

**MINUTES OF A YALDING PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 07 JULY 2026 AT 7.00 PM IN YALDING VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT

Geraldine Brown (Chairman)	Jason Buckland (JB)
Tim Chapman (TC)	Ken Gough (KG)
Pip Jamison (PJ)	Ian Simmons (IS)
Dee Ann Stead (DS)	Kelly Woods (KW)

DECLARATION OF INTENTION TO RECORD PROCEEDINGS

PJ and the Deputy Clerk declared that they were audio recording.

PUBLIC SESSION

There were two members of the public present who did not wish to speak.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Saunders sent his apologies due to work commitments which were accepted.
Councillor Saunders joined the meeting at 8.02pm.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST OF COUNCILLORS IN ANY ITEM

2.1. DECLARATION OF CHANGES TO THE REGISTER OF INTERESTS

None were declared.

2.2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

KG and TC declared an interest in agenda item 13.2 as they had bills for payment.

2.3. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

None were requested.

2.4. DECLARATION OF ANY GIFTS RECEIVED

None were declared.

3. DECISION TO TAKE AGENDA ITEMS UNDER CLOSED SESSION

Due to principal authority requirements and receipt of sensitive information, it was resolved to take item 22 in Closed Session.

4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 02 JUNE 2026

It was proposed KW seconded IS and unanimously resolved that the minutes be signed as a correct record.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

5.1. BOOT SCRAPER AT KINTONS BRIDGE

5.2. TRANSFER EE MOBILE PHONES TO A YALDING PARISH COUNCIL (YPC) ACCOUNT

EE Residential may be able to move them to a business account.

5.3. THE KINTONS – CREATION OF AREA FOR INFORMAL FOOTBALL GOALS

KG needs support cementing them in, which he is arranging.

5.4. PAT TESTING OF PARISH COUNCIL ASSETS

The PAT testing of The Parish Councils portable assets is out of date. A list will be prepared.

5.5. CHANGE THE COUNCIL'S ADDRESS FOR ALL LAND TO THE PO BOX ADDRESS

Completion date for The Land Registry of the middle of August. The Clerk is trying to stop this and change it to the Post Office address.

5.6. SPEED INDICATOR DEVICE

The Clerks are pre-checking locations.

5.7. LEES PICNIC AREA

The barrier permit reader is not working, KG is investigating options to repair, he needs to download instruction on the unit.

5.8. CCTV SIGNAGE

It was agreed to install two signs on the current information boards that are located at the entrance to the car park. With the following wording "CCTV cameras are in use in this area for the purpose of crime prevention and public safety. This system is controlled by Yalding Parish Council. For more information contact 01622 814134 or 07421 823502". The Deputy Clerk is ordering these and is implementing all other actions.

5.9. SPEEDWATCH SPEED GUN

The police have confirmed to JC the company to order from, but they are currently out of stock.

5.10. REQUEST FOR A GRANT FOR £500 FROM HEART OF KENT HOSPICE

The Clerk will add to the budget list for next year.

5.11. HOUSEKEEPING LIST

The Chairman will circulate.

5.12. PLAYScheme 2026

KW has managed to secure a grant from The Yalding Education Foundation for £500 providing it is spent on activities and equipment. The Clerk has asked Play Place to provide invoices accordingly. A thank you will be sent.

6. POLICE MATTERS

The Clerk has invited the Kent Police Commissioner to a Parish Council Meeting to discuss the lack of visibility of policing and the gap that taking away the community officers has caused. The ability to close roads for ourselves and South East 4x4 Rescue may also be part of the discussion.

7. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Councillor Ford did not attend the meeting and did not send a report.

8. BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Councillor Summersgill attended the meeting and himself and Councillor Gouch had previously sent a report which was circulated. Cllr Gouch joined the meeting later in the session. Cllr Russell was unable to attend.

8.1. THE BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPRESENTATIONS - HAMPSTEAD LANE

The lock issues are usually dealt with by Maidstone Borough Council (MBC)/police and Councillor Russell has already spoken to the correct department, for the past few years, they have made regular visits to the area. It was suggested that MBC ask them to pick up their horse poo at the lock. The flooding issues are in the hands of Kent County Council (KCC) and we await for two gullies to be jetted.

9. BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

A reminder that this should be considered in all of the items that follow on the agenda.

10. PLANNING

10.1. TO DECLARE ANY LOBBYING OR FORMAL REPRESENTATION

None were declared.

