

MINUTES OF WOULDHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY 1st SEPTEMBER, 2026 AT 7.30PM
WOULDHAM VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllr Miles, Cllr Church, Cllr Timothy, Cllr Yard, BCllr Dalton
 T. Miles (Clerk) 4 Members of Public

1. **Apologies for Absence** BCllr Davis, Cllr Marr and BCllr McDermott
2. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 2nd June, 2026 were proposed by Cllr Church and seconded by Cllr Yard. The minutes were duly signed by the Chair.
3. **Matters arising from the Minutes** - None
4. **To receive Declarations of Interest** – Chair declared that she is working as a Grounds Maintenance Technical for our ground's maintenance contractor 2 days per week and therefore would not be party to any discussions regarding payments/contract etc. Clerk to inform TMBC with updated DPI.
5. **External Reports** BCllr Dalton referred to the Government re-organisation presentation made by Matt Boughton and Damian Roberts in August. He noted that there are a lot of unanswered questions. West Kent will have 567k people which makes it one of the largest unitary areas. Boundaries are not being changed, but there are currently 40 councillors which will be increased to 84 to cover the extra electorate. Malling North East will have 3 councillors. Elections should be in May 27 and all councillors will be staying on another year to shadow the new team. The Borough Council is not allowed to spend now. There will be a joint committee set up consisting of 10 County Councillors and 10 Borough Councillors to manage the transfer and amalgamated funds from all councils. All the debt will need to be shared among the new Unitaries. Assets will covert to the new Unitary from each Borough Council. Asset transfers cannot now be started until the Unitary is in place. The only thing that must be transferred are allotments, if owned by the Borough Council. He would suggest that a community asset for our allotments is progressed at speed. - Agreed. It will be the decision of the new West Kent Unitary Area if they continue with current committees such as the Parish Partnership Panel.

National Scheme of Delegation 2026 will take away some of the Planning Committee responsibilities. Schedule 1 applications will now be determined by Officers i.e. extensions, porches, 1-9 dwellings. It will now not be able to be called-in. Councillors will now only be able to affect applications over 10. Major applications, 150+ will go straight to government for a decision.

Roadworks by Southern Extension is not for the development of the ground. BCllr Davis advised in his report that the application has lapsed and has been referred to Enforcement. Trenport are marketing it 'as is' and currently hold the safety responsibility until it is sold. Culland Farm pit has been sold to Kent Wildlife Trust with funding from an unknown donor.

6. **Community Safety**
- 6.1 **Speedwatch/Road Surveys:** The Speedwatch Co-ordinator reported that the Speedwatch team has now been increased by a new member. The team was deployed on the following dates

12th June - 248 vehicles passed the team. 10 were noted as travelling 25+ and reported to police. This equated to 4% Session was on the Village Green South to North.

3rd July - 200 vehicles passed the team. 8 were noted as travelling 25+ and reported to police. This equated to 4% Session was on Village Green travelling South to North

24th July - 312 vehicles passed the team. 0 were recorded as speeding. This Session was at the substation on Village Road, South to North.

10th August - 109 vehicles passed the team. 6 were recorded as speeding. This equates to 5.5% This Session was at the Village Green, South to North.

The Speedwatch team deployed on Village Road (24th July) opposite the substation due to the number of complaints on FB regarding speed on this road. It should be noted in 1hr 312 vehicles passed the team and no one was recorded as speeding. It is a 30mph road and top speed within the hour was 1 vehicle travelling at 32mph.

Out of interest we did a test of vehicles coming from the roundabout onto Village Road, and found they were travelling slightly faster than the ones travelling South to North, but again no one was travelling 35+mph.

Action

Clerk

South to North traffic had, of course, travelled over the speed platforms. There is no speed platform where we took the test North to South (from roundabout to Village Road), This proves the speed platforms are indeed working.

We cannot deploy, other than places already accepted by Speedwatch, and it has to be 200mtrs from a change in speed limit.

