

Alkham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday, 13th January 2025, at 7:30 pm in Alkham Village Hall

Present: Alkham Parish Councillors: D Barnard (Chairman) S Edwards, T Johns, M Libaert. P Tapsell (Vice Chairman)
In Attendance: Two Members of the Public
Irene Bowie – Parish Clerk

1. Apologies.

1.1 Apologies for absence received and confirmed by the Council Members who cannot attend a meeting shall tender their apologies to the Parish Clerk prior to the meetings, under Section 75(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence shall be accepted.

Apologies were received from KCC Cllr Beaney and DDC Cllr Hibert.

RESOLVED: To accept the apologies and reasons given by Councilor C Webber and Councillor Kaile.

1.2 Declaration of Changes to the Register of Interests. There were no declarations.

1.3 To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda. In accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers. There were no declarations of interest.

1.4 Requests for Dispensations. There were no requests for dispensations.

1.5 Declarations of Lobbying. There were no declarations of lobbying.

2. Public comments and observations. (Maximum 15 minutes)

The meeting will be adjourned to allow members of the public to speak. Individuals may speak for up to three minutes, at the discretion of the Chairman, on agenda items only. The minute book will be closed.

There were no public comments.

3. Reports from external parties (if present). Appendix 1

There were no external parties present and no reports were received.

4. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4th November 2024 were taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. Planning:

5.1 To table planning applications received for consideration:

5.1.1 TC/25/00005 Greenwood Slip Slip Lane Alkham CT15 7DA
Proposal Work to trees in a conservation area. APC No Objection

5.1.2 TC/25/00004 Greenwood Slip Slip Lane Alkham Dover Kent CT15 7DA
Proposal Re-pollard back to previous pruning points of three Lime trees situated within a conservation area. APC No Objection

5.1.3 22/01625 Evergreen Slip Lane Alkham Dover CT15 7DA
Erection of porch, raised terrace with balustrade, storage underneath dwelling and associated changes in ground levels, replacement cladding to elevations, erection of retaining wall and alterations to fenestration (retrospective) (amended plans, re-advertised)
APC Objection

5.2 To Table and Validate Planning Applications dealt with since the last meeting. There were none,

5.3 To table decisions by Dover District Council (DDC) since the last meeting.

- 5.3.1 24/01030 5 Meadow Hill Cottages Hogbrook Hill Lane Alkham CT15 7AR
Conversion of garage to annexe accommodation with associated alterations and erection of porch to dwellinghouse
Decision Grant Planning Permission
- 5.3.2 24/00901 Erection of single storey side and two storey rear extensions with first floor rear balcony, replacement garage with first floor office and creation of lowered patio
Decision Grant Planning Permission
- 5.3.3 24/01085 Land East Side Of Short Lane Alkham
Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of planning permission 23/00546 for the "erection of 8 dwellings with associated access and landscaping" to allow a single garage to plot 7 and a double garage to plot 8
Decision Grant Planning Permission

5.4 To Table late planning matters. There were none.

6. Finance:

- 6.1 To receive and authorise payments listed on the schedule (to be provided at the meeting)

RESOLVED: the payments on the schedule were authorised.

Payee	Description	£
Irene Bowie	Staff Costs	Confidential
Harmer	Village Mowing and Playground Inspections	108.00
Ionos	emails November-January Invoices	110.40
Nathan Tester	Village Slide Repair	700.00
Village Hall	Hall rental April 2024-January 2025	160.00

- 6.2 Late Payment Request/s to be discussed for approval and payment.

RESOLVED: That the following payments were approved

M. Libaert	Sensory Mirror For Play Area	£ 92.39
London Hearts	Village Defibrillator	£ 750.00

- 6.3 To note receipts of Income Receipts of Income were noted as £20,338.27 year to date.

- 6.4 To receive the bank reconciliation. To be circulated.

- 6.4 To agree the budget for 2025/26. The budget was AGREED as £47,869

- 6.5 To agree the precept demand for 2025/26.

It was agreed that the precept demand for 2025/26 would be £21,589, representing a Band D Council Tax Charge of £66.61 per annum.

7. Parish Council Defibrillator at the Village Hall

- 7.1 To validate the maintenance contract with Hopkins.

RESOLVED: To validate the maintenance contract with Hopkins.

- 7.2 To agree reimbursement to the VHMC for electricity for the defibrillator cabinet.

RESOLVED: To make a payment of £50 per annum for the electrical supply to the defibrillator.

- 7.3 To receive the Governance report for the defibrillator.

The report was received and noted.

- 7.4 To agree on dates for Basic Life Support and Defibrillator Training.

It was AGREED that the Clerk would liaise with the VHMC and Hopkins to find a suitable date in March.

8. To receive Reports and agree on actions if appropriate. Appendix 1

8.1 Chairman's Report

8.1.1 Telephone Box Ewell Minnis.

The Chairman reported that the final documentation had been received from BT, and the Telephone box had been decommissioned.

It was AGREED that Councillor Bernard would follow up the feasibility and funding for a second defibrillator.

The Clerk will add the BT Box to the asset register.

8.2 KALC Area Meeting Alkham Parish Council Representative.

Councillor Tapsell reported on the Joint Transportation Advisory Board Meeting he attended.

8.3 Clerks Report (on matters not included in other agenda items).

Pétanque Pitches on Vicarage Meadow.

DDC confirmed that Planning Permission would be required. Councillors Barnard and Johns will liaise with the community group to prepare the planning application for the Clerk to submit. The diocese had not responded regarding possible overage. The clerk to follow up.

