

**MINUTES OF A YALDING PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 06 OCTOBER 2026 AT 7.00 PM IN YALDING VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT

Geraldine Brown (Chairman)
Ken Gough (KG)
Andy Sanders (AS)
Dee Ann Stead (DS)

Tim Chapman (TC)
Pip Jamieson (PJ)
Ian Simmons (IS)

DECLARATION OF INTENTION TO RECORD PROCEEDINGS

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

PUBLIC SESSION

There were four members of the public present. Two members had previously requested to address the meeting regarding land to the east of Darman Lane, south of the school, and regarding a Community Micro-Hydro Scheme.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Buckland sent his apologies due to holiday; Councillor Woods sent her apologies due to sickness; these were accepted.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST OF COUNCILLORS IN ANY ITEM

2.1.DECLARATION OF CHANGES TO THE REGISTER OF INTERESTS

There were none declared.

2.2.DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

KG declared an interest in agenda item 13.2 as he 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 MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 01 SEPTEMBER 2026

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

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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

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

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

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

5.3. PAT TESTING OF PARISH COUNCIL ASSETS

KG has started to prepare the list and the work should be completed this month.

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

The Clerk chased, August was an indicative completion date for The Land Registry and it is still in the queue, advised not to make further changes at this time.

5.5. SPEED INDICATOR DEVICE

The Clerks are pre-checking locations.

5.6. CCTV

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 action. The Chairman has suggested that the CCTV be switched off during the picnic area closed season and a professional company be employed to resolve all the technical issues.

5.7. HOUSEKEEPING LIST

The Chairman will circulate.

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

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 Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) dated 27 March 1991 with regard to the transfer of MBC assets to any new Unitary Authority. The Chairman has asked YPC solicitor to look at it. No longer an issue as the Local Government Reorganisation is paused however it would be good to have a legal opinion.

5.9. POLLING DISTRICT REVIEW

MBC Electoral Services are proposing to remove the Laddingford polling station and have issued a constitution. It was agreed that Yalding Parish Council (YPC) would write to object. The Chairman will send the consultation out on Parish News and it will be put on Facebook.

5.10. 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. Awaiting approval of the draft letter from The Chairman. The draft response was recirculated. Disappointingly, no comments were received from Councillors therefore, The Chairman authorised and The Clerk has sent the letter.

5.11. ANNUAL ROSPA PLAY AREA SAFETY INSPECTION REPORTS

The reports were circulated, there were no major risks. KG and The deputy Clerk are prioritising the actions.

The main issue is the Rota Bounce which is not dangerous but is not working properly. A quote has been received from Playdale for £1,395.83 plus VAT and from another contractor for around £900 plus VAT. KG feels that it was not fitted properly. The Deputy Clerk has spoken to Playdale who have said that they will charge £150 to come out and inspect the equipment, they are coming out to look at a potential new bit of equipment so she has challenged them then.

6. POLICE MATTERS

The Clerk has chased the police for a meeting after the Police Commissioner refused, no response has been received from Adam Duke, Steve Kent is insisting that this is done through the Ward Cluster meetings. Funding and strategic operating plans are not for a Ward Cluster Meeting attended by local officers.

It was suggested Adam Duke is chased to explain.

7. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

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

8. BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Councillor Couch sent her apologies due to a conflicting meeting, Councillor Summersgill attended and had previously sent a report which was circulated. Councillor Russell sent her apologies due to illness she could therefore not send a report.

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

The Clerks' received communication from residents with regard to 26/502730/FULL which was noted.

10.2. TO CONFIRM THE FOLLOWING PLANNING APPLICATION WAS RESPONDED TO IN LINE WITH A SCHEME OF DELEGATION AND THE RESPONSE IS INCLUDED AT THE END OF THE MINUTES OF THIS MEETING

- 26/502730/FULL - Orchard View Park, Shingle Barn Lane – Object

10.3. MOTION TO RESOLVE REPRESENTATION TO THE FOLLOWING PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- 26/503458/FULL - 1 Walnut Tree Cottages, High Street, Yalding – No comment
- 26/503459/LBC - 1 Walnut Tree Cottages, High Street, Yalding – No Comment
- 26/503430/LAWPRO - Little Venice Country Park And Marina – Object
- 26/503434/FULL - Congelow Farm, Benover Road – 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)

No further update from YEP.

