a>. Cllr Miles suggested that if there are any urgent H &amp; S issues, to let her know and she will try to deal with it.</p> <p>Cllr Collier-Ward invited Cllr Bell to explain about having flashing signs at schools. Cllr Bell presented a suggestion that a flashing sign outside the schools with a 20pmh speed during school times may help people be more aware. He will investigate getting these installed.</p> <p>Cllr Collier-Ward proposed that 2 banners could be put up in problem areas sign saying 'It's a limit not a target'. Seconded by Cllr Yard. ALL AGREED. Clerk to liaise with Cllr Collier-Ward to agree size, material and placement.</p>	EB  CLERK /CCW
10.4	<p>Cllr Collier-Ward has reported fly tipping on Pilgrims Way that had been growing. It has now been removed, except the freezer which she will chase. She has also received a complaint about people parking on double yellow lines on Knowle Road, but unsure how to deal with it. Cllr Yard advised that she had a contract with Traffic Enforcement and offered to make the reports. Cllr Collier-Ward will pass on details/dates/times to her.</p>	CCW/ TY
10.5	<p>Cllr Church reported that the mirror at Portland had been moved again so he has repositioned it.</p>	
10.6	<p>Cllr Yard reported that the pothole at Portland has started to deteriorate again. Clerk explained that this was only an emergency repair, done by the Inspector. But all the potholes are due to be done by SE Water with a road closure.</p>	
11.	<p><b><u>Open Spaces (OS)</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Updates:</u></b></p>	
11.1	<p><b>Recreation Ground:</b> Cllr Church advised that he had reported overflowing bins, which were cleared the next day. He also reported the loose bolts on the swing in the Rec.</p> <p>Cllr Yard reported that there has been a quad bike and mini bike using the rec which is not allowed and could be dangerous for users. Cllr Miles also noted that the metal detector is back leaving holes/dead grass and she has picked up golf balls again. Clerk to publish rules again on FB</p>	CLERK
11.2	<p>Cllr Miles advised that part of the matting has been removed, but some is still left. She noted that there had also been a step built, hidden behind bushes, but it is not their land and has no permission for it to be there. In order to treat everyone the same, it should be made clear that NOTHING is allowed to be placed on the land. She also proposed to get a full structural quote to confirm the current condition as we may need to set aside reserves to replace it with fencing at some point in the future. Seconded by Cllr Yard. ALL AGREED.</p>	CLERK
11.3	<p>Clerk reported that the bench has been repaired after it was vandalised and the damaged gym equipment has been removed. Cllr Miles suggested that, as there were no red issues and we have tackled quite a few yellow issues from last year's report, we wait until the next ROSPA inspection is done in July to forward plan. Cllr Miles also reported that the bolts on the swing had been replaced, but the swings are still too low. Cllr Church and Cllr Miles will have a look and adjust. Cllr Miles reported that the holes in the playground surface had been filled, and requested that some wetpour filler is purchased to fill the gaps around the different colours and some green wetpour to re-do under the slide in the toddlers play area. ALL AGREED</p>	JM/LC  CLERK
11.4	<p>Cllr Collier Ward thanked Cllr Church for making the bin store by recycling some of the Rec fencing, but asked if there were any suggestions on what to do with the remainder? Cllr Marr suggested to move it to the hall to keep it safe. Cllrs Church and Miles will arrange for it to be moved</p>	JM/LC
11.5	<p>Cllr Yard advised that, on certain evenings, local people still find it difficult to park in the carpark, due to the pub. She would like to reconsider having retractable bollards for the residents parking spaces. Clerk noted that a criterion and costed plan needs to be presented to ensure any new system is fair and transparent. Cllr Bell noted that he had observed that it is there are often spaces, but asked Cllr Yard to investigate fobs, parking meters and bollards so that an equitable decision can be made.</p>	TY
11.6	<p>Common: Clerk reported that the re-wilding volunteer group had been in touch and may be able to offer some sessions to help improve the Common. They suggested getting in touch with the Woodland Trust and Kent Wildlife Trust, to see if they can help create an ecology plan. The Woodland Trust have responded that their Conservation Team will contact us as soon as they can. This could be a large project and would need help from both councillors and volunteers. Cllr Yard volunteered to help progress a project.</p>	

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11.7	<b>Allotments:</b> Clerk reported that she had contacted SE Water again and they had confirmed that the lack of water pressure not an issue from metre. She has informed the Association that they will need to recruit a plumber to identify what the issue is. Cllr Marr advised that it has always been an issue. If someone is using, or leaves a tap on at the bottom of the allotments, it reduces pressure further up. Although there could also be a leak anywhere along the pipework.	
