

WOODCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES 238

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 24th April 2025

The meeting started at 7.00 pm.

In attendance:

Councillors Wade Nash, Rob Woods, Roger Knight, and Peter Ruddick.

Also in attendance were Ian Philo the Parish Manager, Kent County Councillor David Robey, Ashford Borough Councillors Aline Hicks and David Ledger. There were 9 members of the public also present.

Councillor Wade Nash chaired the meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence

Councillors Lucy Quinn, Gina McKay and Neil McKay sent their apologies. Neighbourhood Watch Area Leader Peter New sent his apologies.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None.

2.2. Other Significant Interests

None

2.3. Other Interests

Councillor Peter Ruddick declared an interest in item 9 and Councillor Rob Woods declared an interest in item 4.4.

3. Acceptance of Minutes.

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on the 27th March 2025 were agreed as a true record.

Proposed by Councillor Rob Woods and seconded by Councillor Roger Knight.

The council voted 4-0 in favour.

Meeting adjourned for public participation 7.10 pm..

Kent County Councillor, David Robey, gave a report to state that KCC had a balanced budget for 2025-2026. The government had awarded KCC £15million for pothole repairs. Ashford Borough Councillor David Ledger explained that the Local Plan preparation was in progress, and a draft should be available in July 2025, and that Parish Councils will be given the opportunity to have some input with as much feedback as possible.

Meeting reconvened at 7:20 pm.

4. Planning applications

4.1. PA/2025/0478

BerridgeFarm, Brook Street, TN26 3SX

Conversion of agricultural barn to dwelling.

There were no comments to add, and the Parish Council voted 4-0 to support this application.

4.2. PA/2025/0536

Maidenwood Farm, Haycross Lane, Woodchurch, TN26 3TF.

Outline planning application for the erection of up to six residential dwellings following demolition of the existing buildings and the removal of the existing mobile homes with all matters reserved except for site access.

The Parish Council struggled to see how this application complied with HOU5 conditions, and therefore voted 4-0 to object on those grounds.

4.3. PA/2025/0581 and PA/2025/0641

Mill Cottage, Bethersden Road, Woodchurch, TN26 3QW

Erection of two storey side extension

Listed Building Consent for the erection of two storey side extension to include the creation of door opening at first floor level in the existing side wall to provide access.

There were no comments and the Parish Council voted 4-0 to support this application.

4.4. PA/2025/0682

12, Kirkwood Avenue, Woodchurch, TN26 3SE

Change of use of garage to a proposed dog grooming salon.

There was some debate regarding parking issues, but on balance the Parish Council voted 3-0 to support this application.

4.5. NOT/2025/0614

Garth End, Redbrook Street, Woodchurch, TN26 3QS

Prior Approval for the change of use of agricultural building and land within its curtilage to a dwelling house and associated operational development.

It was felt that despite appearing to be close to Garth End, it wouldn't detract from the overall character of the surroundings.

The Parish Council voted 4-0 to support this application.

4.6. NOT/2025/0642

Agricultural building and land north of Coggers Cottage Boldshaves Oast House, Frogs Hole Lane, Woodchurch.

Prior approval for the change of use 1no. Building and land within its curtilage from Agricultural to Dwellinghouse (Class C3) and for associated operational development.

Subject to there being adequate sewerage and no light pollution, The Parish

Council voted 4-0 to support this application.

5. Annual Parish Meeting

The Parish Council agreed to hold the Annual Parish Meeting on 22nd May 2025. It was suggested that the Parish Council considered inviting speakers from Woodchurch Surgery, Friends of Woodchurch Windmill and Neighbourhood Watch representative Peter New.

6. Community Warden

The Parish Council agreed the Parish Manager will request a Service Agreement from KCC, and then seek quotes from solicitors to review the agreement before signing. The parish Council voted 4-0 in support of this action.

