

MINUTES
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF
COLLIER STREET PARISH COUNCIL
Orchard Room, St Margaret's School
Monday 5th JANUARY 2026
commencing at 7.00pm
In attendance

Cllr Andrew Papas [AP]	Michelle Rumble – Parish Clerk [MR]
Cllr Ben Ward [BW] <i>arrived at 7.11pm</i>	
Cllr Charlie Cooper [CC]	Borough Councillor Claudine Russell [CR]
Cllr Deborah Papas [DP]	Borough Councillor Grace Couch [GC]
Cllr Jack Highwood [JH] Vice-chair	Borough Councillor – Mike Summersgill [MS]
Cllr Kelly Rigden [KR]	
	5 Members of Public

Cllr Jack Highwood commenced chairing the meeting as Cllr A Papas had resigned as Chair between the meeting in November and this meeting.

26.01.01

To receive apologies and reasons for absence.

Apologies were received from Cllr Steve Barham, due to emergency plumbing issues at home and County Councillor Brian Black

26.01.02

To receive declarations of personal, prejudicial, and disclosable pecuniary interests on items on the agenda and updates to members' register of interests.

Cllr Jack Highwood declared an interest in item 26.01.08.01 25/504308 as he owns the Field opposite Moors cottages.

Cllr Ben Ward declared an interest in item 26.01.08.01 25/504701 as he is managing this project (no financial interest declared)

26.01.03

Election of Chairperson

The Clerk chaired this part of the meeting and asked for nominations for the position of Chairperson.

Cllr A Papas nominated Cllr Highwood, Cllr Cooper seconded this. Cllr Highwood was Elected as Chair and both himself and the Clerk signed the Acceptance of Office.

26.01.04

Election of vice-Chair

Cllr Highwood nominated Cllr D Papas, this was seconded by Cllr A Papas. Cllr D Papas was elected as Vice-Chair

Cllr Highwood then continued the meeting as Chair of the Parish Council.

26.01.05

Public Forum – Time limit 15 minutes

The meeting was adjourned at 7.05pm to hear from a member of the public who asked if the recording from the meeting in November was available.

It was inaudible and a personal recording and not for the use of the Parish Council.

The meeting reconvened at 7.07pm

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

After the busy November, this past month has seemed to be a lot quieter, apart from in my Cabinet role covering Finance issues. We put forward the proposed 2026/27 Fees & Charges to committees, and to Cabinet, during December (including the second stage in raising town parking fees back to where they would have been with inflation, post-Covid). Also, without knowing exactly what the Local Government Finance settlement would be (received the week before Xmas), I have started to set out the process and budget for the next financial year, and there is further Committee, Cabinet and Council decision-making during Jan/Feb on how much we expect next year's Council Tax to rise.

The Council meeting on 3rd December heard a Motion of 'no confidence' in the Council Leader being tabled by two Councillors from this part of the Borough, which was defeated by 28 votes to 14. Council then heard from the (continuing) Leader as to progress on various matters in the Borough, plus considered a second Motion about potential future planning issues at Invicta House. Cabinet on 17th December looked primarily at finance issues, noting that the half-year now shows an expected small surplus in Council funds/spend; it also passed a motion on Council Tax reduction allowances.

A public consultation regarding Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) continues to be open until 25th January, so please respond; we're actively encouraging all ages' participation, and the funded 'Citizens' Assembly' style community discussion on VAWG is also now [open for applications](#). Two SPDs on Lidsing & Heathlands Garden settlements are also still out for Consultation, as is also the Gypsy & Traveller (GTT) Reg. 18b consultation + Call for Sites (<https://maidstone.oc2.uk/>), until 11th Jan. And lastly there is also another Survey/consultation out, about the creation (or not) of a Town Council: <https://online1.snapsurveys.com/Interview/41f29ed5-8b99-44ef-9ce3-b6ce2712a0b2>

Please check upcoming events, in town and around, on: <https://www.visitmaidstone.com/whats-on>

Parish Matters –

Collier Street – Mike had assisted a resident with concerns over blocked ditches, by contacting UMIDB (who confirmed that they knew about a problem, and enforcement action had been taken).