11.8	<b>Grounds Maintenance:</b> Clerk reported that the grounds maintenance contractor has agreed to trim the worst part of the common where the rubble has been dumped, we will then have to clear it, before he can flail cut the land. Cllr Bell reported that he had contacted the bench suppliers to see if he could get some touch up paint for the bench along Hall Road, but needed the order number. Clerk reported that she had also spoken to the company who need a photo of the damage, then will be able to sort it out.	CLERK
12.	<b>Village Hall:</b> Cllr Yard reported that there is currently a bad debt from a regular user. She thanked Sarah Briggs for her continued efforts to get payment but we need to be tougher on non-payers before it gets too large. Cllr Church suggested that the code is changed, so that he cannot get access until he speaks to us. Cllr Yard suggested that his equipment could be held until he pays. Cllr Bell suggested contacting KALC about the legalities of holding his equipment. Cllr Miles suggested that the code is changed before he is contacted.  It was agreed that all hire users will be given 30 days from the date of invoice to pay. If not paid within this time, their hiring will cease and the code will be changed. Cllr Church was concerned that with the WhatsApp users' group, banned users may just ask one of the other users for the new code. Cllr Miles offered to go the Hall before his next session to have a chat with him.	JM
13.	<b>Health &amp; Safety/Risk Management</b>	
13.1	<b>Defibrillators:</b> All have been checked and The Circuit updated.	CLERK
13.2	<b>Lifebuoys:</b> All the PC's lifebuoys along the Esplanade in Peters Village have been checked with no issues except that the tamper triggers seem to need re-setting on every visit.	
13.3	<b>Risk assessments:</b> The risk assessment for the Big Lunch event has been checked by the H & S team. The additional item raised regarding rubbish has now been included.	
14.	<b>General Village Business</b>	
14.1	<b>Items for the Newsletter:</b> Any items for inclusion need to be with the Clerk by 12 <sup>th</sup> July.	ALL
14.2	<b>PPP Meeting:</b> Cllr Bell reminded councillors to give him or Cllr Collier-Ward any questions to put forward. Clerk noted that she had asked if PC's will have to take over assets/services when devolution takes place and that BCllr Dalton had confirmed that they would not.	
14.3	<b>Project update: VE Day event:</b> Clerk reported that the event was a great success with all 100 tickets used. Although it was not an intention to make a profit, the budget of 1k was not used and can now be re-allocated. The profit of £435.59 will be donated to RBLI in Aylesford. <b>Big Lunch:</b> Clerk reported that Ann-Marie has arranged this 'low key' event for Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> June, weather permitting, to bring the community together. She has received a £250 grant from the Co-op, which has been used to purchase equipment. Some of this will be set up to be used by families on the day.	
14.4	Cllr Yard noted that we had been assured by the Police that we would receive monthly reports detailing their effectiveness in the Parish, but again nothing had been received. Clerk to chase.	CLERK
15.	<b>Correspondence:</b> Cllr Bell noted that he had received a letter from the MP saying what is going on locally. Encouragingly, the addition of 3 ASB officers and 3 Planning Enforcement Officers are to be employed by TMBC	
16.	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS:</b> Tuesday <b>1st July</b> , 2025. 7.30pm at the Village Hall	
17.	<b>QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS, CHAIRPERSON AND CLERK:</b> To be passed to Clerk 7 days before the next meeting	
18.	<b>Meeting Closed: 9.45pm</b>	

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