However, it should also be noted on 24th July, 1 teenager was travelling on Village Road using an electric scooter, and they were travelling at 26mph without any protective clothing. This is illegal!

It should be noted that I have requested a new Speedwatch site opposite number 3 Village Road, with traffic travelling from the village onto New Court Road. Should this site be accepted, and health and safety agree, we will carry out a session there. It should also be noted we cannot have a site outside number 3 as it is not 200mtrs from the change of speed limit (from 40 to 30)

6.2 Neighbourhood Watch/Police

- a) *Sandbank Place - 16-29/6 Somebody broke into a shed at a residential property. They stole fishing equipment.*
- b) *Tusk Walk - 14/6 somebody damaged the tyres of a car parked in the road*
- c) *Heron Place - 13/7 Somebody damaged an Audi parked in the road.*
- d) *Chalkpit Road - 3/7 Somebody stole the contents of a parcel. It was delivered empty.*
- e) *Peters Bridge - 12/8 Somebody spray painted graffiti on a bridge. 46/133678/26*
- f) *High Street - 12/8 Somebody caused damage to a tractor. 46/133802/26*

Clerk noted that the ASB team have now included the park in Peters Village and the derelict cottages in their patrol areas.

It was also noted that electric scooters and modified electric bikes are becoming a problem along Hall Road and the High Street.

7. Administrative and Finance Matters

- 7.1 **Payment request and reconciliation:** Were reviewed by members and approved. Signed by Cllrs Yard, Cllr Church and Timothy.
- 7.2 **Co-option:** 1 application had been received linking to the Peters Village job description (2 vacancies) and 2 for the Old Village job description (1 vacancy). Members asked applicants what experience they have of the local community. JD explained that she looks after the river front and liaises with TMBC and Nu Venture on behalf of residents, she attends the Over 60's and Coffee Club and regularly supports events such as Litter Picking Days, Community Picnic etc. SP explained that he has spent most of his life working in the community. As a Police Officer, he has engaged with many young people and represented the community to other organisations. Voting took place and the Chair formally welcomed Jenny and Sohrab to the team. Both then signed the Declaration and joined the Council. Clerk to complete the DPI's and inform TMBC.
- 7.3 **Review of External Audit:** There were no issues raised except the need to add a 0 rather than leave blank in one of the boxes. This has been published on our website before the deadline of 30/9/26.
- 7.4 **Review of Budgets:** Income budget has now been included as advised by the internal auditor. Noted that Allotments is at 132% due to the water bill not being re-charged yet.
- 7.5 **Future of Youth & Community Work:** Chair was really sorry to hear that Ann-Marie would be leaving. She has done a great job and will be missed. It's unlikely we would be able to appoint with such a short contract term left. We have approached Salus to investigate whether they can deliver any youth work, they will let us know what may be possible. Ann-Marie said that it was a difficult decision, but found the younger youth group has too many special needs and creates a safety risk which is emotionally draining. Chair asked if there was a possibility of continuing if this group was dropped? Ann-Marie said that she could consider it, but would need to look at hours and activities. Clerk to discuss options. Cllr Peerbaccus noted that if there are a lot with special needs, specialist workers are needed and ratios would need to be increased to avoid H & S issues.

8. Introduction from TMBC Independent Advisory Group (IAG)

Chair invited Cllr Peerbaccus, as the new Chair of the IAG. to outline its purpose.

Cllr Peerbaccus explained that in 1999 the McPherson Report was published saying that the community had lost trust with the Police and must communicate better. Every borough had an IAG except TMBC so there was little communication. The IAG have worked very hard to become a critical friend to the Police. For example, the Police will go to the IAG to understand community tensions. Some of the work is now quality assurance i.e. they will look at the body cam footage and make suggestions for improvements. Also, they can take young people to see how the Police work. The IAG will meet every quarter, with the first one on 10th September in the council offices. Hopefully there

Signed:

Date:

Clerk

Clerk

will be a representative from every parish. It is a very good voice for the community and can feed back to the Police. Chair and Clerk will try to attend the first meeting.