Hunton – Mike had mail about litter on Hilltop and a potential permissive path action, and attended a meeting with Clockhouse Farms, about their proposals for polytunnels on the Greensand slopes above Lughorse Lane. Chased up a couple of recent Planning Enforcement issues without success.

Marden – Mike had meetings at Stilebridge Lane caravan site with residents, about power/water supply issues & fly-tipping on land opposite and had contacted the Parish Council over potential encroachment on another site in Tilden Lane (already under MBC Enforcement action). Traffic & speeding issues continue to get traction on social media, and Parish Council had formed a joint Group to discuss/assess. Attended, damply, a wonderful Weald of Kent Young Farmers' Tractor Run.

Nettlestead – Nothing to report from Mike, but a very jolly post-Parish Xmas drinks/canapes with Councillors. The Council Leader had visited a new cafe/coffee shop (on the riverside, by Bow Bridge) after he & Mike received an email from the owners about negative comments online from an adjacent area's Councillor (Grace is to visit early in the New Year) – supportive actions & publicity.

Yalding - Mike visited a resident on Claygate Road, to look at new works undertaken on the highway verge, including tree removal and a new access crossing of the ditch; UMIDB & KCC Highways were informed, asking about clearance suitability and any potential highway safety issues. Grace received an issue of concern over flags on High Street lampposts, which Parish Council are dealing with. And both had emails about a small solar panel 'farm' in Laddingford, which is currently being assessed by MBC about its environmental aspects; Grace had met with Boom Power to discuss details of their proposals. Grace had

been contacted by a resident over highway lighting concerns on/near the East Peckham by-pass, after the fatal accident there; she has passed on KCC contact details for that zone.

Borough Councillors Grace Couch & Mike Summersgill – 1st January 2026

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

MBC Members Report from Cllr Claudine Russell

Dated: January 2026

Happy New Year! I look forward to continuing to work with you all in 2026.

Council

There are a number of consultations running at the moment although the timeline for them is now quite short. They are as follows.

- Landscape Character Assessment – to inform planning and decision making for new developments and nature recovery in the borough. I note that many of these responses have been put in by sitting councillors so far, not from our area, so I would encourage participation in this if you wish to preserve/protect the views you love.
- Violence against women and girls – help to shape the discussion on VAWG.
- VAWG youth consultation.
- Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople DPD – the maps and future plans for this type of accommodation across the borough.
- Community Governance Review stage 2 – views invited on the Maidstone Town Council Proposal. All of the above can be found at <https://bit.ly/3Y8u8wR>

The budget meeting will be held in February, and we have had a budget briefing with officers.

My group received cross party support for our motion to start the urgent work of obtaining Article 4 direction on Invicta House following the news that KCC have an idea to sell it to the highest bidder, with one of the options being to convert it into an extremely large House of Multiple Occupation (HMO). We look forward to hearing from the administration as to how these progresses.

Ward Work

I have reported a number of potholes across the patch as they open up again due to the winter conditions.

I was made aware of the Marden Primary School alarm sounding continuously over some of the Christmas period and contacted their maintenance team to get that switched off. I have emailed them to suggest putting the contact number clearly on their school sign for those that don't have easy access to the internet.

As always, if you need my help, please do not hesitate to email me at claudinerussell@maidstone.gov.uk

26.01.07

Approval of minutes

To approve the minutes of the parish council meeting held on 3rd of November 2025 as a true record.
Resolved: as proposed by DP, seconded by CC, and reached unanimous approval the minutes were approved.

