

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of Collier Street Parish Council

St Margaret's School, Collier Street. Monday, 13 April 2026 at 7.00pm

PRESENT:

Cllr Jack Highwood (chair)
Cllr Deborah Papas (vice-chair)
Cllr Andrew Papas
Cllr Charlie Cooper
Cllr Steve Barham
Cllr Grace Couch arrived at 20.14pm

Also, in attendance was the Clerk Michelle Rumble
Also, in attendance 10 members of the Public.

26.04.01

Apologies and absences.

Cllr Rigden (holiday)
Cllr Russell, Cllr Summersgill and Cllr Black

26.04.02

Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying

Cllr D Papas declared an interest in payments as one of the payments is for purchase of CCTV accessories.

26.04.03

Reports from Members of the Public

The meeting was adjourned at 19.02pm, to hear from members of the public.

Questions were asked: -

When the Collier Street sign is going back on the grass patch at the End of Haviker Street.

Website and Emails are not working.

Residents asked why meetings are not being advertised anywhere other than the Noticeboard (which is not visible due to wire mesh covering the notices)

Not everyone has access to the Internet.

This was all taken on board, and the Parish Council will look at how they can improve their communication with the community.

The meeting resumed at 19.15pm

26.04.04

Reports.

Green Party Councillors' Report of **March 2026**, for Marden & Yalding Ward Parishes –

In a busy period within the Borough Council before Easter, the Cabinet Meeting on 18th March dealt with ten 'business' items for approval; the next Cabinet is on 15th April, with the Full Council now meeting on 29th April. The latest Cabinet agenda included updating/new Policies on Bulky Waste charges, Housing Payments, Empty Homes, and an Asset Management Strategy for the next three decades. The Council Tax Reduction Scheme

for lowest earners is now in effect, as Council Tax bills are issued. The third quarter Budget update revealed an increasing 'surplus' on this year's Budget, now over £0.5m, and there were also motions on River/Nature restoration, Invicta House (Art.4 direction) and an expression of interest in Kent becoming a Foundation Strategic Authority (the step below a Mayoral Authority). We are still waiting to hear from Central Government about the future make-up of Kent for Local Government Reorganisation in 2028; a decision is expected in July, but recent government decisions on other Counties caused concern in some areas that what Boroughs have proposed may not be agreed... The mayor-making Council event will be on Saturday 16th May.

Other Committees continue through April, with Policy Advisory Committees (PACs) from 1st – 7th, Overview & Scrutiny on 13th and Planning on 22nd. As there are no elections in Maidstone this May, there is no suspension of Council business, although there is some restriction on 'political' decisions.

During March, Mike also attended meetings of the Rochester Bridge Trust and the Upper Medway Drainage Board, where he is an MBC representative on both. RBT is part-funding some re-tiling (wood shingles) work on Hunton's ancient Church, amongst other charitable donations within its geographical remit – this was agreed before Mike took up his role there! Mike also attended the opening of a new STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) teaching hub at Kings' School in Rochester on 2nd March, which is available for public education events as well as school use. RBT is also inviting secondary schools across Kent to apply for engineering and maths-related funding, with grants for two years of up to £10,000 – by 1st May (www.rbt.org.uk/eesp). UMIDB is looking at assisting some restoration work on old stream paths and 'ghost ponds' in Collier Street and other sub-catchments, to help mitigate flooding, through its Conservation and Nature Resilience Fund.

The Council completed its Citizen's Assembly, consisting of four sessions of powerful conversations of ground-breaking citizen deliberation on Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). Residents came together with national and local experts, advocates, and academics to explore some of the most difficult and important issues facing our community. The outcomes will be used to move straight into shaping our approach to making Maidstone safer for everyone. Some of the insights were shared with Councillors attending 'Active Bystander' training in March, and the interest from local and national organisations in the recommendations feels incredibly positive. Cllr Couch is also meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner in April to discuss the 'Words Matter' reporting guidelines, which police forces are being encouraged to adopt. These guidelines provide clear information on how Police external communications teams should avoid victim-blaming language in their reports and use language that centres on the actions of perpetrators and encourages greater respect toward victims/survivors.

Parish Matters –

Collier Street – Mike attended the Parish meeting and sent in detail about a Planning amendment.

Hunton – Liaison continues with residents over construction work adjacent to Lughorse Lane, and a forthcoming PlanAp for polytunnels. The recent Parish meeting covered several Road Safety aspects and consultation on The Square access; Mike reported back from the Police/MBC 'Cluster' meeting on 10th, which was attended by clerks from Nettlestead & Marden, but not by other Ward Parishes.