10.2. SCHEME OF DELEGATION

To confirm the following planning applications were responded to in line with a Scheme of Delegation and the response is included at the end of the minutes of this meeting

- 26/501938/FULL - Coach House, Kenward Road – No Comment
- 26/502138/FULL - 22 Medway Avenue – No Comment

10.3. MOTION TO RESOLVE REPRESENTATION TO THE FOLLOWING PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- 26/502277/TPOA – 3 Oast Court Yalding – **No Comment**
- 26/502221/FULL - 1 Fowle Hall Green Cottages, Pike Fish Lane – **Object**
- 26/502036/FULL - Willow Farm, Lughorse Lane – **No Comment**

The above decisions were resolved unanimously and the representations are recorded at the end of the minutes.

10.4. MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS UPDATE

10.4.1. YALDING ENTERPRISE PARK (YEP)

Nothing to report.

10.4.2. FERNHAM HOMES – LAND NORTH OF KENWARD ROAD

The construction traffic route is yet to be agreed. The Clerk has responded to the application to discharge the condition.

10.4.2.1. TO CONFIRM THE FINAL ROADS ON THE DEVELOPMENT

- Lupulin Way
- Fuggles Corner
- Tutsham End
- The Goldings
- Timber Bats Road
- Whitebine Road
- Bramling Place
- Brewers Row

MBC made a few changes to the road endings that proposed by YPC to ensure they fitted with the type of layout of the roads.

10.4.3. FERNHAM HOMES – LAND SOUTH OF KENWARD ROAD

Fernham Homes have corresponded further about the Heads of Terms asking for details of YPC solicitor. The Chairman does not feel YPC should enter a completion of sale until the land has been reinstated as an Open Space. It was suggested that YPC should raise a query with regards to all the movement on the land and how the retention of habitat is being achieved.

The Clerk has replied to the discharge the condition with regard to the play/gym equipment stating that the adult equipment for the south site is not suitable for the age group for which we are aiming.

10.5. ANY OTHER PLANNING MATTERS

10.5.1. INVESTIGATION INTO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MBC PLANNING COMMITTEE

There is a stage 2 of the complaints procedure and it is recommended that MBC Monitoring Officer be asked to look at the conduct issue. The Clerk has sent The Chairman a draft letter to review, this would need to be sent soon as there is a 6 month deadline. Councillors agreed that this should be pursued. It was proposed JB, seconded DS and resolved unanimously.

10.5.2. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (FOI) REQUEST RECEIVED REGARDING PLANNING APPLICATIONS AT LAWTON PLACE

A FOI/EIR was received with regard to the three recent planning applications at Lawton Place. The Clerk responded but an internal review has been requested which will be carried out by The Chairman as per the Council's FOI policy.

10.5.3. NOTIFICATION OF A PLANNING APPEAL FOR 26/501223/FULL LAND AT LAWTON PLACE, BENOVER ROAD

The appeal was noted.

10.5.4. NOTIFICATION THAT THE ENFORCEMENT APPEAL APP/U2235/C/26/3378504 - PEARVIEW SYMONDS LANE WILL BE HELD ON 11 AUGUST 2026, 10 AM AT TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, MAIDSTONE

The appeal date was noted.

10.5.5. TO NOTE THE YPC HAVE REMOVED THE CALL IN FOR PLANNING APPLICATION 26/500525/FULL - BOWER MOUNT PROVIDING THE EA'S RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS ARE APPLIED.

The removal of the call in was noted

11. PARISH BUSINESS (NOT OTHERWISE ON THE AGENDA)

11.1. NOTIFICATION OF ANY WELCOME LETTERS THAT NEED TO BE SENT

There were two to deliver.

11.2. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (NhP)

DH has sent a final draft document in Word to MBC for review on the content and policies. On receipt of a response and any amendments required, Rob O'Connell will be asked to format the plan into its finished shape before sending it to all Councillors and Steering Group members for comment.

11.3. POST OFFICE

It is now understood that a decision on the new location could take several months to be agreed by Post Office Limited(POL).

POL confirmed that an outreach service for two hours twice a week would be made available and this is now operating on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons 2pm to 4pm in The Old Post Office. This is working well.

The Chairman is working on the lease agreement with the landlord. Solicitors have been instructed. The Chairman has agreed with the landlord to date the lease when completed and pay him additional rent for the interim.

An EPC survey is being undertaken on 8 June. The Chairman has spoken to Trooli asking them to remove their equipment.

Target for completion of the office is September 2026.

11.4. TO DISCUSS THE POTENTIAL TRANSFER OF THE LEES PUBLIC CONVENIENCE TO YPC FROM MBC

MBC has drafted Heads of Terms for the transfer of The Lees public toilets to YPC. The Chairman has responded that YPC would not be prepared to take them over until at least April 2027 as there is currently no budget for them. A discussion took place on the advantages and disadvantages of the transfer.

