

MINUTES OF WOULDHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

TUESDAY 2ND DECEMBER, 2025 AT 7.30PM

WOULDHAM VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllr Miles, Cllr Marr, Cllr Collier-Ward, Cllr Yard, Cllr Church, BCllr McDermott
 T. Miles (Clerk/RFO) **4** Members of Public

1.	APOLOGIES: BCllr Davis and BCllr Dalton	ACTION
2.	MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 4 th November 2025 were proposed by Cllr Collier-Ward and seconded by Cllr Marr. The minutes were duly signed by the Chair	
3.	MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES - None	
4.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - None -	
5.	EXTERNAL REPORTS 5.1 Borough Council: Received. To be published on our website. BCllr McDermott noted that there is a lot of detail in the Plan which will shape the Borough over the coming years. The consultation runs until 2 nd Jan. Leaflets are being posted to every house by Royal Mail and some of the main points should be disseminated as widely as possible Although there are only 40 properties for the allotments, it would cause a lot of problems for the village and with the amount already, it could be argued that we should not need to take more. There is a possibility that if enough submissions it could be taken out, however other areas feel the same and will be encouraging their residents to do the same. Everyone in the household can reply i.e. 5 people = 5 emailed submissions. 73% of borough is green belt, but now there is grey belt, it does help for a better distribution of developments. BCllr McDermott advised that, at the public meeting on the 7 th December, the Leader of TMBC will go through how to complete the consultation, so it would be great to see as many residents turn up as possible. He noted that Chapter 5 of the Plan says that WOULDHAM is tier 3 village, but that was set in 2003 when there were more facilities, so thinks it should be tier 5. Any replies can state this so that it could be changed. Tiering is really important as it threatens future applications. The 'call for sites' is still open, anyone can look and comment on each site and also comment on more appropriate sites. BCllr McDermott's initial thoughts/concerns regarding the allotment site are: School Lane Junction/Pilgrims Way are not sufficient to increase any development, with at least 900 more properties in Eccles, where does the traffic go if the main artery roads are closed. Other local issues can also be included i.e. Eccles/Snodland new builds. Lack of GP, shops, school etc. BCllr McDermott gave his assurance that we can still influence where houses are built and what infrastructure is needed. Cllr Marr suggested to have hub sessions to help residents complete the consultation - maybe offer at the meeting on the 7 th . BCllr McDermott will prepare a crib sheet which can be shared as a start point, Obviously any other issues can be added. Cllr Church asked how many we should be trying to get for it to make a difference. BCllr McDermott suggested we should hope to get a minimum of 500 responses.	Clerk AMCD
6.	Community Safety 6.1 Police: Chair reported the Police held in Peters Village on 12 th November. Clerk attended, but noted that not many people stopped to have a chat with him. PC Brown did not know about the Community Centre, so she took him to have a look and suggested that there may be more engagement if it was done after school. 6.2 Neighbourhood Watch: HIGH STREET/KNOWLE ROAD: 16/11. Somebody damaged a Jaguar XF S <i>Crime Report No. 46/198332/25</i> PETERS VILLAGE PLAY PARK: Vandalism of equipment and fencing COMMUNITY CENTRE - unattended car keys being stolen	