10.4.2. FERNHAM HOMES – LAND NORTH OF KENWARD ROAD

The construction traffic route application to discharge the condition has been approved. The planning officer has not progressed YPC request for smaller lorries, and KCC are insisting the route is Yalding Hill. There is some tightening of delivery times but these are not compulsory.

The road closure was extended to 23rd of September. More road closures in September and October.

10.4.3. FERNHAM HOMES – LAND SOUTH OF KENWARD ROAD

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 of 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. This condition is still pending consideration; The Clerk has written to the planning officer for an update; he has agreed to chase; however, it is still pending.

10.5. ANY OTHER PLANNING MATTERS

10.5.1. TO DISCUSS ILLEGAL DEVELOPMENT AT DARMAN LANE

A Stop Notice was served to include the northern field and plots sold/for sale on the southern field. Letters have been sent to 63 of the current registered landowners. The Stop Notice expires on 10 November and the Clerk will ascertain the next steps.

The dumping of waste material on the northern field to be reported to Waste Crime at MBC again.

11. PARISH BUSINESS (NOT OTHERWISE ON THE AGENDA)

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

There were three 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. MBC has responded with several amendments required, DH is working through them. DH believes it will be extremely tight for it to be ready by May 2027.

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. CLAIM FOR ALLEGED DAMAGE TO A VEHICLE AT LEES PICNIC AREA

A claim for alleged damage to a vehicle sustained on 31 May 2026 whilst exiting The Lees Picnic Area, in the sum of £169.16, was received. The Council's insurers have confirmed that the amount claimed falls below the Council's policy excess and therefore they are unable to process the matter or advise on liability.

The Clerk had circulated the claimant's letter and supporting documents and briefed members on the correspondence exchanged with both the claimant and the Council's insurers.

Councillors noted that the speedbumps had been in place for many years, that no material change had been made to their relationship with the exit teeth, that thousands of vehicles have exited the site without incident, and that "park at your own risk" signage is displayed at the entrance.

Given these circumstances, Councillors agreed that they did not accept liability for the alleged damage.

It was proposed by AS, seconded by TC and unanimously agreed that the Clerk write to the claimant to confirm the Council's position.

11.4. TO REVIEW THE MONITOR LIST

The Monitor list was reviewed and updated.

11.5. TO CONFIRM THE MISSPELLING OF COUNCILLORS' NAMES IN PREVIOUS MINUTES

It was confirmed that from May 2025 Councillor Jamieson's name and from April 2026 Councillor Sanders' name has been spelt incorrectly in the "Present" part of the minutes.

12. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

There were none.

13. FINANCE

13.1. SCHEME OF DELEGATION

To confirm it was agreed to pay £247.50 to The Franconian Sausage Co Ltd for the sausages for the Parish Picnic, in line with the Scheme of Delegation it is included in the bills list attached to the minutes of the meeting

13.2. MOTION TO PAY BILLS

It was proposed IS seconded PJ and resolved by all to make payment of bills totalling £13,498.56 exclusive of VAT as per attached list.

KG did not vote as he had declared an interest.

DS and TC will authorise them electronically.

13.3. CONFIRM RECEIPTS

A list of receipts, as attached, totalling £3171.28 was circulated.

13.4. MONTHLY SPEND AGAINST BUDGET REVIEW

There was no unbudgeted or previously unauthorised spend.