Marden – We received a couple of residents' concerns about the unsolicited housing proposal (by GladMan Developments) for 115 homes off Plain Road; we are formulating a reply, but Mike's position on MBC Planning Committee means he should not directly state his opinion. Nothing more has been received about the 'North Marden' development proposal, after the local invitation-only meeting on 27th February, and no news has been heard for a while about the Copper Lane housing development. A fly-tipping incident on Tilden Lane was resolved, one of several locations/lanes that MBC Waste are investigating. Cllr Couch supported a resident looking for reassurance regarding the implementation of the fast-track process within the Housing Assistance Policy for MND diagnoses.

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

Yalding – We were disappointed that MBC’s argument against the Developer’s Appeal about (. not.) putting solar panels on the next phases of warehousing at YEP was dismissed; Grace had submitted a strong argument to the national Inspector, but Planning ‘rules’ took precedence. Mike also chased up a couple of Planning enquiries about a second Appeal for housing (three units) on Vicarage Lane. Cllr Couch has raised the issue of regular fly-tipping on Mill Lane with the relevant MBC team (again) but is pausing support for a resident pursuing noise complaints at the Boathouse with the Council, until the nature of the future/new tenant’s business is understood.

Updates for Newsletters/Sharing with Residents:

Medieval Fayre at Brenchley Gardens on Saturday - 11th April

The gardens (and the adjacent Museum) will have traditional crafts and skills being demonstrated (in costume) from 11am to 4pm, no charge. Find out more on www.visitmaidstone.com/whats-on.

Also happening all over town venues over the May Day Weekend is Maidstone Fringe musical festival, and there is a fun fair in Mote Park at the same time (and the weekend before).

‘Drive Electric’ - 17th April.

Drive Electric is coming to MidKent College Maidstone, Friday 17 April, 10am–2pm. Join it for a fun, informative day exploring the future of transport with a huge range of electric vehicles, expert advice, live demos, and plenty more. “Whether you're a business, resident, student or just EV-curious, this event is the perfect chance to learn, ask questions, explore opportunities and see how electric transport could work for you.” Find out more and book: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/drive-electric-tickets-1976717838266>

Maidstone’s ‘Big Day Out’ - 13th June

MBC is inviting everyone to get out and enjoy our amazing parks and open spaces, and to be part of the first community-led ‘Big Day Out.’ Being held on Saturday 13th June, this (second) one-day festival is celebrating outdoor areas to be found across the borough. Parishes are encouraged to host events on their green spaces as part of the celebration, and/or publicise neighbouring activities.

To find out more about the Maidstone Big Day Out, please visit the website: <https://bigdayout.info/>

→ Maidstone River Festival also returns on Saturday 25th July.

Borough Councillors Grace Couch & Mike Summersgill – 2nd April 2026

Emails: michaelsummersgill@maidstone.gov.uk, gracecouch@maidstone.gov.uk

MBC Members Report from Cllr Claudine Russell

Dated: April 2026

Council

The Heathlands SPD was called in to Overview and Scrutiny for further assessment but was ultimately passed through to cabinet without any changes being recommended and has since been adopted.

The Annual meeting of the Council is scheduled for Saturday 16th May and the new Mayor will be Cllr Brian Clark (Lib Dem – Loose Ward area). The new deputy Mayor will be Cllr Denis Spooner (Conservative – Bearsted Ward area).

The Article 4 Directive motion that we raised in council has ended with a decision being taken to pursue a non-emergency Article 4 directive but to look at a slightly wider area than just Invicta House and to gather the evidence for this area.

There are various 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.

You may have heard that the new recycling rules started on the 1st of April, but the good news is that our MBC recycling system already meets the new requirements. Collection days remain unchanged. You can now put Tetrapaks and cartons (like soup and juice cartons) into the dry mixed recycling bin. MBC are working with communal properties to make sure everyone can take part.

Ward Work

I have chased about a number of fly tips across the ward this month. It has been a very busy month for fly tipping and clearing up fly tipping so for a short while the team fell below target but they are back to clearing quickly again now.

26.04.05

Signing of the minutes of the last meeting.

The minutes of the meeting on 2nd March 2026 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

26.04.06

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

APPLICATION REF: 26/500886/ELEC

ADDRESS: Field Adjacent to Little Sheephurst Cottages, North of Sheephurst Lane, Marden.

PROPOSAL: Overhead electrical cable notification to relocate an existing electricity tower.