7. Junction of Bethersden Road and Redbrook Street

The Parish Council reviewed the East Kent Highways proposal for increased lines on the road surface along Redbrook Street and Shadoxhurst Road in the approach to the junction with Bethersden Road. It was agreed to accept this proposal but request higher visibility roadside signs if possible. The Parish Council voted 4-0 in support of this action.

8. Front Road 30mph Roundels

The Parish Council voted 4-0 to agree to the 30mph roundels on the road surface as proposed by East Kent Highways.

9. Convex Mirror at Exit of Shirkoak Park

The Parish Council very carefully considered the request to install a convex mirror opposite the exit to Shirkoak Park. It was felt on balance that the Parish Council should not expose itself to potential liability risk, in the event of an accident occurring there as a result of a person using that mirror. It was proposed that the Shirkoak Park Residents Association could apply for a grant or donation to the Parish Council which would then be considered.

The Parish Council voted 3-0 in support of this action.

10. Play Area Inspection

The Parish Council considered the Playground Inspection Company report and noted the items highlighted:

Will obtain prices for signage with improved emergency contact details.

Will obtain prices for better instructions for the adult exercise equipment.

Seek quotes for a replacement picnic bench.

Rails on the slide need monitoring.

Aspire had been instructed to repair the surface around one of the sprung items.

The Parish Council voted 4-0 in support of these actions.

11. Memorial Bench

The Parish Council agreed to the maintenance of a memorial bench, lower down on the green. The Parish Manager would get quotes for a concrete base to be installed for the bench to sit on.

The Parish Council voted 4-0 in support of this. .

12. War Memorial Clean

The Parish Council agreed to a volunteer to clean the War Memorial. This would be done under the supervision of the Parish Manager and members of Woodchurch

Remembers. This is subject to clearance by the Parish Council insurance company. The Parish Council voted 4-0 in support of these actions..

13. Flagpole Inspection

The Parish Council noted the reported advisories from Windsock. It was agreed that the flagpole would have a closer inspection when it is lowered for the next annual report, as there were no issues of concern highlighted. It was also noted that the Flag Master monitors the wind speeds and lowers any flag flying when speeds approach 6 on the Beaufort Scale.

14. Litter Bins

The Parish Council agreed to 6 more Roadware Derwent 120 litre bins. The Parish Manager will obtain quotes for removing existing cast iron bins and installing the 6 new ones, in addition repositioning 2 existing plastic bins. The Parish Council voted 4-0 in support of this action.

15. Insurance

Under the Long Term Agreement, the Parish Council voted 4-0 in favour of renewing the insurance for 2025-2026 with Zurich.

16. Asset Register

The Asset List link set up by the Parish Manager lacked any values, therefore the Parish Council deferred its agreement to the meeting on 29th May 2025.

17. CALA Homes Development Road Names

The Chair Wade Nash opened the meeting to allow members of Woodchurch Remembers to comment:

They felt that CALA had been economical with the information put forward, preferring a speedy planning process. Woodchurch Remembers could evidence that there were no lasting next of kin in many names that had been put forward, and that CAL were circumnavigating the process having to go to committee meeting at Ashford Borough Council.

The Parish Council agreed to submit the list of names with no surviving next of kin to CALA, along with any field names that Title deeds that the site sits on.

The Parish Council voted 4-0 in support of these actions.

18. Woodchurch Windmill

Councillor Wade Nash read out a report relating to covenants on the windmill. It was agreed to send this to Simon Betty at Ashford Borough Council and copy in the other Ashford Borough Councillors. It was also agreed to place the document in the public domain.

The Parish Council voted 4-0 in support of these actions.

19. August Meetings

The Parish Council voted unanimously to continue with meetings in August.

20. Finances

It was noted that the Items for March Payment were overstated by £133.08, and therefore were £2,206.84 instead of £2,339.92 as stated at the March 27th meeting.

It was agreed that the Parish Manager would transfer £5,000 from the savings account to the current account to cover payments if the precept has not been received in time.

In the event of the precept being received first, to transfer £17,000 to the savings account.