13.5. BANK BALANCES AS AT THE END OF AUGUST 2026

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

- NatWest £22,314.83
- Unity Trust £96,866.63

13.6. BANK RECONCILIATIONS FOR AUGUST 2026

It was confirmed that these have been signed as correct

13.7. MOTION TO ACCEPT THE ANNUAL AUDIT RETURN EXTERNAL AUDITOR REPORT FOR 2025/2026

The external audit has been completed and published.

There were no issues reported and no 'except for matters'.

Under "Minor scope for improvement in 2026/27" it was noted that the accounting statement at Section 2 contains the following error, which was not corrected because the value was immaterial: Box 8 for the year 2025 states £45,495 but should be £45,459 to agree to the prior year Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

Councillors agreed that this was a human transposition error and that all should be alert to this to ensure that the AGAR is accurate and complete.

It was proposed PJ, seconded IS and resolved by all that the report be accepted.

13.8. MOTION TO REPLACE THE REMAINING TWO HID STREETLAMPS WITH WINDSOR HERITAGE LED LANTERNS AT A COST OF £2,790.

The motion was proposed AS, seconded PJ and resolved unanimously.

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

14.1.3. YALDING VILLAGE GREEN AND VERGES

Inspection complete, no new issues

14.1.4. JUBILEE FIELD

Inspection complete, no new issues

14.1.5. LADDINGFORD VERGES

Not reported but not aware of any new issues

14.1.6. THE KINTONS

Inspection complete, no new issues

14.1.7. FOWLE HALL GREEN

Inspection complete, no new issues

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. THE LEES PICNIC AREA – TO CONFIRM THE CLOSURE AND THE REMOVAL OF THE BARRIERS AND SWITCHING OFF THE CCTV.

The picnic area closed on 4 October for the winter, The manager will remove the equipment this week and put into store and the CCTV will be switched off pending reorganisation for the new season.

14.3.2. TREES ON YALDING VILLAGE GREEN

The work has been completed.

14.4. REQUEST TO USE PARISH LAND

There have been no requests.

15. HIGHWAYS

15.1. KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (KCC)

REVIEW THE HIGHWAYS LIST - The list has been updated and circulated. Councillors to advise any additions. It was agreed to ask for the white lines to be repainted at the Junction of Lees Road and Hampstead Lane.

• HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT PLAN (HIP) PROGRESS

- **Path to Laddingford bus stop will now be funded by KCC.** – Awaiting start date.

- **Double yellow lines outside Lyngs Farmhouse** – has been given the go ahead, the TRO has been completed and the works will be ordered.

The HIP has been updated; the items from the reserve list and the Whetsted Road signage have been added along with the chicane on Yalding Hill and the stop line at the Post Office. It will be updated with any additions after the meeting and circulated.

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

- YPC was copied into an email sent by a member of the public Mr Anderson to the KCC Ward Member regarding Twyford Bridge. The bridge was reinforced many years ago and is inspected regularly. It was widened a few years ago to allow HGVs to cross without damaging the walls. Several businesses in the parish would be unable to access their properties if a 7.5 ton weight limit were placed on the bridge as this would then become a pinch point with no access. This was accessed when the 7.5 ton limit through the area was implemented. With regard to the surface of the bridge, the depth is too shallow and the services cannot be installed any deeper. The only solution is to monitor the surface and infill as and when necessary.

15.2. TOWN BRIDGE

15.2.1. TOLL BRIDGE INITIATIVE

The presentation is ready for submission to the minister.

15.3. OTHER HIGHWAY ISSUES

15.3.1. BOLLARDS OUTSIDE THE LIBRARY – CONCERNS WITH REPOSITIONING

The Bollards at the library are there to protect pedestrians from vehicles mounting the pavement. The bell bollard did its job for many years. It kept getting hit so it was taken away and replaced by two normal bollards. Both of these have been knocked out. KCC highways marked the pavement moving them back a long way. The Highway steward has taken on board both our and the library's comments regarding the disabled ramp access and seems to have moved them much closer to where they were. The Clerk has asked why the KCC internal specification of 500mm from the highway applies to safety equipment, no reply received.

