



## Alkham Parish Council

### Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> January 2026, at 7:30 pm in Alkham Village Hall

Present: Alkham Parish Councillors: P Tapsell (Chaired the Meeting), S Edwards, T Johns, G Kaile, M Libaert. C Webber  
In Attendance: DDC Cllr Hibbert, Members of the Public  
Irene Bowie – Parish Clerk

#### 1. Apologies and Declarations.

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.

**RESOLVED: To accept the apologies and reason given by Councillor Webber.**

1.2 Declaration of Changes to the Register of Interests.

*Councillors are responsible for ensuring that their Register of Interests is up to date (within 28 days of any changes). There were none.*

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 respectively for officers.

*Reminder to Members to disclose either a Pecuniary Interest or Other Interest in any item on the agenda. The clerk cannot advise members on this, and members are personally responsible for declaring an interest. There were none.*

1.4 Requests for Dispensations. There were none.

1.5 Declarations of Lobbying. There were none.

#### 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. A presentation was given to the council regarding agenda item 5.1.1.

#### 3. Reports from external parties (if present).

DDC Councillor Hibbert spoke regarding the Local Government Reorganisation. KCC Has a preferred option 4b. A public consultation will be held from 5 February 2026 to the 26<sup>th</sup> of March 2026

#### 4. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2025 be 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 25/01337 Great Cauldham Farm Cauldham Lane Capel Le Ferne Kent CT18 7HQ

Ref: 25/2170/FH: Construction of an Anaerobic Digestion Plant and Associated Infrastructure

**RESOLVED: APC Objection.**

##### 5.2 To Table and Validate Planning Applications, which have been 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 25/01328 Uplands Farm Meggett Lane Alkham CT15 7DG

Prior approval for the erection of 2 agricultural barns for the purpose of lambing  
Decision Prior Approval refused (28 days)

5.3.2 25/00933 Wolverton Farm Wolverton Hill Alkham CT15 7DT

Certificate of Lawfulness (proposed) for use of land for the stationing of a caravan for occupation as a residential annexe  
Decision Certificate Proposed Refused

**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)

<b>7. Payee</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Irene Bowie</b>	Salary December 2025	<b>Confidential</b>
<b>Irene Bowie</b>	Salary January 2026	<b>Confidential</b>
<b>HMRC</b>	HMRC NOV 2025	<b>Confidential</b>
<b>HMRC</b>	HMRC Dec 2025	<b>Confidential</b>
<b>HMRC</b>	HMRC Jan 2026	<b>Confidential</b>
<b>Ionos</b>	Emails December	<b>48.60</b>
<b>Harmer</b>	Playground Inspections x 2 Shortening Swing Chains	<b>153.60</b>
<b>Den Barnard</b>	Defib Store Reimbursement Defibrillator signs	<b>96.00</b>

7.1 Late Payment Request/s to be discussed for approval and payment. There were none.

7.2 To note receipts of Income. Total receipts year to date were noted as £22,084.55

7.3 To receive the bank reconciliation.

The bank reconciliation was received and noted as £46,936.72

7.4 To receive any late financial matters.

7.5 To consider the budget for 2026/27

**RESOLVED:** that the Parish Council approved a deficit budget of £48,933.25 for the financial year 2026.

Total receipts for 2026/27 were predicted to be £24,498.00. The resulting shortfall will be drawn down from reserves.

7.6 To agree the precept demand for 2026/27

**RESOLVED:** The Precept demand submitted to DDC was £22,898.62. Due to an increase in the tax base, there will be a corresponding increase in the Band D Council Tax charge for residents. The Band D charge remains unchanged from the previous year at £66.61 per annum.

**8. To consider a motion for an Alkham Valley Road Transport and Road Safety Policy and Strategic Proposal**

*Appendix A: Alkham Valley Road Transport and Road Safety Policy and Strategic Proposal*

MOTION: Alkham Parish Council notes the unsustainable levels of traffic, speeding, and inappropriate HGV use on the Alkham Valley Road, resulting in increasing risks to road safety, residential amenity, and the rural character of the parish.

The Council recognises that these conditions arise primarily from strategic development and regional and international traffic pressures beyond parish control, and that local mitigation measures have been exhausted.

This Council resolves to:

- Adopt the position that the Alkham Valley Road requires strategic, cross-authority intervention.
- Request that Kent County Council convenes a strategic review of traffic using the Alkham Valley Road, involving relevant district councils and affected parish councils.
- Authorise the Clerk to submit this resolution and supporting evidence to the appropriate authorities.