9. Planning Applications:

9.1 Planning Consent Issued/Approved:

26/01245/FL - 39 High Street - Interior refurbishment, relocation of staircase and lowering of existing window between kitchen and conservatory

26/01216/FL - Keepers Lodge Common Road - Single-storey front extension

26/01089/FL Ivy Cottage 740 Pilgrims Way -Change of use of agricultural land to residential garden

26/01543/LDP- 4 Walter Burke - Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: Dropped kerb to the front of the property and provision of hard standing with a tarmac surfaced driveway

25/00746/RD - Phase 5 Worrall Drive - Details of condition 29 (landscaping) pursuant to planning permission TM/15/01485/OAEA

Planning applications refused/withdrawn:

25/01896/NMA 7 High Street - Non-Material Amendment to planning permission TM/23/00803/FL) for alterations to roof and changes to the amount of windows. (Refused) full planning required

26/00808/LDP - 166 High Street - Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: Extension of the existing dropped kerb and driveway (Refused) full planning required

9.2 Other Planning Issues:

10. Roads, Footpaths & Lighting

10.1 Updates: Included in Summer Report

10.2 Cllr Peerbaccus asked if there had been any feedback about the double yellow lines on Worrall Drive. Clerk advised that nothing had been reported to the PC. Cllr Peerbaccus advised that few were taking any notice of them at school times. Cllr Yard to speak to Enforcement to see if they can increase patrols around these times.

10.3 MOP advised that she had reported the cracking on the roundabout on the A228; the hedge on Hall Road. The Trenport side is due to be cut by next week and KCC have informed her that there is not enough growth to cut their side yet. Also, one side of Wouldham Road has been cut, but the signs are not visible on the other side, to Borstal. Clerk to speak to KCC. Chair thanked MOP for her continued support.

11. Open Spaces

11.1 **Updates:** Included in Summer Report All agreed to remove tramway camp

11.2 **Common:** Work has started to clear the saplings restricting the view from the picnic area.

11.3 **Rec:** Height barrier has been repaired, thank you to Mervin Hemphill. Signage has been changed. Chair asked if we want to replace the gym equipment. Ann-Marie reported that there is currently a challenge to see who can break them first. All agreed to remove current equipment and look at a larger package to be installed later. (Possibly 6 items)

11.4 **Allotments** – Clerk to chase Association re community asset.

12. Village Hall

12.1 Updates: Summer Report

12.2 Grand Opening: All agreed to have the opening to celebrate the completion of the Community Fund, funded re-vamp and Mosaic installation on 11th September from 6-8pm. Anyone able to help with a tidy-up and finish off, is welcome to come along on Friday 4th from 10am.

13. Health & Safety/Risk Management - Concerns Raised

13.1 Defibrillators Update – Cllrs Miles and Church have checked all 3 units. New pads have been fitted for the Peters Village unit and all updated on The Circuit,

13.2 Life Buoys – Cllr Miles advised that they are now being checked weekly.

13.3 Village Hall: Clerk noted that Pat testing and Gas Safety checks have been completed

14. Common - as previously mentioned, the area is still suffering a lot of anti-social behaviour. Both Police and ASB team are aware. Chair noted that she had added additional restriction poles at the entrance as quads had pulled the previous one out and also reported further fly-tipping.

15. Members of the Public MOP 1 asked what the cones were for around the village. Clerk advised that she is awaiting a response from KCC.

16. General Village business

16.1 Discuss the Community News:

17. Correspondence Received - An email has been received from the Chair of Hildenborough Parish Council requesting support to employ a full-time Planning Officer. This would cost the PC around 17k through the precept. **All agreed that we could not justify this at the moment.**

18. Date of Next Meeting: Next meeting will be **Tuesday, 6th OCTOBER** at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

19. Items from Councillors, Chairperson and Clerk for NEXT Agenda.

20. Meeting closed at 10.10pm

Action

TY

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk
Clerk

ALL

Clerk