8.4 Councillors Report (on matters not included in other agenda items)

8.6 Flood and Drainage Warden. At Appendix 1

8.7 Footpath Warden. No report.

8.8 Village Organisations. No reports.

9. To receive reports and consider recommendations from the working groups. Appendix 1

9.1 Highways Working Group.

Councillor Johns gave his report. The current Highway Improvement Plan is with the KCC Highways Planners. Costings and designs are awaited.

9.2 Communications and Community Involvement Working Group. No report.

9.3 Parish Plan Evolution and Delivery Working Group.

Councillors Barnard and Johns had met with DDC to review the requirements for a Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council Group will meet to discuss.

9.4 Green Spaces and Environment Working Group.

In principle, it was agreed to consider purchasing a cow spinner for the play area. Councillors will review the cost of installation.

It was AGREED that further tree works would be reviewed as part of the maintenance plan for the next financial year.

10. To receive the Monthly Playground Inspection Report.

The report was received and noted. Councillor Bernard to liaise with Harmers regarding the refurbished slide.

11. Correspondence:

11.1 To table items of late correspondence:

11.1.1 Sponsoring a Community Warden - Free Online One Hour Workshop. Clerk to attend.

11.1.2 BT Notice of Completion – BT Telephone Box Ewell Minnis

11.1.3 Draft Transport Strategy Public Consultation Open until 7th March

11.1.4 Staple Parish Council- Email regarding DDC Planning -Ombudsman Response

11.1.5 DDC Cllr Hibbert – Devolution White Paper

11.2 Items circulated or received.

DDC/CSU Pensioner Just Missing Out Scheme - £200 food/energy vouchers. Noted and posted on the website and noticeboard.

2024-25 Community Transport Grant Scheme. Noted

DDC Public Spaces Protection Order 2025. Noted

Current Funding Opportunities from Active Kent & Medway

It was AGREED that the Clerk would apply for grants for the Pétanque Pitches and a second defibrillator.

A new MRI opened at Buckland Hospital. Noted

12. Agenda Items for the next meeting: To be received by the Clerk no later than the 24th January 2024

13. Consideration of items to be taken in private (Exclusion of Public and Press):

There are only a few reasons as to why, legally, the public and press can be excluded from a meeting. The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Sec 1 (2) states "A body may, by resolution, exclude the public from a meeting (whether during the whole or part of the proceedings) whenever publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons stated in the resolution and arising from the nature of that business or of the proceedings; and where such a resolution is passed, this Act shall not require the meeting to be open to the public during proceedings to which the resolution applies." It is generally considered acceptable to exclude the press and public if the agenda item relates to the consideration of tenders, leases, purchases of assets, for matters relating to staffing covered by the Data Protection Act and to consider complaints against the council or a code of conduct complaint.

There were no matters to be considered.

14. Meeting Dates for 2025

3rd February, 3rd March, 7th April, 12th May, 2nd June, 7th July, 1st September, 6th October, 3rd November

12th May Annual Statutory Meeting of the Parish Council

12th May Annual Village Meeting

Councillor Standing Declarations of Interests.

CLlr Trevor Johns:

Chairman of the Alkham Valley Society

Member of the Alkham Community Speedwatch Team

CLlr Catie Webber:

Vice-Chairman of the Alkham Valley Society

Bookings Clerk for the Alkham Village Hall Management Committee

Member of the Alkham Village Hall Management Committee

CLlr Paul Tapsell.

Trustee of the Alkham Village Hall (Charity number: 255919)

CLlr Steve Edwards.

Member of the Alkham Valley Society Management Committee

Member of the Alkham Community Speedwatch Team

National rules about pecuniary interests are set out in Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011 and in secondary Legislation made under the Act, in particular The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012

These minutes are not a verbatim record of the meeting, but a record of resolutions made.

There being no further business to be transacted, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:47 pm.

Signed on behalf of the Parish Council

Signature:

Date:

Chairman: Please Print.

Appendix 1

8.6 Flood and Drainage Warden Report.

Work on relining the sewers started in early December 2024 and took several weeks. They will finish up in January 2025, and hopefully, this will mean we will not need to have tankers pump out over the winter when the Nailbourne flows.

A request was made through the Dover portal to dig out the sump and the swale, but it has not been done yet.

It is difficult to get through by telephone despite several attempts, but Andy Hudson from highways drainage has told me he is monitoring it. This year has been much drier, and so far, the Nailbourne hasn't started to run.

A work party in autumn tidied up the Vicarage meadow, and some branches overhanging the ditch were trimmed. This will help reduce the amount of leaves falling into the ditch.

Leaves have been regularly cleared from the barrier across the ditch at the Short Lane end and put into the compost bins.

The workmen at the building site have been informed that the field floods and that they need to move their toilets along a bit; otherwise, they could be under water!

9.1 Highways Update - January 2025

Kent Highways are still considering our proposals to enable Alkham Highways Improvement Plan to move on.

In response to our last request for an update, they asked us to "bear with them" and trust that they have Alkham Parish Council's requests and desires in mind and in hand. There is still a considerable amount of work and investigations that need to be carried out before they can come back to us with firm information and decisions.

However, in an important concession, it has been agreed internally within Kent Highways to proceed with these investigations prior to receiving a design fee so they can ensure that they can do all they can but ensure Alkham Parish Council will not be out of pocket should they not be able to deliver.