The Highways steward has asked that YPC speak to the Highway Improvement (HIP) Team directly, although it is understood they have no further solution to offer.

The Chairman felt YPC should request that the bell bollard be put back in to a better standard and the kerb be raised before someone is seriously injured. The Clerk will add it to the HIP and ask the KCC road safety team to look at it.

16. COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

16.1. UPDATE ON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PLAN

The Chairman has shown it to MBC and will make the final adjustments.

Storage of items at The Chequers: The new landlords have agreed to continue storing YPC items, The Clerk will write to confirm. Therefore KG is no longer arranging to have a small shed at Jubilee Field for Road Closure signs.

16.2. FLOODING ISSUES

16.2.1. COMPLETION OF THE ENLARGED LEIGH FLOOD STORAGE AREA

The storage area is now fully operational. The wording of its use was circulated.

16.2.2. MEDWAY CONFLUENCE ANNUAL MEETING

The meeting has been arranged for 15 October 2026.

16.2.3. SANDBAGS

A storage box has been purchased for Tatt sandbags; chain & padlock are required. KG will arrange to install it.

Details will be discussed at the Medway Confluence annual meeting.

16.2.4. EL NIÑO WINTER WEATHER PROJECTIONS

The El Niño winter weather projections for 2026-2027 indicate an impact on UK weather patterns, the level of the impact is unknown.

16.2.5. ROAD CLOSURE DEVOLVED POWERS

The Chairman has chased KCC but received no reply.

Christopher Stern holds the “ticket” as required by KCC and has agreed to be involved. The Chairman will report this to KCC.

- The new pole mounted transformer is currently being installed.
- The flood warden list is almost complete with only a few gaps. The Chairman will send a Parish News asking for more volunteers.
- The Chairman will review the of Property Flood Resilience measures report, she has written to Peter Waring to find out where the maintenance by a third party has got to.
- £10,000 flood prize still needs to be spent now that flood gates have been dismissed by KCC.

17. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION (LGR)

17.1. MBC COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW UPDATE

The new town council elections will take place next year.

17.2. PUBLIC ASSESTS TRANSFER AND MANAGEMENT MBC

These are still available. YPC awaiting confirmation from solicitor with regard to the toilet covenant.

17.3. LGR CREATION OF UNITARY AUTHORITIES UPDATE

Central Government has paused this indefinitely, it is understood that an announcement will be made on 15 October with more detail by the end of the year.

Parish elections revert back to 2028.

17.4. PUBLIC ASSETS TRANSFER AND MANAGEMENT KCC

Nothing to report.

18. EVENTS

18.1. PARISH PICNIC – DEBRIEF

All went to plan with a very good attendance.

KG will look at locking the apple press after use.

18.2. REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY PARADE – 8 NOVEMBER 2026

The Road Closure has been approved.

The plans are progressing.

18.3. YULETIDE MARKET

12.1.1. ROAD CLOSURES

The permit has been approved at the reduced cost; yet to receive the actual road closure authorisation, however this normally does not come until November.

We are working with the ticketed volunteer to purchase all relevant signage.

KG will clean out the Kintons container and scrap any frames and signs not needed. Yuletide will then be given an area to store their signs.

12.1.2. GAZEBO

The YPC large gazebo purchased last year was sold to the Yuletide Committee but the wrong one was taken and needs to be swapped. Both small gazebos were found to be broken but have been repaired. However, both tops are missing.

DS will see what she can find.

19. CONSULTATIONS

No new consultation has been received this month.

Last month

- National Highways & Transport Network - Public Satisfaction Survey – The Chairman will sent out on Parish News.