20.1. End of Year Report for 2024-2025

The Parish Council voted 4-0 to agree the 2024-2025 Year End Financial Report presented by the Parish Manager and RFO (See Appendix 1)

20.2. Items for Payment

The Parish Council noted the two additional items added to the payment list to D Jarvis for strimmer fuel £14.79 and mower oil £57.89.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to the April 2025 items for payment,

Items For Payment April 2025					
Payments Made since the last Meeting					
			Amount	Vat	
Direct Debit	EDF	A/C is £178.81 in Debit	£ 66.00	£	-
Direct Debit	Castle Water			£	-
Direct Debit	Lloyds Bank	Account Management Charges	£ 4.25	£	-
			£ -	£	-
			£ -	£	-
Subtotal			£ 70.25	£	-
New Items for Approval Beneficiary					
Payment Method		Payee	Description	Total payable	VAT
Bacs		Salaries	Salaries	£ 1,399.28	£ -
Bacs		I Philo	Petrol	£ 32.40	£ -
Bacs		HMRC	PAYE	£ 229.23	£ -
Bacs		Maiden Accountancy	PAYE Services (Jan-March 2025)	£ 36.00	£ 6.00
Bacs		KALC	Membership Fee	£ 914.94	£ 152.49
Bacs		PI	Play Area Inspection	£ 113.94	£ 18.99
Bacs		Flagpole Company	Flagpole Inspection	£ 570.00	£ 95.00
Bacs		D Jarvis	Mower & Strimmer Fuel	£ 14.79	£ -
Bacs		D Jarvis	Mower Oil 5 Litre	£ 57.89	£ 9.65
Bacs				£ -	£ -
Bacs				£ -	£ -
Subtotal			£ 3,368.47		
			£ 3,438.72	£	282.13

20.3. March 2025 Bank Reconciliation

The Parish Council unanimously agreed the March 2025 bank reconciliation.

March 2025 Bank Reconciliation

Cash Book Opening Balance		2689.42
	Receipts	Payments
Precept	£0.00	£0.00
Transfer	£0.00	£0.00
VAT Refund	£0.00	£0.00
Salary Including HMRC	£0.00	£1,471.33
Grants and Donations	£0.00	£0.00
Projects	£0.00	£0.00
VGC Maintenance Agreement	£0.00	£75.64
Running Costs	£0.00	£659.87
Income	£0.00	
Expenditure		£2,206.84
Cashbook Balance (A)	£0.00	£482.58
Bank Statement Balance		£2,689.42
Transfer		£0.00
Income		£0.00
Expenditure		£2,206.84
Bank Closing Balance (B)		£482.58
Difference (A - B)		£0.00
Deposit Account		£52,411.90
Interest		£45.33
Transfer		£0.00
Total		£52,457.23
Total Funds		£52,939.81

20.4. March 2025 Receipts and Payments

The Parish Council unanimously agreed the receipts and payments for March 2025.

Receipts and Payments March2025				
Receipts			Amount	Vat
Bacs	Lloyds	Interest	£ 45.33	£ -
			£ -	£ -
Bacs			£ -	£ -
			£ -	£ -
			£ -	£ -
Total			£ 45.33	£ -
Payments				
	Payee	Description	Total payable	VAT
Bacs	Salaries	Salaries	£ 1,339.01	£ -
Bacs	I Philo	Travel	£ 32.40	£ -
Bacs	HMRC	PAYE Inc NI	£ 132.32	£ -
D Debit	EDF	Pavilion Electricity	£ 66.00	£ -
D Debit	Lloyds	A/C Management Charge	£ 4.25	£ -
D Debit	Castle Water	Pavilion Water	£ 9.64	£ -
Bacs	Maiden Accountancy	PAYE Services	£ 36.00	£ 6.00
Bacs	NALC	Councillor Training	£ 39.22	£ 6.54
Bacs	S Brignall	Install New Litter Bins	£ 548.00	£ -
Bacs			£ -	£ -
Bacs			£ -	£ -
Bacs			£ -	£ -
Bacs			£ -	£ -
Total			£ 2,206.84	
Transfers	From	To		
Bacs	Deposit A/C	Current A/C	£ -	
Bacs	Deposit A/C	Current A/C	£ -	
Total			£ -	

21. Correspondence.

The Prish Manager attended the Pond Wood Solar Farm public drop in session, on 23rd April. At that time there had been just over 50 attendees, and it was felt that split was roughly half in support vs opposed.