Councillors felt that the toilets were an important asset for the Lees Picnic Area and car park but it was agreed to seek legal advice as to the validity of the covenant contained in the transfer document to MBC dated 27 March 1991 with regard to the transfer of MBC assets to any new Unitary Authority.

12. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

There were none.

13. FINANCE

13.1. SCHEME OF DELEGATION

To confirm it was agreed to pay £500 to Berry & Lamberts Solicitors as a retainer in order for them to act as YPC solicitor for the Post Office lease. This was approved in line with the Scheme of Delegation. It will be included in the appropriate bills list attached to the minutes of that meeting.

13.2. MOTION TO PAY BILLS

It was proposed IS seconded KW and resolved by all to make payment of bills totalling £13,989.08 exclusive of VAT as per attached list.

KG and TC did not vote as they had declared an interest.

DS, TC and KG will authorise them electronically. TC and KG not authorising their own bills.

13.3. CONFIRM RECEIPTS

A list of receipts, as attached, totalling £4,908.31 was circulated.

13.4. MONTHLY SPEND AGAINST BUDGET REVIEW

There was no unbudgeted spend.

13.5. BANK BALANCES AS AT THE END OF MAY 2026

The cleared bank balance for the end of May 2026 was confirmed:

- NatWest £22,267.61
- Unity Trust £102,730.24

13.6. BANK RECONCILIATIONS FOR MAY 2026

It was confirmed that these have been signed as correct

13.7. TO DISCUSS THE REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL AND AGREE WHETHER TO FOREGO MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

The report was discussed and it was agreed unanimously to forego the Members' allowances. This minute is considered as written notification to The Clerk.

13.8. BRITISH GAS, INVOICING ISSUES

Following the transfer of the street lighting electricity from the liquidated Tomato to British Gas, invoices for the two accounts have been erratic. The Clerk to liaise with British Gas.

14. OPEN SPACES

14.1. REPORTS FOLLOWING VISUAL UPDATE INSPECTIONS OF COUNCIL OWNED LAND

14.1.1. THE LEES

Inspection complete, no new issues

14.1.2. THE LEES PICNIC AREA

Inspection complete, no new issues

The EA has cut up the two trees that had fallen across the River Teise from Twyford Boatyard to The Lees Picnic Area but has left the wood on The Lees river bank. The Clerk has requested that the EA remove this wood asap.

The Teapot Island sign has been re-erected at the entrance.

14.1.3. YALDING VILLAGE GREEN AND VERGES

Inspection complete, no new issues.

KG has repaired the manhole cover damaged by the grass cutting contractor and the invoice has been sent to the contractor for payment.

14.1.4. JUBILEE FIELD

Inspection complete, no new issues.

14.1.5. LADDINGFORD VERGES

Inspection complete.

The vegetation overhanging the footway opposite The Pony Field needs cutting back KG will arrange for it to be cut.

14.1.6. THE KINTONS

Inspection complete, no new issues

14.1.7. FOWLE HALL GREEN

Not reported but no issues known of.

14.1.8. THE TATT

Inspection complete, no new issues

14.2. EQUIPMENT INSPECTIONS

14.2.1. JUBILEE FIELD

Inspection complete, no new issues.

14.2.2. THE KINTONS

Inspection complete, no new issues.

14.2.3. DEFIBRILLATORS

Inspection complete, no new issues.

14.3. OTHER ISSUES

14.3.1. TREES ON THE VILLAGE GREEN

On Sunday 28 June a very large branch on one of the Horse Chestnut Trees came down; the site was cleared by our contractor.

The trees have now been inspected by an arboriculturist who can see no major health problems. He has advised us that it is not unusual for healthy trees to drop branches in these current weather conditions. The trees are victims of a phenomenon known as "Summer Branch Drop". This is characterised by the sudden, unpredictable failure of large, healthy looking limbs, typically on hot, calm days or following heavy rain after a period of hot weather/ drought. The trees most affected are mature broadleaved species, such as Beech, Oak, Horse Chestnut and Poplar. As this very hot, dry weather is continuing, YPC, has, on his recommendation, cordoned off the area beneath all three trees and issued a Parish News asking that people do not walk or allow their children to play within the cordoned off area or sit on the War Memorial.

He has recommended that the trees be reduced by two metres all around each tree and then inspect again from the top. He has given an initial estimate cost of £3,500 plus VAT to include the necessary planning application to MBC.

It was proposed KW, seconded IS and resolved unanimously to approve a spend up to £4,500 plus VAT.

