

NETTLESTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 9th APRIL 2026 IN NETTLESTEAD VILLAGE HALL at 19:45

PRESENT: Cllr Alison Green – Chair
Cllr David Meredith – Vice Chair
Cllr Emily Corfe
Cllr Jackie Bennett
Cllr Martyn Evans
Borough Cllr Grace Couch
Joanna Geary – Parish Clerk
Tamsin Miles (Trustee of the Village Hall)

1. APOLOGIES AND ABSENCE

Cllr Anita van Hensbergen
Borough Cllr Mike Summersgill
Borough Cllr Claudine Russell

2. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS - Cllr Meredith declared interest in agenda item 6 - Village Hall and it was agreed by all Councillors present that he would not participate in any decisions that Councillors might make in relation to this matter.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5th March 2026

The minutes of the previous meeting were duly signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

4. EXTERNAL REPORTS

4.1 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

Cllr Ford was not in attendance and had not provided a written report.

4.2 BOROUGH COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Cllr Russell circulated her report in advance of the meeting. The topics covered were:

COUNCIL

- The Heathlands Supplementary Planning Document
- The Annual meeting of the Council, new Mayor and Deputy Mayor
- The Article 4 Directive motion
- Consultations open at the moment: Community Governance Review (CGR) for the unparished areas and Grove Green, Town Centre Public Spaces Protection Order Review, Dog Control Public Spaces Protection Order Review, Street Trading Policy
- New recycling rules from 1st April but MBC recycling system already meets the new requirements

WARD WORK

- Fly tipping

Cllr Summersgill and Cllr Couch had circulated their report in advance of the meeting. The topics covered were:

COUNCIL

- Cabinet Meeting dates
- Cabinet Agenda items
- Council Tax Reduction Scheme
- Third quarter Budget update
- Motions on River/Nature restoration, Invicta House (Art.4 direction) and an expression of interest in Kent becoming a Foundation Strategic Authority

- Future make-up of Kent for Local Government Reorganisation in 2028
- Mayor-making Council event will be on Saturday 16th May.
- Other Committees continue through April. No elections in Maidstone this May.
- Meetings of the Rochester Bridge Trust and the Upper Medway Drainage Board
- Opening of new STEM teaching hub
- Citizen's Assembly on Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

PARISH WORK

- Nettlestead: The Pelican Crossing did not come up at the March Joint Transportation Board (JTB) meeting, and Cllr Summersgill contacted the Chair, who confirmed it is with KCC for discussion at the July meeting.
- Upcoming events

Cllr Green thanked Cllr Couch for her and Cllr Summersgill's report.

Cllr Couch noted that the Annual MBC Report will be circulated the following week.

5. COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

5.1 NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT

Neighbourhood Watch – Cllr Corfe

On Wednesday 11th of March between 00:01 and 16:06, on Maidstone Road, Nettlestead. Somebody broke into a commercial property. Pipes and wiring were stolen.

Crime Report No. 46/43808/26

Cllr Corfe reported verbally that police had responded to anti-social behaviour in the Deer Park.

5.2 PARISH MAGAZINE

- Cllr Van Hensbergen reported prior to the meeting that the printing supplier had supplied an incorrect invoice for the April edition of the Magazine, and they are due to send a corrected version.
- One new advertising space has been purchased.

5.3 CHATTERBOX & WARMSPACE

- Cllr Bennett reported that Age UK attended the latest meeting and shared information that was very useful.

6. VILLAGE HALL

Tamsin Miles reported that:

- The Village Hall current account is now with Unity Bank.
- All invoices have been distributed and some payments are still awaited.
- Tamsin Miles invited Parish Cllrs to attend an informal event to celebrate the retirement of the current Committee Chair in July. Ideas for a gift were suggested.
- At a recent 3rd party hire event the hall was left in a dirty and damaged condition; with some damage also caused to items owned by the adjacent Pre School. It was noted that the deposit held did not cover the entire costs of repair and cleaning. The Village Hall Committee is considering options for preventing future damage and loss.

7. KGV FIELD

7.1 KGV FIELD – PARISH UPDATE

- Cllr Bennett shared photos received from Cllr van Hensbergen of some items that might require maintenance/repair. Cllr van Hensbergen was thanked for these in her absence.
- The first grass cut of the year has taken place.