APPLICANT: UK Power Networks

APPLICATION REF: 26/501006/FULL

ADDRESS: The Workshop, Den Lane, Collier Street. Kent. TN12 9PX

PROPOSAL: Erection of replacement self-build dwelling utilising excess access.

COMMENTS DUE BY: 10 April 2026

DECISION DUE DATE: 13 May 2026

CASE OFFICER: Sema Yurtman

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk would ask for an extension to the comments due by date.

APPLICATION REF: 26/500029/ENF

ADDRESS: The Old Coach House, Claygate, Marden. TN12 9PL

PROPOSAL: Appeal against Enforcement Notice - Breach of Planning Control - the outbuilding referred to in the Enforcement Notice has not been constructed in accordance with the approved plans under planning permission 22/501795/FULL. Specifically, it does not comply with the approved dimensions, scale, or design. In addition, details required by Conditions 3 and 4 of

planning permission 24/503901/FULL were due to be submitted by 23 October 2024. No such applications have been submitted, and therefore these conditions are also in breach. This was noted by all members and RESOLVED that no further comments need to add to the original comments made by the Parish Council.

26.04.06.02

Planning Decision

APPLICATION REF: 26/500061/FULL

ADDRESS: Brandenburg Farm Haviker Street TN12 9RH

Proposal : Section 73 - Application for variation of condition 11 (to allow some living accommodation to be provided on the ground floor) and minor material amendment to approved plans condition 14 (to allow changes to allow alterations to internal layout and fenestration to create living/dining/kitchen area, utility rooms and gym to ground floor and 2no. additional bedrooms to first floor) pursuant to 17/503500/FULL for - Change of use and conversion of elisting American Oast to form a 4no. bed dwelling, along with associated landscaping and parking, and part-demolition of adjacent barn structure at Brandenburg Farm, Collier Street. Application Permitted 3rd March 2026
Parish comments Neutral

Application Ref: 25/504701/FULL

Address: Land Adjacent to Churston Burtons Lane, TN12 9PN

Proposal: Erection of freestanding array of 144 solar PV panels

Application Permitted 13th March 2026

Parish comments Neutral

26.04.07

FINANCE ITEMS:

26.04.07.01 – Bank Statements for Community Account and Money Manager

Proposed by Cllr D Papas, seconded by Cllr Barham and it was RESOLVED with all in favour.

26.04.07.02 – Bank Reconciliation for Community Account and Money Manager

Proposed by Cllr D Papas, seconded by Cllr Barham and it was RESOLVED with all in favour.

26.04.07.03 – Finance Reports

a) Annual Budget Report YtD

b) Earmarked Reserves

c) Trial Balance Report

Proposed by Cllr D Papas, seconded by Cllr Barham and it was RESOLVED with all in favour.

26.04.07.04 – Payments for the Month of April

Proposed by Cllr D Papas, seconded by Cllr Barham and it was RESOLVED with all in favour to make the payments.

These will be made ONLINE after the meeting.

26.04.07.05 Income

£195.99 Bank Interest

£25,248.00 Precept Income 2026/2027

26.04.08

CLERKS MOBILE PHONE

The Clerk asked members if she could purchase a mobile phone to use for work and not use her personal phone anymore.

It was Proposed by Cllr A Papas, seconded by Cllr Highwood and **RESOLVED** by all members present to have a Budget of £100.00 plus pay as you go.

26.04.09

INSURANCE 2026

The Clerk circulated the Insurance premium for 2026/2027.

It was proposed by Cllr D Papas, seconded by Cllr Highwood, and **RESOLVED** by all members present to accept the premium of £601.36

26.04.10

IT POLICY

The Clerk circulated the IT Policy which required to be adopted as part of the Assertion 10, it was proposed by Cllr A Papas, seconded by Cllr D Papas and **RESOLVED** by all members present.

26.04.11

SOCIAL MEDIA

Cllr A Papas read out a statement to all present

The Council noted ongoing concerns regarding abusive behaviour directed at parish councillors, including personal accusations, allegations of dishonesty, and statements that undermine the legitimacy of the Council or misrepresent councillors' roles where they are relaying information or requests from principal authorities. The Council reiterated that robust challenge is legitimate, but personal attacks, intimidation, and unsubstantiated allegations are unacceptable and harmful to councillor wellbeing and effective local governance. It was agreed that such behaviour must cease and that respectful engagement is essential to the proper functioning of the Parish Council.

26.04.12

CIL MONIES

CCTV

March 2026

Spent £0.00 (net of VAT)

Balance £25,772.34

Spend due.