APPLICATION REF 25/504601/FULL	<p>ADDRESS: 1 Kings Lane Cottages Kings Lane Marden Kent TN12 9PP</p> <p>PROPOSAL: Change of use of 15m of paddock land along northern boundary to residential use to extend the existing residential garden.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED by all members to a NEUTRAL STANCE</p>
APPLICATION REF: 25/504308/FULL	<p>ADDRESS: Land Adj Moors Cottages Spenny Lane Marden Kent TN12 9PR</p> <p>PROPOSAL: Erection of 2x 3 bed semi-detached dwellings with parking and access.</p> <p>COMMENTS DUE BY: 17 December 2025, DECISION DUE DATE: 20 January 2026 CASE OFFICER: Gautham Jayakumar GauthamJayakumar@Maidstone.gov.uk</p> <p>It was proposed by JH, seconded by CC and RESOLVED by all members present to support the application.</p> <p>The Parish Council would like to make a further comment on this planning application.</p> <p>25_504308_FULL</p> <p>The Collier Street Parish Council have reviewed this planning application and wishes the support this planning application for the following reasons.</p> <p>Design. We feel the design is in keeping with the neighbouring properties and makes sensible use of an unused plot of residential land.</p> <p>Flood. While we note that that the design does not state a final floor level and this location is in Flood Zone 3, We know from local knowledge that this location does not flood to a degree that would put future occupants, of these 2 houses at risk. Spenny Lane (at this location) does experience localised flooding due to local drainage restrictions, but this has not hindered emergency services in the past. Therefore, we can see that this would be a good location to build a house (an issue critical in our parish). The design allows for parking off road and therefore theoretically does not impact the highway. We would however request clarity in design for the proposed disposal of sewage and wastewater as several neighbours have concerns about the lack of information about this matter</p>
APPLICATION REF: 25/504701/FULL	<p>ADDRESS: Land Adjacent to Churston Burtons Lane Marden Kent. TN12 9PN</p> <p>PROPOSAL: Erection of freestanding array of 144 solar PV panels</p> <p>COMMENTS DUE BY: 17 December 2025, DECISION DUE DATE: 20 January 2026 CASE OFFICER: Kathryn Altieri kathrynaltieri@maidstone.gov.uk</p>

	It was RESOLVED by all members to a NEUTRAL STANCE
26.01.08.02	
Planning decisions made by Maidstone Borough Council	
25/504701/FULL	ADDRESS: The Stable, Crow Plain, Collier Street PROPOSAL; Erection of a self-build detached annexe with associated parking (resubmission of 25/503273/FULL APPLICATION REFUSED
26.01.09	
Correspondence List	
The Correspondence list was circulated prior to the meeting and noted by all members present.	
26.01.10	
26.01.10.01 To receive the bank reconciliations for November and December 2025	
26.01.10.02 To receive the bank statements for November and December 2025	
26.01.10.03 To receive the RBS finance reports for November and December 2025	
26.01.10.04 To receive the RBS Budget Report YtD	
26.10.10.05 To note Income received since the last meeting.	
None	
26.01.10.06 Payments made outside since the last meeting in in November 2025	
RESOLVED: as proposed by AP, seconded by JH, and reached unanimous approval the payments made outside of the meeting were approved.	
26.01.10.06 Payments for January 2026 to be authorised and the paid online Banking following approval at this meeting.	
RESOLVED: as proposed by AP, seconded by JH, and reached unanimous approval the December 2025 and January 2026 payment list were approved.	
ACTION: CLERK TO ADMINISTER PAYMENTS VIA BACS.	
26.01.10.07 RESOLUTION to approve the Clerks working hours an increase of 10 hours per week to 12 hours per week when needed from April 2026	
It was agreed by all that when the workload is higher than standard, that the Clerk will work extra time to accommodate and then take time off in lieu to accommodate. JH suggested keeping a Timesheet to log hours worked and kept in lieu.	
ACTION: DP TO SET UP A TIMESHEET TEMPLATE FOR THE CLERK.	
26.01.10.08 RESOLUTION to approve the Budget for 2026/2027 (circulated prior to the meeting) and to set the Precept for the year 2026/2027.	
Cllr D Papas spoke about the Budget and what increase to Budget Headings and what decreases could be made.	
The Clerk was asked to investigate the Street Lighting, speak with other Parish Councils who may have only three or more and how much they pay and which supplier they are with.	
The Clerk was also asked to check with the Insurance company and confirm that the Barrier, fencing etc is covered.	
Cllr D Papas suggested that on the proposed spend for 2026/2027 an increase of 6.08% on the current Precept would be sufficient. This would mean an increase from £23800 to £25248.	