The decision by Ashford Borough Council relating to adding the Windmill to the List of Assets of Community Value had been deferred to after the 25th April 2025.

Democratic Services had informed the Parish Manager that it could proceed with co-option to replace Wendy Hookey.

Black Forge would need to trim the hedge encroaching on the Water Pump to continue the restoration. They would ensure that any nesting birds are not disturbed first.

22. Items for Information or Agenda for Next Meeting.

Councillor Rob Woods was undertaking a consultancy role for Northiam Parish Council and there were no comments from members.

There will be a KALC EGM on 19th June to discuss the local government

reorganisation. Councillor Rob Woods and the Parish Manager Ian Philo will attend. The Parish Manager would also attend a meeting in London relating to Community Interest Funds, to have a better understanding the mechanism behind them.

23. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 7pm on Thursday the 29th May 2025 in the Memorial Hall Annexe.

The Meeting concluded at 8:30 pm.

Signed _____
Chair

Dated _____

Appendix 1

Year End Financial Report 2024-2025

Overall receipts were £58,521.12, of which £45,006 was the precept. Other receipts of £13,515.12 were made up of mostly £11,027 grant from Ashford Borough Council and a VAT payment of £1,794.12.

Gross payments totalled £78,403.06 with £6,942.53 in VAT to recover.

Net payments were £71,460.53, versus the £93,300 budget.

Spending that exceeded budget:

Microsoft 365 and Email payments were £600 more than budget, this was skewed by the 6 month upfront payment in January 2025 which included payments for the first quarter of 2025-2026.

Whereas the purchase of the new litter bins was in budget, the Parish Council agreed to pay a local handyman £548 to install them as it was discovered that the work was more involved than originally thought, exceeding the budget by £300.

There was an upfront payment for hall hire in February to secure all the Parish Council Meeting Room, and £60 for 10 electric heater tokens.

Audit Fees also came in above budget as the external auditor invoice was higher than expected as a result of challenges from the 2023-2024 year.

The public convenience deep clean was double the budget, this was due to incorrect budgeting by the Parish Manager at the time of setting the budget.

The project work on the Hub and power to the village green were above the set budget, but within once the £11,027 ABC grant has been taken into account.

Salaries were £1,327 over budget, this was due to back pay at the increased new hourly rates which don't get announced until October.

Over spends in running the Parish Council of £3,065 were more than offset by other areas coming in £4,045 under budget.

Unspent earmarked funds were £19,100 which have been carried forward to 2025-2026 and repurposed as agreed when setting the 2025-2026 budget.

Cash in the bank at 31st March 2025 stood at £52,939.81 (£482.58 in the current account and £52,457.23 in savings).

There is an outstanding invoice for Hub electric work of £2,100 plus VAT. (£2,520). After allowing for this along with £19,100 unspent earmarked funds, and £20,000 general reserve, we have brought forward cash of £11,319.81. There is around £6,900 in VAT still to recover on payments made in 2024-2025.