7.2 KGV FIELD – UPDATE ON REPAIRS AND QUOTES FOR WORKS

- Repairs to the Leg Press : as the previous contractor Matt Lotty has not responded to repeated requests to return to complete the repair, the Clerk is to instruct Fresh Air Fitness to do this remedial work.

7.3 KGV FIELD – TREE SURVEY

- The Clerk has requested quotes from three companies to carry out the works recommended from the recent Tree Survey.
- Cllr Corfe recommended that a further company known be contacted for a quote
- Identified within the survey report are recommended remedial actions on two trees that sit on adjacent private properties. The Clerk is to write to the homeowners to request that they action these works.

7.4 THREE COUNTIES CONTRACTING SCHEDULE OF WORKS

- This has been received

8. CHURCHYARD

- As per the schedule of works, the first grass cut happened in March and the next cut is imminent.

8.1 THREE COUNTIES CONTRACTING SCHEDULE OF WORKS

- It was noted that the current three year contract with Three Counties Contracting expires in 2028 and will therefore need to be tendered at that point. The Clerk is to investigate the agreement around the Parish Council paying for the grass cutting at the Churchyard.

Commented [DM1]: Can you double check this? I have a feeling that we are now starting the second year, so the current contract will finish in February 2028

9. HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS

9.1 TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY ISSUES – MAINTENANCE REPORT

- Nothing to report

9.2 TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY ISSUES – HIP PROGRESS REPORT

- The Clerk had circulated the draft new HIP form. Councillors had no comments or additions to make.
- **Maidstone Road speed restrictions**
It was noted that the signs are in place but that one is partially obscured. This item is included in the HIP form.
- **Update on Zebra Crossing project**
This is still a live item with the Joint Transportation Board. Funding is in the process of being secured.
Cllr Couch reported that KCC Councillors have not been present at recent Joint Transportation Board Meetings

9.2 TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY ISSUES - MAIDSTONE ROAD/HAMPSTEAD LANE FLOOD MITIGATION

- The Clerk has discussed the matter with the KCC HIP contact.
- The Clerk has followed up the matter of the ponds within the wooded area adjacent to Diamond Works with the Estate Manager of Roydon Hall Estate and awaits a response.

9.3 TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAYS ISSUES - STREETLIGHTS QUOTES FOR OCTOBER 2026

- It was noted that emails have been received from the energy broker regarding earlier action on procuring an energy supplier once the contract with the current supplier expires in October, but Councillors agreed that no action is to be taken at this time.

10. OLD SCHOOL HOUSE CLOCK

The annual maintenance for the Clock has been booked with Gillett & Johnston for the 20th April.

11. PLANNING MATTERS

11.1 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- It was noted that no response has yet been received to the Councillor questions regarding Planning Application 26/500224/ADV, for the Railway Public House.
- 26/501184/SUB
Submission of details pursuant to condition 9 (Landscaping) and Condition 10 (Landscape Implementation) in relation to planning permission 24/505202/FULL.
This application was received after this Meeting Agenda had been published but were circulated prior to this Meeting. There were no comments from Councillors.

11.2 DECISIONS MADE BY MBC

- 26/500022/FULL1 Glenleigh Terrace Maidstone Road Nettlestead Kent ME18 5EP. Application permitted : Noted.

11.3 PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE

None

12. FINANCE

- Tamsin Miles noted that there is a lockable cupboard for Parish Council use and is £1 a week to hire. Cllr Meredith proposed this be hired. This motion was seconded by Cllr Green and it was approved by all Councillors
- As agreed in the 2026 Budget, Cllr Meredith proposed that the Clerk's salary go up by one SCC point from 1 April 2026. The motion was seconded by Cllr Green, and approved by Councillors. Cllr Meredith advised that there would be a backdated pay increase when the new hourly rates are published in November 2026.

12.1 RESOLUTION to receive Budget Monitoring Report to MARCH 2026

- The financial year end budget was circulated.
 - The following points were noted
 - There is a shortfall on budgeted receipts which is due to the VAT income still to be received.
 - The budgeted expenditure was less than planned for.
 - £600 allocated for the KGV field is still to be spent.
 - The reserves are healthier than anticipated but will be required for the actions arising from the Tree Survey.
- Cllr Meredith requested the invoice for use of the Village Hall in 2025/26
Tamsin Miles will send this invoice to the Clerk, and this will be paid in April.