14.3.2. CAR PARK

14.3.2.1. NON-DOMESTIC RATES

Following an increase in the rateable value, a business rate demand has been received for £800 per annum, the rates had previously been zero due to the having 100% small business relief. The Clerk has challenged this as the area is not a car park in the traditional sense but is ancillary to an open space and therefore is exempt. An application for a business rates check has been submitted to the Valuation Office. Awaiting outcome, MBC invoices put on hold.

14.3.2.2. DISCUSSION WITH REGARD TO POTENTIAL DAMAGE TO CAR EXITING THE CARPARK, FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST AND POTENTIAL INSURANCE CLAIM

There has been potential vehicular damage at the exit of the car park, a Freedom of Information Request has been submitted and there is a possibility of insurance claims. The Clerk has replied to FOI request and the insurance company has been put on notice.

14.4. REQUEST TO USE PARISH LAND

14.4.1. REQUEST FROM A RESIDENT TO USE THE KINTONS FOR PRIVATE ONE-TO-ONE FOOTBALL TRAINING SESSIONS

A local resident has requested to use The Kintons for private one-to-one football training sessions; she is happy to fit around the football and cricket club so as not to interfere with current activities. She will supply risk assessment and public liability insurance. Councillors agreed this was acceptable.

The charity horse drive has been cancelled.

15. HIGHWAYS

15.1. KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (KCC)

- **REVIEW THE HIGHWAYS LIST** - The list has been updated and circulated. Councillors to advise any additions. The Clerks' are increasingly frustrated at the quality of information on the KCC Highways portal and the lack of responses from officers.

- **HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT PLAN (HIP) PROGRESS**

- Double yellow lines outside Lyngs Farmhouse – This is with the design and delivery team, once complete it will go to formal consultation.
- The footpath across the green at Laddingford to the bus stop, detailed costs have been provided by the HIP Officer that total £10,882. Councillors felt that this was an unacceptable amount and it was agreed not to pursue it.
- The HIP has been updated; The items from the reserve list and the Whetsted Road signage has been added along with the chicane on Yalding Hill and the stop line at the Post Office and sent to The Chair for comments then it will be circulated for further comment.

- **WATER ON VICARAGE ROAD** – Still nothing from Councillor Ford.

15.2. TOWN BRIDGE

15.2.1. TOLL BRIDGE INITIATIVE

The presentation for submission to the minister is being prepared.

15.3. OTHER HIGHWAY ISSUES

There were no other highways issues.

16. COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

16.1. MOTION TO ADOPT THE COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PLAN

The Chairman circulated the Community Resilience Plan and asked for comments.

She will add a terrorist section before it is adopted.

Concerns were expressed about the items stored at The Chequers as it is up for lease; it was agreed that a shed should be purchased for the Jubilee Field to contain the road closures signs and that the Christmas lights and poles would be taken to the lockup/Bramling House to be stored with those for Yalding.

16.2.FLOODING

16.2.1. FLOOD WARDEN UPDATE

The flood warden list is almost complete with only a few gaps. The Chairman will send a Parish News asking for more volunteers.

16.2.2. SANDBAGS

A storage box has been purchased for Tatt sandbags; chain & padlock are required. KG will arrange to install it. Jonathan Alawo has moved positions and has been replaced by Richard Westcott at the EA. The Chairman has emailed him regarding a visit to look at potential storage sites and to get the sandbags collected from the village hall.

16.2.3. SUBSTATION MOVE

UKPN want to do the work during school holidays with traffic lights on Lees Road for a two week period but KCC keep rejecting their permit request. The Chairman has emailed the relevant manager at KCC, Andy Rockett, to explain the need for the work and he has responded asking for contacts at UKPN so that he can arrange a site meeting directly with them as an urgent issue.

The Chairman will review the of Property Flood Resilience measures report.

£10,000 flood prize still needs to be spent now that flood gates have been dismissed by KCC.

Despite two emails and a phone message, there has been no response from the highway manager with regard to road closure training. The Chairman has chased and has had a reply from the Interim Senior Highway Manager and has been promised a reply.

A meeting was held with South East 4x4 rescue to agree procedures during a flood and what other support they can give us. A memorandum of understanding is being prepared by them.

17. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION (LGR)

17.1. MBC COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW UPDATE

17.2. PUBLIC ASSETS TRANSFER AND MANAGEMENT MBC

17.3. LGR CREATION OF UNITARY AUTHORITIES UPDATE

17.4. PUBLIC ASSETS TRANSFER AND MANAGEMENT KCC

No further update, however the whole project could depend on the direction a new prime minister will take.

18. EVENTS

18.1. PARISH PICNIC – 13 SEPTEMBER 2026

The BBQ will be managed by PJ and KW.