6.3	<p>Speedwatch: Clerk reported that the Speedwatch Co-ordinator has reported as below:</p> <p>The Speedwatch team deployed again on Monday 17th November to take part in National Road Safety Week. The session was shortened by 15 minutes due to the road congestion caused by the dray wagon trying to turn and park outside The Medway Inn.</p> <p>The result was 199 cars passed by with 22 speeding.(11%) Once again a number were well over 30mph. Again many thanks to the Speedwatch team for turning out in the freezing cold.</p> <p>On another point, someone asked if the Speedwatch team could note numbers at the No Entry, but this is outside of the Speedwatch domain.</p>	
7.	Administrative and Finance	
7.1	Authorisation of payment request. Cllrs Yard, Church and Marr signed the request.	
7.2	Precept Projects/Budget Planning: Cllr Marr asked if extra lights on the rec path at the Tramway end and Knowle car park behind the cabin could be added. Suggest allocate 3k. Clerk advised that 3k had been put into reserves which could be used and will update the spreadsheet.	Clerk
7.3	Standing orders/Code of Conduct: Noted. Chair advised that hard copies had been included separately from the meeting papers so that they can be kept for reference	All
7.4	IT Policy: Chair advised that this was needed for the new Assertion 10 requirements. Proposed by Cllr Yard, seconded Cllr Timothy - All Agreed.	
8.1	Planning	
8.2	<p>Planning applications considered or commented upon by the Planning:</p> <p>25/01476/PA: IVY COTTAGE, 740, PILGRIMS WAY. Proposed barn conversion to a residential 1 x 2-bed dwelling and associated landscaping alterations</p> <p>25/01671/PA: 134 HIGH STREET. Non-material change from render to cladding.</p> <p>Planning applications refused/withdrawn:</p> <p>25/01671/PA: 134 HIGH STREET. Non-material change from render to cladding. Not considered a non-material change due to the impact and size - REFUSED</p> <p>Planning Consent Issued:</p> <p>9 NELSON ROAD - Single storey extention</p> <p>Planning applications refused/withdrawn: NONE</p> <p>Other Planning Issues:</p> <p>Chair explained that the application for 134 High Street had been refused as a 'material change' so had to be re-submitted as a new application. This application and the approval for 9 Nelson Road had come through after the agenda had been circulated, but members had had them via email. All agreed not comment required.</p>	
9	Roads, Footpaths & Lighting (RFL)	
9.1	Cllr Collier-Ward reported that there is little to add to the action spreadsheet, which is shared on the website. However, additional updates are that the Tramway footpath has been completed. It was unclear whether the footpath to Borstal had been completed - Clerk to chase contractor. Although the salt bins at the top of School Lane and Knowle Road had been reported, they remain unusable. Clerk advised that KCC require a road closure to resite them, so the plan is to do it on 14 th January when the road is closed for drainage work. Hedge cutting along Hall Road still needs to be completed and there seems to be more dog poo on the path on Knowle Road.	
9.2	Clerk reported that PROWS have agreed to install steps on the entrance to the footpath on Knowle Road in January. Cllr Marr thanked them for their prompt attention to the issue and asked if they could also cut back the bushes which obstruct the sight line.	Clerk
9.3	Clerk noted that whilst the steps were a good result, changing Hill Road catogrisation from a BOAT to a Byway is more problematic and requires Secretary of State authorisation. Chair noted that Scarborough Lane changed from a Highway to a Byway without anyone seeming to know about it and asked if we could find out how it was done as restricting traffic would help save TMBC money due to the amount of flytipping on the road. BCllr McDermott will investigate to see what the process is.	AMcD
9.4	Cllr Timothy reported that he had messaged the Medway pub regarding the dray lorry and they have confirmed that they will try to change the delivery times. Cllr Church reported that this week it arrived	

	9.30am which is much safer as it is after school time.	
9.5	Chair noted that there had been a request to put speed bumps outside the Church and suggested this could be included in the Highways Improvement Plan - All Agreed.	Clerk
9.6	Cllr Church noted that there are no 20mph repeaters from the pinch point to the pub. MOP noted that there are 20 mph white signs on road, but these, and the junction markings are now nearly non existant. Clerk contact KCC to see what can be done and if they could add it on when they do the dropped curb.	Clerk
9.7	Cllr Yard reported that she had spoken to the Enforcement Officer regarding the dangerous parking on Worrall Drive, particularly at school times and they have confirmed that they will try to schedule some visits to coincide with these times.	
10	<u>Open Spaces (OS)</u>	
10.1	Updates: Cllr Church reported the November action sheet will be on the website but additional updates are: the bin on the Rec has been emptied by our contractor as TMBC do not appear to be doing it, as it is not on a contract it costs £35 per time, we need to clarify whether TMBC will do it or not. The Clerk has arranged for another key from the contractor so can empty it in an emergency. The bin on Hall Road keeps being pulled from its base. - Clerk to speak to the contractor for him to secure better. Additional costs have been agreed by the Clerk under delegated powers to clear the wall in the Rec of ivy/budlia etc. She has also agreed for the contractor to clear items 'dumped' by residents in the wildlife area. These are extra costs that have to be paid through council tax	Clerk
10.2	Cllr Yard advised that the football lights are shining into the houses and there doesn't seem be much car sharing as the car park is full when they are there. Clerk to contact organiser.	
10.3	Common: Chair invited Richard Colman, Wouldham Wildlifing to give an outline of his conservation efforts. He reported that there are currently 7 active volunteers on chalk grasslands working along Pilgrims Way in Wouldham. It is split scrub land between 2 fields. From July to September they cut hay from one field and spread it on the lower field to increase the biodiversity. It is then left for a couple of weeks to seed, then removed to the edge of the area to provide habitat for small creatures. They have also created dead hedges to create boundaries which attracts a lot of wildlife and are looking to create a small pond and a vegetable garden. He has linked with the allotment association to see how they can work together. This work has been going on for around 2 years and seems to be improving the area. But not sure how long they may be able to use the area. So Wouldham Common would be a good opportunity to do something on the scrub area below the common. He suggested that this could be cut and hay layed to increase the biodiversity. Also, the top area is overrun by sycamore, but there are bluebells which means that it could have possibly been ancient woodland. Woodland Trust will supply trees to groups who do conservation. Woodland Trust have agreed to do a survey and advise on how to deal with it to improve diversity. Problem is that there are concrete blocks. Richard asked again if steps could be put in at the lower area to enable machines to access there. Woodland Trust are running Local Wildlife sites and could include both sites in Wouldham as this gives a certain amount of protection and there is also a project called Chalk to Coast which is about linking up wildlife corridors and recording animals ect. Local Wildlife Sites people will come and do an ecological survey to identify rare species. Clerk noted that we need to clear the area with PC and volunteers in the spring and it could be a good idea to set a volunteer working day for the area.	
10.4	Allotments: The Chair of the Allotment Association reported there were 12 people on the waiting list with only 1 plot just becoming available. Clerk advised that she had received an offer from BCllr Dalton to arrange for free compost if the Association would like it. MOP asked if there could also be some for the Schools Nexus project. Clerk to speak to BCllr Dalton	Clerk
10.5	Grounds Maintenance: Clerk reported that she had instructed the contractor to do extra work under delegated powers. This included emptying the bin on the Rec again, fixing the new notice board in Peters Village, an extra hedge cut along Hall Road and removing rubbish left on the Rec (decking/branches from residents gardens old fencing and rubbish (as Litter Pickers are on holiday)).	
11.	Village Hall:	
11.1	Cllr Marr reported that the Charity transfer was now signed off by them with no issues	
11.2	Cllr Timothy advised that he had not had time to put the hand rail up, but will do it.	NT Clerk JM
11.3	Cllr Church noted that the guttering at the front door was overflowing - Clerk to sort out	
11.4	Chair advised that she also had not had time to move freezer, but will arrange to do it over Christmas.	