RESOLVED by all members to approve the Budget Monitoring report for MARCH 2026

12.2 RESOLUTION to approve payments for MARCH 2026

- The narrative for the SSE monthly payment is to be amended from February to March.
- Cllr Meredith will advise Councillors and the Clerk of the amount to be transferred from the Savings Account to the Current Account once the annual Precept has been credited to the Current Account.
- Cllr Meredith signed the invoices and advised that the direct debits had been paid.

RESOLVED by all members to approve the online payments list for MARCH 2026

12.3 RESOLUTION to approve Bank Reconciliation

RESOLVED by all members to approve the Bank Reconciliation for MARCH 2026

12.4 Pensions Regulator Automatic enrolment

It was noted that the re-declaration of compliance has been submitted.

12.5 VAT reclaims with HMRC

The Clerk reported on the current issues being experienced with making the VAT reclaim online. It was noted that the Parish Council does not operate as a business and VAT claims are made under different rules.

12.6 HMRC financial year end PAYE submission

It was noted that this had been done.

12.7 Easy PC Accounting software

It was agreed by all Councillors to purchase the accounting software Easy PC.

13. SOCIAL MEDIA

The Facebook page was reported to be running smoothly.

14. CORRESPONDENCE

14.1 REPORT OF CORRESPONDENCE FROM RESIDENTS

Emails from residents had been read and were noted.
The Clerk will request a litter pick along Station Road from KCC.

14.2 KCC SALT BAGS

It was noted that the salt bins on Gibbs Hill have now been filled by volunteers using the salt from the ton bag at the Village Hall, and therefore the Clerk has rescinded the request for KCC to fill these bins. The Clerk is to re-iterate to KCC that the Parish Council do not wish salt to be deposited at the Village Hall again.

14.3 MULBERRY LTD. RE: YEAR END AUDIT

This has been booked with the Clerk for May 2026.

14.4 KALC EMAIL RE: TRAINING SESSION DATES

These dates were noted.

14.5 KALC EMAIL RE: KENT ACRE VILLAGE HALL INITIATIVE

An email had been received from Kent Acre regarding fundraising for local Village Halls, which was passed to Tamsin Miles.

14.6 KALC EMAIL RE: EMPLOYABILITY SKILL'S PROGRAMME FOR 16 - 24 YEAR OLDS WHO LIVE IN MAIDSTONE

This was published on the Facebook page

14.7 AGE UK EMAIL RE: DEMENTIA DAY CARE & MEALS ON WHEELS

This was published on the Facebook page

14.8 KCC email re: Water Supply Enquiry questionnaire

The Clerk replied to this email to confirm that Nettlestead Parish had not been affected by the recent disruption to the water supply.

14.9 CORRESPONDENCE RE: ASSERTION 10

It was noted that the Parish website already complies with Assertion 10 as it is hosted by Hugo Fox. The Clerk is to create an IT Policy and review all existing Policies.

14.10 WARD CLUSTER MEETING 10.3.26

The Clerk attended this and reported the content to Councillors. The Clerk is to request the link to My Community Voice and share this on the Parish website and the Facebook page.

14.11 MOVE TO GOV.UK EMAILS

The Clerk had circulated the costs of changing Parish Council email addresses to the suffix gov.uk, and it was decided that as the change is not currently mandatory that these would not be purchased at this time.

14.12 It was agreed to move the Parish Council noticeboard from The Hope Pole to the Village Hall. Tamsin Miles to advise on the new location.

14.13 Cllr Evans has produced a check sheet for the de-fibrillator which is located at the Village Hall. It was noted that the batteries do not need to be replaced until November 2027. It was agreed to publicise the location of the defibrillator in the Parish Magazine, Parish website and the Facebook page with a photo. The Clerk will action this.

14.14 The Clerk is to propose all meeting dates for the remainder of the financial year and inform Tamsin Miles once agreed by Councillors.

15. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- HIP report
- Tree Survey Actions
- Flood mitigation
- Annual Audit
- AGAR

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday 7th May 2026 at Nettlestead Village Hall.

The next PC meeting will be the Parish Council AGM and Parish Meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.10pm