CCTV signs and bracket for post £36.83

Bollard Lighting £1,736.33

Concrete and subsidiary materials £300

Digger £110

Labour approx. £2,250 (or less)

Other items for consideration

Playground equipment to be agreed and circa £20k (To be discussed later on in the meeting)

26.04.13

Highways and Footpaths

HIP – 26.04.13.01

Scheme for the highways land at end of Haviker Street x B2162 has been designed

Added to HIP request for wild fowl warning signs along Green Lane

Drain cover issue on B2162 at Mockbeggar.

28th-30th Underlyn Lane, just past Pattenden Lane closed.

26.04.13.02

Streetlights

The Clerk updated members in that the complaint has been sent to the Energy Ombudsman which has been accepted and a case reference given by them EG022670-26, there has not been an update on this at the moment. The Clerk also received a letter from a Debt Collection agency which has been placed on hold for 6 weeks whilst the case is still underway with the Ombudsman.

26.04.13.03

Outstanding / Other Items

Drain cover issue at Mockbeggar.

28th - 30th Underlyn Lane just past Pattenden Lane closed for South-East Water works

26.04.14

Recreation Ground and Car Park

26.04.14.02

Bollard Lighting

Cllr Highwood stated that the ground is now quite hard but will speak with Adam from Oast Fencing as this was down to be installed in May.

26.04.14.03

CCTV

The Data protection policy has been updated to include CCTV, and this has also been added to the website.

26.04.14.04

INPOST Lockers

The Clerk will chase after the meeting, to receive an update.

26.04.15

MARDEN MINORS FOOTBALL TEAM

The Clerk circulated the Pitch agreement for the coming season 2026/2027.

It was proposed by Cllr A papas, seconded by Cllr Barham and **RESOLVED** by all members present for the Chairman to sign the agreement. The members also requested that they send a schedule of games along with the agreement.

26.03.12

Play Equipment

Cllr Highwood circulated the quote from Play safe, which is the preferred contractor.

The new Play Equipment will include the following at a cost of £21324.00 plus VAT

Play Equipment

Beetle Bridge Tower (Product Code – 31 BBT)

1 No 2-Tower Junior Multi Play Climbing Unit (Special) manufactured in FSC certified hardwood robinia timber, by Dylan Group and as part of the Dylan Junior Play range, to include the following features – ☐ 2 x 1500mm height triangular decks complete with guardrails ☐ 2200mm length beam bridge with hand rails and 8 No drop ropes ☐ 1500mm height stainless steel slide ☐ 1500mm notched log ladder with hand rope ☐ 1500mm height vertical rung ladder (2 x rungs) ☐ 1500mm height inclined access net ☐ 1500mm height inclined scramble net in coloured steel core rope.

2-Bay Premier Swing (Product Code - 124 F2 C2)

1 No 2-bay 2400mm high 'Premier Type' swing set manufactured from FSC certified hardwood Robinia by Dylan Group, to include the following features – 2 140mm minimum Ø timbers 2 x flat seat (bay 1) 2 x cradle seat (bay 2) 2 Heavy-duty stainless-steel swing hanger bars 2 Stainless steel chains as standard.
Single Bay 'Premier Type' Swing – Inclusive (Product Code - 124 HS)

Single bay 2400mm high 'Premier Type' swing set manufactured from FSC certified hardwood Robinia by Dylan Group, to include the following features – 2 140mm minimum Ø timbers 1 x inclusive seat with harness straps 2 Heavy-duty stainless-steel swing hangers with safety chains 2 Stainless steel chains as standard.
It was proposed by Cllr A Papas, seconded by Cllr D Papas and **RESOLVED** by all members present.

Cllr Highwood will inform Play Safe that they have been awarded the contract.

This is Phase 1 of the Play Equipment, and Phase 2 will follow and items will be able to be funded either by fundraising or sponsorship by local companies.

The Clerk will also contact Maidstone Borough Council for the Grant of £5000, and Cllr Black for his Member Grant of £600.00

26.04.17

Village Hall

The members discussed the Village Hall and how going forward it will work. The Clerk was asked to contact KALC regarding how the Governance will work.

The Clerk was also asked to find out if they can pay a Bill, from their own account – or wait until the new account is open. The signatories will be Cllr D Papas and Cllr S Barham.

26.04.18

CORRESPONDENCE

The Correspondence was noted by all members.

26.04.19

Flooding Report.

Cllr Highwood reported that it was very dry.

26.04.20

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Annual Parish Meeting commencing at 6pm

Parish Council Annual General Meeting commencing at 6.45pm

Parish Council meeting commencing at 7.00pm

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:51pm

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