The bar will be DS, AS, The Clerk and Deputy Clerk.

The chairman will arrange supplies.

All to be there for 12 to set up.

TC gave his apologies.

The Chairman will send out a request for volunteers.

18.2. YULETIDE MARKET

18.2.1. UPDATE ON KCC ROAD CLOSURE COSTS

The Clerk has had a reply from Barbara Westmoccott at KCC, who has confirmed that, upon confirmation of the level of donations given to charitable causes, they can give a 50% discount on the TTRO fees. It is also understood that the TTRO covers 18 months therefore if the application would be for 2026 and 2027 giving a further 50% reduction.

The details are still not conclusive; clarification is being sought.

A meeting was held with South East 4x4 rescue who may be able to man the road closure and have a stall at the event. They cannot close the road as they do not have a licence. So, a licenced contractor would need to do this.

Even this reduction in costs would make the market unviable within a couple of years. It was agreed that KCC Cabinet should be lobbied to dramatically reduce the costs of community event road closures. The Chairman will look at attending.

18.2.2. TO DISCUSS SUGGESTED CHANGES TO THE ROAD CLOSURE LOGISTICS FROM THE YULETIDE WORKING PARTY

The Yuletide Working Party would like to reduce the road closure footprint, removing one barrier checkpoint, and relocating the start of the market to the top of the High Street.

The Vice Chairman proposed and it was agreed that it go ahead as normal this year and look to review any changes for next year. Whilst working to reduce the costs this year.

19. CONSULTATIONS

One new consultations has been received this month.

- Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 16 Notification – this was noted.

20. CORRESPONDENCE

20.1. KENT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (KALC) AND NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCIL (NALC) CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND CIRCULATED

- NALC Chief Executive's bulletin – 4,11,18,25 June and 2 July 2026
- KALC Bulletin Week Ended 19 June 2026
- KALC News – June 2026

20.2. OTHER GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND CIRCULATED

- Campaign to Protect Rural England -Newsletter - June 2026
- Open Spaces Society eZine – June 2026
- MBC Parish Newsletter – June 2026
- Maidstone Borough Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Development Plan Document – notification of withdrawal

20.3. OTHER CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED BEFORE THE MEETING

- Play Place has asked if they can put a banner up at The Kintons to advertise the pre-school. This was agreed.
- Maidstone Ladies walking football team have asked to use The Kintons on a Friday evening, it was agreed this was not possible due to current usage.

21. OTHER PARISH MATTERS (Not for resolution)

There was none.

COMMENTS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

26/501938/FULL

Coach House, Kenward Road

Erection of a two storey side extension and single storey rear extension.

NO COMMENT

26/502138/FULL

22 Medway Avenue

Erection of a single storey wrap around extension along with changes to front elevation finish.

NO COMMENT

26/502277/TPOA

3 Oast Court, Yalding

TPO Application to reduce 1no. over mature Blue Atlas Cedar Tree, height 18-20m and 18-20m spread (asymmetric, least on E side, most on N side), by thinning selected branches: those overhanging the drive, south (by 3-4m x 7), to neighbouring houses; those overhanging the neighbour east (3-4m x 6); those impacting on a young Monkey puzzle tree, west (2-3m x 3 + 2).

NO COMMENT

26/502221/FULL

1 Fowle Hall Green Cottages, Pike Fish Lane

Demolition of existing single storey rear extension and front porch. Erection of a two-storey side extension above the existing ground floor side extension. Erection of a single-storey rear extension. Installation of two conservation rooflights and formation of a new open porch to the front elevation.

OBJECT

This site is in a Flood Zone 3. Although the development does not significantly increase the footprint, it is increasing the number of bedrooms from 3 to 5. It has not been demonstrated that the development has a safe access and escape route and the proposal would expose any additional occupants and members of the emergency services to serious risk in times of flood.

26/502036/FULL

Willow Farm, Lughorse Lane

Retrospective change of use of land for a mixed use as agricultural and an educational care farm enterprise, including the permanent retention of existing timber skidded classroom/rest and indoor activity building, skidded timber animal shelter and polytunnel, together with the erection of an additional classroom building, and installation sewage package treatment plant (permanent renewal of planning permission 22/505714/FULL).

NO COMMENT

Councillors have no comment on this planning application. However, the mobile home on site is separate from this application and is temporary. The application does not indicate a need for onsite residential accommodation.

The planning officer should formalised that the mobile home
remains temporary with a planning condition

MBC PLANNING DECISIONS SINCE LAST MEETING

There were none.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 22.14.

Signed.....

Date.....