The Council considered a motion regarding unsustainable levels of traffic, speeding, and inappropriate HGV use on Alkham Valley Road, and the associated risks to road safety, residential amenity, and the rural character of the parish.

It was acknowledged that these issues arise primarily from strategic development and wider traffic pressures beyond parish control, and that local mitigation measures have been exhausted.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the Alkham Valley Road requires strategic, cross-authority intervention.
2. That Kent County Council be requested to convene a strategic review of traffic using Alkham Valley Road, involving relevant district and parish councils.
3. That the Clerk be authorised to submit the resolution and supporting evidence to the appropriate authorities.

**9. To receive Reports and agree on actions if appropriate.**

- 9.1 Chairman's Report. No matters to report
- 9.2 KALC Area Meeting Alkham Parish Council Representative. Meeting to be held on January 21<sup>st</sup> 2026
- 9.3 Clerks Report (on matters not included in other agenda items) No matters to report
- 9.4 Councillors Reports (on matters not included in other agenda items)
- 9.5 Flood and Drainage Warden. It was reported that the ditch and the sump had been dug out.
- 9.6 Footpath Warden. No matters to report  
Request for the bridge at the end of the Village green to be inspected by KCC PROW.
- 9.7 Village Organisations.

**10. To receive reports and consider recommendations from the working groups.**

- 10.1 Highways Working Group. It was **AGREED** that the HIP would be updated.
- 10.2 Communications and Community Involvement Working Group. No matters to report
- 10.3 Parish Plan Evolution and Delivery Working Group. No matters to report.
- 10.4 Green Spaces and Environment Working Group. % trees to be planted beside the Swale late February/early March. The gate had been repaired.

**11. To receive the Playground Inspection Reports.**

The report was received and noted.

**12. Correspondence:** Noted

**13. Agenda Items for the next meeting:**

**14. 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.

14.1 Enforcement Matters The Clerk reported on a matter which had been reported to DDC Planning Enforcement.

14.2 It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would obtain quotations for parish maintenance and playground inspections.

**15. Meeting Dates 2026.**

2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> April 13<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> May, 1<sup>st</sup> June, 6<sup>th</sup> July, 7<sup>th</sup> September, 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2<sup>nd</sup> November

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 9:08 pm

Chairman: Please Print

Signed :

Date:

## **Appendix A:**

### **Alkham Valley Road Transport and Road Safety Policy and Strategic Proposal**

#### **1. Purpose of this Policy**

This policy sets out Alkham Parish Council's formal position on the escalating transport, safety, and environmental impacts affecting the Alkham Valley Road and establishes a clear proposal for strategic intervention. It seeks to move beyond piecemeal mitigation towards a coordinated, evidence-led approach that protects residents, road users, and the rural character of the Alkham Valley.

#### **2. Background and Problem Statement**

The highways and safety challenges affecting the Alkham Valley Road have been recognised for over three decades. In recent years these issues have intensified significantly due to:

- The Whitfield Urban Expansion and associated housing growth
- Increased port-related and international freight traffic
- TAP operations and wider cross-Channel movement
- The use of the Alkham Valley Road as a rat run between the A2 and M20

These pressures are fundamentally incompatible with:

- A historic, narrow, unclassified rural road network
- A designated conservation area
- A protected rural landscape with limited pedestrian infrastructure

Localised measures, parish-led initiatives, and signage are no longer sufficient. What was once a local traffic issue has become a strategic transport failure, requiring intervention at county and district level.

#### **3. Policy Context**

This policy aligns with and supports Kent County Council Local Transport Plan 5 titled "Striking the Balance", Kent Vision Zero, and the planning policies of Dover District Council and Folkestone and Hythe District Council, including the joint A260, Alkham Valley Road, and A20 junction strategy funded in part through Section 106 contributions.

#### **4. Evidence of Harm and Risk**

Speedwatch volunteers recorded thousands of speeding vehicles in the past year. Over 5,000 police warning letters were issued in one year alone. Approximately 40 percent of offending vehicles originated from the Whitfield postcode area. Alkham Valley Road now carries traffic volumes of up to 1,000 vehicles per hour at peak times. There are no safe pedestrian crossing points through the village. Rural roads account for 57 percent of all fatal collisions in Kent. The railway bridge at Kearsney is reportedly the most frequently struck bridge in Kent.

#### **5. Policy Position**

Alkham Parish Council adopts the position that the Alkham Valley Road is unsuitable for high volumes of through traffic and HGV movements, that rural road safety must take precedence over procedural rigidity, and that strategic, cross-authority intervention is required.