



DRAFT MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 14TH OCTOBER 2025 AT THE ALLENS, ALBION ROAD, MARDEN COMMENCING AT 7.30PM

063/25 PRESENT

Cllrs Boswell, Gibson, Griffiths, Newton, Rabot and Summersgill were present. The Clerk, Borough Cllr Couch, one member of the public and two representatives from Redloft were also in attendance.

064/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Adam, Dobinson, Goda, Tippen and Turner.
County Cllr Black had also given his apologies.

065/25 COUNCILLOR INFORMATION

Declaration of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Cllr Gibson declared an interest in allotments at item 069/25 and would leave the meeting if item was discussed.

Changes to Register of Interest

There were no changes to registers of interest

Granting of Dispensation

There were no requests for dispensation.

066/25 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Cllrs received and accepted as a true record the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9th September 2025. These were duly signed by the Chairman.

067/25 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

Member of the public wished to speak on item 073/25 (Highways: Correspondence). The Chairman proposed, and Cllrs agreed, to move this item to be heard prior to Clerk's report.

Two representatives of Redloft would give a talk to Cllrs on rural exception sites/affordable housing when the meeting was adjourned.

The meeting was adjourned for the following:

Redloft:

Redloft is a consultancy firm working in delivering affordable housing and local exception sites and has been appointed by MBC to deliver a local needs housing programme in parishes in the borough.

The project is to find appropriate sites for rural exceptions sites/local needs housing for local people who meet the relevant criteria including having a

local connection, have a housing need or those who have had to move away due to unable to afford normal housing market in the parish.

It was noted that housing surveys had been undertaken in 2005 and 2022 and Marden had received a visit from an MBC officer in 2023 which led to the Howland Road application which has subsequently been refused at appeal.

MPC was asked to consider if there were any other sites in the parish which could be considered and it was raised that the site in Copper Lane would have affordable housing and queried whether this could be local needs housing instead. Redloft would look into this.

It was proposed that the question of sites would be taken to the Planning Committee to ascertain what, if any, land could be considered for this.

Thanks were given to the two representatives and the Clerk would be in contact again once this subject had been discussed further.

7:55pm – Redloft representatives left the meeting.

PUBLIC FORUM

No issues were raised.

EXTERNAL VERBAL REPORTS (if in attendance)

County Councillor Report – not in attendance.

Borough Councillors Report: Borough Cllrs Couch and Summersgill reported on the Council meeting which had been held last night. Cllr Summersgill was no longer Cabinet lead for Climate Transition and Nature Recovery but had been appointed Cabinet lead for Corporate Services.

Cabinet meeting tonight to discuss the Supplementary Planning Documents on on Heathlands and Lidsing Garden Settlements.

Police – not in attendance.

The meeting was reconvened for the remainder of the meeting.

073/25 HIGHWAYS

Correspondence

Brought forward as member of the public in attendance.

The resident was invited to speak to the meeting on the subject of the A262 Action Group.

Cllrs were aware of the A262 from Sissinghurst through Goudhurst towards the A21 especially the corner at St Mary's Church, Goudhurst with the increase in lorry movements in the area.

A number of residents of Goudhurst, Biddenden and Sissinghurst have formed an A262 Action Group and MPC was asked to consider joining this.

The resident pointed out the two main pinch points on B2079 through Marden being Maidstone Road junction with High Street and the Primary Academy.

He was also concerned that lorries were using Plain Road and Thorn Road to get from the A229 at Staplehurst to the A21 via Marden/Goudhurst.

The Chairman proposed, and Cllrs were in agreement, that this be taken to the next meeting of the Highways Working Group and the resident be invited to attend.

Cllr Summersgill sits on the Hunton PC traffic sub-group and would filter some information to MPC's Highways Working Group which may be of some assistance.

The resident was thanked for attending and the Clerk would be in contact when a date had been arranged for the next meeting of the Working Group.

8.10pm Resident left the meeting

068/25 CLERK'S REPORT

Cllrs noted the Clerk's report which highlighted projects/issues being dealt with over the past month. Several of these were already on the agenda for tonight's meeting including allotments, public conveniences solar panels and meetings/training attended.