12.	Health & Safety/Risk Management Defibrillators: All have been checked and The Circuit updated. Lifebuoys: All the PC's lifebuoys along the Esplanade in Peters Village. Recreation Ground: replacement 'weight limit' signs to be put onto the zip line as they keep being taken off. Village Hall: Clerk suggested that now the PC operates the Hall in a statutory capacity, it may be worth getting a facilities company to do a full check that we are following the rules. Risk register review; Reviewed and noted	
13.	Members of the Public 13.1 MOP1: Noted that where the curb has been marked up, there needs to be a new risk assessment with KCC for the Crossing Patrol. She has informed her Line Manager who are now liaising with KCC Highways. MOP2: Reported that, following her report, the signage at Scarborough Lane has been changed. She will also put the Christmas toppers on post box in the Village. Finally, she noted that although the signage was changes to enable horses to come through the No Entry, it does not mean they can drive through in a horse box. 13.2 MOP 3: Advisted that there is a new composting toilet at the allotments which needs to be build and asks for permission to create a concrete base. Cllr Marr asked how much space it would take up and its position. MOP 3 advised that it is around 1.5 mtrs square and could be sited by the communal shed. - All agreed. 13.3 MOP4: asked if the Public Meeting on the 7 th could be done by Zoom. BCllr McDemott advised that there was no facility to do this, but will see if it can be filmed and made available. MOP4 also advised that when she gets home from work, she can never get a space and asked if there are any solutions. Cllr Yard agreed to research again to see if a company can take over the parking. However, it was noted that even as a residents only car park, over 2000 people would be entitled to park in around 100 spaces. It was also noted that the PC did note to the TMBC planning that when the application to convert the pub car park to a garden, it would cause a problem. But this seems to have not been considered. 13.4 MOP 2 As an additional note - a resident had replaced the glass in the phone box, and wanted to thank them for their efforts.	TY
14.	General Village Business 14.1 Items for the Newsletter: Clerk advised that the next deadline will be 13 th January for the February one. 14.2 Other Meetings: Cllr Collier-Ward noted KALC and PPP meetings mainly focused on the devolved 3 areas, and Local Plan. The main message was to advertise it as widely as possible. Minutes will be circulated in due course. 14.3 Local Plan: Chair asked if we should provide refreshments for the Public Meeting. All agreed that it was not necessary. Hopefully most Councillors will be able to attend. 14.4 Other Business: a. Christmas opening, The office will be closed from 22 nd December to 5 th January b. Chair asked if Councillors would like to meet for a Christmas meal, this would have to be paid for individually as it cannot be covered by parish funds, but could include partners - Suggested Monday 22 nd at Rubys. Clerk to check availability, Councillors to confirm.	ALL
15.	General Correspondence: None	
16.	DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS: Tuesday 6th JANUARY 7 PM PRECEPT APPROVAL followed by Full Parish Meeting at 7.30pm at the Village Hall	
17.	QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS, CHAIRPERSON AND CLERK: To be passed to Clerk 7 days before the next meeting	
18.	Meeting Closed: 9.30pm	