Quarterly Budget Monitoring 2024-2025							
	BUDGET	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL	% of Budget
Employee costs							
Total Employee Costs	£ 16,970.00	4270.43	4809.02	4473.94	4743.71	18297.1	107.82%
Councillor Costs							
Chair's Expenses	£ 150.00	0	0	25	0	25	16.67%
Councillor Training	£ 850.00	0	0	70	32.68	102.68	12.08%
	£ 1,000.00	0	0	95	32.68	127.68	12.77%
Running Costs							
Accountant PAYE Fees	£ 120.00	30	30	30	30	120	100.00%
Audit Fees	£ 350.00	236.05	315	0	0	551.05	157.44%
Data Protection Controller	£ 250.00	150	0	0	0	150	60.00%
Registration with Information Commissioner	£ 35.00	0	35	0	0	35	100.00%
Legal Advice	£ 1,500.00	0	0	0	1204.25	1204.25	80.28%
Environment	£ 500.00	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Insurance	£ 2,000.00	1240.33	0	0	0	1240.33	62.02%
Maintenance of Laptop Computer and Data inc 365 for cllrs/clerk	£ 1,500.00	0	669	716.9	732	2117.9	141.19%
Website	£ 590.00	0	774	0	0	774	131.19%
Cilca	£ 670.00	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
KALC Subscription	£ 750.00	755.39	0	0	0	755.39	100.72%
SLCC Subscription	£ 125.00	0	0	190	0	190	152.00%
Hire of Hall and Heating Tokens	£ 150.00	28	60	88	124	300	200.00%
Subtotal A	£ 8,540.00	2439.77	1883	1024.9	2090.25	7437.92	87.10%
Other Running Costs							
Public Convenience Running Cost	£ 250.00	0	0	0	536.84	536.84	214.74%
Council Building Maintenance	£ 1,000.00	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Notice Board Repairs/Replacement	£ 1,600.00	0	199	0	1248.9	1447.9	90.49%
Green Extension (hedges, tree work and wildflower meadow)	£ 600.00	0	460	0	125	585	97.50%
Footpath width restriction Bollards (paint only)	£ 50.00	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Grass Cutting - War Memorial	£ 500.00	0	0	340	0	340	68.00%
Waste Bins	£ 1,700.00	0	0	1571.5	548	2119.5	124.68%
Flag maintenance/Flagpole Replacement**	£ 150.00	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Beacon Costs**	£ 200.00	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Defibrillator Batteries and Pads	£ 500.00	0	196.8	0	0	196.8	39.36%
Contingency (maintenance)**	£ 1,000.00	950	139.39	0	0	1089.39	108.94%
Subtotal B	£ 7,550.00	950	995.19	1911.5	2458.74	6315.43	83.65%
Total Running Costs A+B	£ 16,090.00	3389.77	2878.19	2936.4	4548.99	13753.35	85.48%
Village Green Charity Incl Maintenance Agreement	£ 6,490.00	240.6	1113.26	541.29	585.8	2480.95	38.23%
Annual Wreath	£ 50.00			50	0	50	100.00%
Discretionary Grants to Other Organisations	£ 500.00			500	0	500	100.00%
Total Grants/Donations	£ 7,040.00	£ 240.60	£ 1,113.26	£ 1,091.29	£ 585.80	£ 3,030.95	43.05%
PROJECTS IDENTIFIED BY VILLAGE SURVEY GROUP							
Power Upgrade to The Hub & Power to VG	£ 20,000.00		9257.05	5276.1	5610	20143.15	100.72%
Bird and Bat Boxes	£ 500.00					0	0.00%
Toilet Revamp	£ 8,000.00			6898.8	6022	12920.8	161.51%
Traffic	£ 3,000.00					0	0.00%
Environment	£ 500.00					0	0.00%
Pavilion Project, Play Area and Multi Surface Court	£ 9,600.00					0	0.00%
CCTV	£ 6,000.00					0	0.00%
Village Pump Restoration	£ 2,700.00			687.5	0	687.5	25.46%
Village Sign Restoration	£ 1,900.00			2500	0	2500	131.58%
Total Projects	£ 52,200.00	0	9257.05	15362.4	11632	36251.45	69.45%
TOTAL	£ 93,300.00	£ 7,900.80	£ 18,057.52	£ 23,959.03	£ 21,543.18	£ 71,460.53	76.59%