069/25 PARISH MATTERS

Reports from MBC and KCC

Cllrs received and noted the written report from Borough Councillors. County Cllr Black had sent the latest highways newsletters for Cllrs information.

Police Update/Report from Police Forum

Crime Figures

Cllr Rabot reported that 21 crimes had been committed in August.

Other Police Matters

The Community Police and PCSO would be at the Village Café (Vestry Hall) on 24th October along with Golding Homes and several Cllrs. The Clerk would advise on social media and notice boards.

The Chairman was hoping to arrange a further police surgery at the Village Club next month.

Communication

Newsletter

This had been drafted ready for printing on 24th October.

Marden Flooding

No updates had been received from Southern Water.

Cllr Rabot had attended a meeting with Hunton, Yalding and Collier Street parishes earlier today and would provide a report to Cllrs in the next week.

Infrastructure Spend Plan (ISP)

No additions/amendments had been made.

Changing Rooms Refurbishment

Cllr Turner was due to speak with the architect but unfortunately no report had been received at time of the meeting. Cllr Griffiths offered to project manage and the Clerk would provide all the relevant paperwork for him and arrange a meeting with Cllr Turner.

Public Conveniences – Solar Panels

Cllrs reviewed the draft licence from MBC and agreed to continue with the project.

The Clerk was asked to contact the grant providers to ensure that the funding was still available.

Costings had been obtained for the structural work and agreed, in principle, to accept the lower quote. The contractor would be informed once confirmation had been received regarding the funding.

Marden Parish Council Policies

IT & Communications Policy and Accessibility Statement for Website

In line with the new Assertion 10 of the Audit Regulations the Clerk had drafted a new Accessibility Statement and incorporated the IT Policy into the existing policy for Communications. These had been circulated prior to the meeting and Cllrs agreed to adopt both. These would now be uploaded to the website.

The Clerk informed Cllrs that on agreeing the IT policy meant that they are aware of the content and how it affects emails, social media and use of MPC owned IT equipment. The office staff would be provided with a copy and to sign the original.

Allotments

Cllrs received notification of the modification to the S106 for the allotment site at Highwood Green.

The Allotments Sub-Group had met to discuss the next steps and the Clerk reported that contact had been made with Redrow outlining the work that was required on the allotments prior to transfer but no response had been received. The Clerk was also arranging a meeting with the previous members of the Allotment Society to view the current situation.

Cllrs to receive update from Redrow solicitors.

Cllrs noted but awaited information from Redrow before further discussions could take place.

Marden Cemetery

Cllrs had been circulated the Maidstone Borough Council's draft Hedgerow / Tree Planting Agreement for Marden Cemetery.

Cllrs agreed and this would be signed and returned to MBC. Delivery of plants was due later in the year with planting in January 2026.

Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) Award Scheme

Cllrs noted the closing date for the nominations of the KALC Award Scheme for 2026 and was asked to provide any nominations to the Clerk by 31st December 2025. An item had been placed in the newsletter and any nominations received would be discussed at January's Full Council meeting.

070/25 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Amenities Committee

Cllrs noted the Minutes of the Amenities Committee meeting held on 23rd September which had previously been circulated and available on the Parish Council website.

Planning Committee

Cllrs noted the Minutes of Planning Committee meetings held on 30th September and 7th October which had been previously circulated and available on the Parish Council website.

Finance Committee

There was no Finance Committee meeting held in September.

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars/Other attended

Those in attendance updated the meeting, where relevant, on the following:
KALC Finance Conference – 12th September: Clerk attended

SLCC Excel course – Module 1 webinar – 16th September: Admin. Asst attended.

KALC Area Committee Meeting – 29th September: Cllr Summersgill attended and minutes had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting.

Meeting with Primary Academy Principal – 22nd September: Clerk and Cllr Rabot attended and a verbal report given to the meeting.

Mulberry: Council Finance Essentials – 23rd September: Deputy Clerk attended

SLCC Excel course – Module 2 webinar – 25th September: Admin Asst attended.

Christmas meeting – 30th September: Notes had been circulated and Cllrs were asked of their availability on 6th December for Marden at Christmas.