This was proposed by Cllr DP and seconded by Cllr JH and RESOLVED by all members present.
The Clerk will now submit this to Maidstone Borough Council

26.01.11

CIL MONIES

Balance £26,864.48

No spend and no income

26.01.12

HIGHWAYS – HIP and GENERAL

26.01.12.01 HIP

Added to investigate triangle at top of Haviker Street x B2162 for visibility. Kent Highways own this and will investigate tidying up and re-aligning signs to improve visibility for turning right onto B2162

26.01.12.02

Other items

- Road closed on B2162 from Haviker Street to Green Lane on 5th January between 9:30 –15:30 each day for five days for Kent Highways for post 2025 surface treatment ironworks adjustment
- Road closed on B2162 by village green down to Sheephurst Lane on 26th January from 8am to 18:00 throughout for five days for UKPN works for new electrical hook up on village green
- Road closed on part of Green Lane on 19th January between 8am to 17:00 throughout for four days for Southeast Water works to allow new stopcock and water meter installation works to be carried out
- Tree fallen over in full into watercourse. IDB Works Manager notified and will assess on 5th

26.01.13

Recreation Ground and Car Park

26.01.13.01

Village Green Electricity connection.

This is now due for the 26th of January

ACTION BW

26.01.13.02

Bollard Lighting

Once the Electrical connection has been completed then this will be looked at again, but a quote was received from Oast Fencing for the Labour. The Clerk will circulate this again.

26.01.13.03

CCTV

Once the Electrical connection has been completed then the CCTV will be installed.

ACTION BW

26.01.13.04

RESOLUTION to approve the Grounds maintenance contract for the season 2026/2027.

A quote was received from Paul Waring and circulated prior to the meeting.

It was proposed by JH and seconded by KR, **RESOLVED** by all members present to accept the quote and to ask the contractor if it could run from 1st April to 31st March going forward in line with the Parish Council's Budget.

26.01.13.05

RESOLUTION to agree a formation of a working group for the New Play Area including members of the Public.

This was discussed by the Parish Council, but it was proposed by JH, seconded by BW with a vote of 5 against a working group and one in favour, therefore a motion was carried to not set up a working group.

It was noted that as there was not to be a working group then a Terms of Reference would not be required.

It was noted that JH, DP and BW had visited some local play areas to see what equipment they had and what surfacing they had to get some ideas of what equipment was popular and to note if there was a uniformity of supplier of the equipment.

It was **RESOLVED** by all members that JH would take the initial lead on this project with potential play equipment companies, site meetings, getting brochures and bring the quotes to the Parish Council meetings. KR, CC, DP and AP would also like to help on this.

It was concluded that the Clerk must be cc'd into all correspondence between JH and potential play equipment companies, as well as any other correspondences going forward. There must also be three like for like quotes before agreeing to go with any one company for the play equipment project.

26.01.14

Flooding Report.

[JH] reported.

No report.

26.01.15

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Monthly Meeting Monday, 2nd FEBRUARY 2026 at 7.00pm

There being no further business, the meeting closes at 8.51pm

Behaviour towards the Conclusion of the Meeting

The Chair reported that, towards the end of the meeting, some members of the public present behaved in a disruptive and confrontational manner. Despite attempts to restore order, the behaviour caused distress to those present. The Chair referred the matter to the Clerk for further action and advice.

All members of the public are welcome to attend and are reminded that this is a Parish Council meeting held in public, not a public meeting.

The meeting will be adjourned to allow members of the public to ask questions. Anyone wishing to address the Council on any subject, should note the following details:

Three minutes per person will be allowed and only if time permits will further questions be heard. This is also on condition that:

- ***Any question must be sent as a transcript, at least seven days prior to the meeting, to the Clerk at clerk@collierstreetparishcouncil.gov.uk***

- ***If more than one person wishes to speak about the same item, a spokesperson must be nominated***

- ***All questions should be courteous, and the speaker must not deviate from the subject***

- ***This is an opportunity to ask questions, not to raise complaints against the Council or any Councillor***

- *Councillors may decide to answer the question at the meeting or add any item to the agenda of a later Parish Council meeting*

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