20. CORRESPONDENCE

20.1. KALC AND OTHER AUTHORITY CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND CIRCULATED AS NOTED IN MINUTES

- NALC Chief Executive's bulletin – 3, 10, 17, 24 September and 1 October 2026

- KALC Bulletin Week Ended 18 September 2026
- KALC News - September 2026
- MBC Parish Newsletter - September 2026
- MBC Parish Conference slides

20.2. OTHER GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND CIRCULATED AS NOTED IN MINUTE

- Open Spaces Society eZine – September 2026
- CPRE Kent – September 2026 Newsletter

20.3. ANY OTHER CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED BEFORE THE MEETING

None received.

21. OTHER PARISH MATTERS (Not for resolution)

There was no Parish Matters.

COMMENTS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

26/502730/FULL

Orchard View Park, Shingle Barn Lane

Replacement of existing caravan and tent pitches with 5 lodges (static caravans) comprising 4 x holiday lodges and 1 reception lodge with the provision of 5no parking spaces

OBJECT

The applicant's Planning Statement confirms that the lodges are static structures meeting the statutory definition of a caravan and are intended for 12 month occupation. Their permanent presence would erode the intrinsic character, openness and landscape qualities of this rural location.

The reception building has been refused on three previous occasions (23/501866/FULL, 23/505083/FULL, 24/501378/FULL). The current proposal does not overcome the reasons for refusal, namely that it represents additional unjustified built development in the countryside.

This Council considers that the site is small and, if this proposal is approved, would accommodate only four holiday lodges. The existing business with more plots would generate more visitor movements and has operated without a reception building and significantly larger holiday parks operate successfully without such facilities, using online booking, payment and arrival systems. No evidence has been provided to demonstrate a functional need for a permanent reception building that would outweigh the landscape harm caused.

If the planning officer is minded to approve the application, Yalding Parish Council formally requests that the application be referred to MBC Planning Committee.

26/503458/FULL

1 Walnut Tree Cottages, High Street ,Yalding

Erection of replacement rear conservatory, reinforce/repair existing north boundary wall.

NO COMMENT

26/503459/LBC

1 Walnut Tree Cottages, High Street ,Yalding

Listed building consent for erection of replacement rear conservatory, reinforce/repair existing north boundary wall.

NO COMMENT

26/503430/LAWPRO

Little Venice Country Park And Marina

Lawful Development Certificate (Proposed) for the stationing of 15(no) caravans for holiday use.

The site is within Flood Zone 3B (functional floodplain) and introducing this constant increase in caravans is unacceptable in respect of the safety of future occupants and emergency service personnel at times of severe flooding. If this development is approved it will make an addition 48 approved.

This also represents and unacceptable encroachment into the open countryside.

It should be noted the seasonal campsite next door was refused on the grounds of flooding; the application site is permanent and, whilst it is a holiday park, there are no specified times when the site should be unoccupied meaning there are people on site all year round.

A full planning application should be submitted to include a flood risk assessment.

26/503434/FULL

Congelow Farm, Benover Road

Change of use of existing buildings and land at Congelow Farm from a hop pelletising plant with ancillary office, laboratory, workshops and storage to a flexible commercial employment use comprising offices (Use Class E(g)(i)), research and development (Use Class E(g)(ii)), light industrial processes (Use Class E(g)(iii)) and storage and distribution (Use Class B8), including the continued use of existing buildings, hardstanding and associated infrastructure; Demolition of existing storage building and cabin and erection of a replacement building in line with current approval 23/503683.

NO COMMENT

MBC PLANNING DECISIONS SINCE LAST MEETING

26/502363/ADV

The George, Benover Road

Advertisement Consent for Installation of 2x externally illuminated fascia signs, 1x non illuminated projecting hanging sign, and 1x non illuminated window graphic. One painted sign on the side elevation.

REFUSED

26/502674/LBC

1 Walnut Tree Cottages, High Street, Yalding

Listed Building Consent for emergency structural stabilisation including construction of 4no. new brick piers, partial reconstruction, and replacement of gate to the curtilage listed boundary wall (works started.)

GRANTED

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).

GRANTED

There being no further business the meeting closed at 22.05.

Signed.....

Date.....