Marden Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – 30th September – reported to Planning Committee.

MBC CIL/S106 training – 30th September: Cllr Rabot attended and notes had been circulated to Planning Committee.

PPG – 1st October: Cllr Tippen circulated notes to Cllrs.

Mulberry Audit and Transparency Webinar – 2nd October. Cllrs had been provided with the powerpoint presentation regarding Assertion 10.

Site meetings – 2nd and 3rd October: Notes had been circulated.

Allotments Sub-Group meeting – 3rd October: discussed above.

Communications Sub-Group meeting – 6th October: Notes had been circulated.

Resilience Planning Sub-Group meeting – 6th October: Following agreement by Full Council at the September meeting the Chairman and Clerk were working through the items and it was hoped that a desk top exercise be held in February.

Play Scheme Sub-Group meeting – 6th October: Cllrs met to discuss fees for 2026 and possible locations.

Highways Working Group meeting – 7th October: Cllrs went through the information received from KCC in regard to the Highways Improvement Plan which would be discussed further in the meeting.

Scribe Finance Conference (virtual) – 9th October: Clerk attending. Talks on Assertion 10 and Procurement.

Cemetery Sub-Committee meeting – 9th October: Notes previously circulated to Cllrs.

Kent Highways/EA meeting – 14th October: Cllr Rabot attended. Notes will be circulated.

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars/Events forthcoming

KALC Planning Training – 15th October 2025

Highways Seminar – 22nd October 2025

Environmental Sub-Group meeting – 4th November

MBC Parish Conference – 10th November

071/25 CORRESPONDENCE

The following items were made available for noting:

Marden Parish Council Office Correspondence Log – September

Marden Parish Church Magazine

KALC Newsletter

Clerk/Council publications

072/25 FINANCE

Bank Statements:

Revenue Accounts:

Nat West: £40,148.73

Unity Trust: £146,108.55 (this included £73,577.31 which had been transferred from Santander).

Capital:

Santander: Account closed as at 30th September 2025.

Cllrs noted that the Santander account (Capital) had now been closed with money currently transferred to MPC's account with Unity. The Clerk would provide a report to take to Finance Committee meeting to propose capital monies to be transferred to the new CCLA account.

Payments for Approval

Invoices for Payment

The following invoices were submitted to the meeting:

October salaries/HMRC payment (Budget codes 4000/4002) - £10,361.85

The Clerk's salary was authorised by Cllrs Rabot and Tippen on 8/10/25

Castle Water – Changing Rooms water (Budget Code 4225) - £7.64

Castle Water – Cemetery water (Budget Code 4302) - £11.11

Business Steam – Public Conv. Waste water (Budget Code 4327) - £984.95

KCC – Photocopier charges (Budget Code 4065) - £350.22

Signature Plants – plants for trough (Budget Code 4310) - £92.00

Total: £11,730.95

Cllrs agreed payments and Cllrs Gibson and Newton would authorise on Unity.

Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024/25

Cllrs received and minuted receipt of the AGAR for 2024/25. This had been placed on the website and notice boards.

Cllrs noted the comment raised in Mazars letter for “Minor Scope for Improvement in 2025/26”. This entailed using Mazars template for bank reconciliations rather than the one produced by the software package used for MPC accounts. The Clerk reported that this would be noted and undertaken in the 2025/26 Audit.

073/25 HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Highways

Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)

New priority list had been submitted to Kent Highways following which a site meeting was held on 8th September with Kent Highways representative. A response on Marden's HIP was received and discussed at the Highways Working Group meeting on 7th October.

Cllrs had been provided an update on this which was reported to Cllrs and the Clerk would response to Kent Highways accordingly.

Fingerposts

Cllrs agreed for the Clerk to obtain quotes for a wooden sign. Once received contact would be made again with Kent Highways regarding removal of existing broken cast iron sign and installation of new one.

Speedwatch

Cllrs noted the next session would be held on Friday 17th October.

Correspondence

Moved to start of meeting.

Public Transport

No public transport information to report.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.01pm

Cllr Adrian Rabot

Chairman

Date: 11th November 2025

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