

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting of Kings Hill Parish Council held on Thursday 19 June 2025 at 7.00 p.m. at the Kings Hill Community Centre.

Present: Cllrs. Colman, McIymont, MacKay, Petty, Rush, Sherlaw & Vincent

Also Present: K. Bell (Parish Clerk)

Apologies: Cllrs. Barker & Hartman

Absentee: Cllr. Kirk

Cllr. Petty opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

FC 021 Apologies for Absence: Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs. Barker (Prior Commitment) & Hartman (Prior commitment).

Unanimous

FC 022 Declarations of Interest, Lobbying and Recording: Members were reminded of their responsibility to declare any pecuniary or other interests.

- Cllr Rush declared an interest in item FC 028.7 **Noted**
- Cllr. Rush stated his intention to record. **Noted**

FC 023 Public Forum: No members of the public present. **Noted**

FC 024 Chairman & Deputy Chairman's Announcements **Noted**

- **NALC Star Councils:** Application submitted for Council of the Year 2025.
- **LCAS Gold:** Application nearing completion.
- **Solar Panels:** Snagging issues noted. Negotiations were continuing with the contractor.
- **Air Conditioning:** Update provided.
- **TMBC ASB Unit:** SLA signed; ASB team to regularly patrol Kings Hill and to report frequently to council.

FC 025 Reports from County, Borough Councillors and Police

County Councillor: The Council welcomed the attendance of C. Cllr Hudson. She an overview of the current situation facing KCC following the recent election, which resulted in a majority Reform council. She outlined the various challenges now being encountered, including those arising from changes in political direction, adjustments to existing policies and priorities, and the impact on service delivery during this transitional period. Members noted the update with interest and expressed their appreciation to the County Councillor for taking the time to attend and share this valuable insight. **Noted**

Borough Councillors: The Council expressed its disappointment that none of its three B. Cllrs were in attendance at the meeting and that no apologies for absence had been received. Members agreed that this lack of engagement was unacceptable, particularly given the importance of maintaining effective communication and representation between the Borough and Parish levels of local government. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to TMBC to formally

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express KHPC's dissatisfaction and request an explanation for the continued absence of B. Cllrs from recent meetings. **Noted**

Police (Neighbourhood Watch): A message of thanks received from Kent Police Volunteer Watch Officer for KHPC's role in supporting community safety.

Noted

FC 026

Minutes

FC 026.1

Minutes: Cllr Rush raised a concern regarding a minute recorded at the previous meeting, which he felt portrayed him in an unfavourable manner. He requested the minute in question be deleted. A robust and frank discussion followed. Members strongly reaffirmed the importance of maintaining the integrity and transparency of the Council's official records. It was agreed that the minutes must remain an accurate reflection of proceedings and should not be subject to alteration based on personal dissatisfaction with their content. It was proposed by Cllr. Petty, seconded by Cllr. Mclymont and:

RESOLVED: That the minute referred to was a fair and accurate account of what had been said, that it would not be amended or removed and that the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 15 May 2025 were to be approved as a true and accurate record.

By Majority

Cllr Rush voted against and requested his vote be recorded

FC 026.2

Matters arising

FC 015.1

2024-2025 AGAR: AGAR and supporting documents submitted to the external auditor. To comply with legislation the Exercise of Public Rights was ongoing. Preparatory steps for the AGAR 2025/26 which would include data protection compliance was underway.

Noted

FC 027

Matters Requiring Decisions

FC 027.1

Sports Park

- **Irrigation:** Quotation accepted for new mains water connection. This was in progress. **Noted**
- **S106:** TMBC asked to clarify funding. **Noted**
- **Planning & Licence to Alter Fees:** It was proposed by Cllr. Petty, seconded by Cllr. Sherlaw and:

RESOLVED: That up to £10k be available to support the progression of the planning and licence to alter applications subject to cost scrutiny with regular reporting to Council.

By Majority

Cllr Rush voted against and requested his vote be recorded

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New Bar: The Council held a detailed discussion regarding the proposed new bar at the Mary Ellis Hall. Cllr Petty was thanked for presenting the updated technical drawings to members.

Cllr Rush expressed concern that certain supporting drawings had only become available shortly before the meeting. Members acknowledged his remarks but noted that the item was clearly listed on the agenda as one for decision and confirmed that they had been notified of the meeting and its contents in line with statutory requirements.

In accordance with Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972, local authorities are required to provide at least three clear days' notice for meetings, along with access to agenda materials necessary for decision-making. Members were satisfied that the agenda and accompanying documentation available ahead of the meeting met this requirement.

While it was recognised that some supporting materials were finalised and circulated closer to the meeting date, the Council was satisfied that proper procedure had been followed and that members had sufficient opportunity to review the item in context and make an informed decision.

Cllr MacKay proposed that a public meeting be held to share the bar project proposals with residents and to seek wider community input. The motion was seconded by Cllr Rush. Following discussion, the motion was put to a vote and was **defeated**, with **2 votes in favour and 5 against**.

Members noted that external input had shaped the proposal, with encouraging feedback from prospective users. The design was considered broadly suitable, and the project seen as offering potential benefits to the community. Members agreed to seek ways of minimising impact on current users.

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Cllr Petty then proposed that, given the updated plans and the previous engagement through *The Hill* newsletter and direct communication with regular Community Centre users, the Council proceed with the bar project as presented. The motion was seconded by Cllr Vincent and put to a vote.

RESOLVED: That the Council approve the proposed bar project. By Majority

Outcome: *Carried 5 votes in favour, 2 against.*

Cllrs MacKay and Rush voted against the proposal. Cllr Rush requested a recorded vote.

Cllr Petty thanked members for their support in progressing the project.

FC 027.2.2

POS System: The Council considered a proposal to implement a new Point of Sale (POS) system to support operations at the Community Centre. Members were advised that the system would streamline payment processing and enhance inclusivity, resilience, and convenience for users. Cllr Rush queried the transaction costs associated with the system and, while supportive of the principle, felt unable to support the proposal without further clarity on this point. It was noted that the costings had been included with the agenda pack. It was proposed by Cllr Petty, seconded by Cllr. Sherlaw and:

RESOLVED: To approve the introduction of the new POS system as proposed.
By Majority

One abstention (Cllr Rush).

FC 027.3

Bus Service (Kings Hill – West Malling): It was proposed, seconded and:

RESOLVED: To delegate this item to the Planning & Transport Committee to explore options to improve peak-time connectivity. **Unanimous**

FC 027.4

Access Hub: *The Council noted the information received from the Malling Primary Care Group regarding the proposed Access Hub. Following a discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Petty, seconded by Cllr McLymont, and:*

RESOLVED: That the paper be shared with neighbouring parish councils. **Unanimous**

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It was further:

RESOLVED: That Officers would arrange and facilitate a collaborative networking meeting, inviting neighbouring parishes to discuss the proposals collectively. **Unanimous**

FC 027.5 Judicial Review Budget: Following a discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Petty, seconded by Cllr Vincent, and:

RESOLVED: To approve the recommendation from the Planning & Transport Committee for an additional budget provision of £5,000 towards Judicial Review proceedings, bringing the total allocation to £10,000, with members noting the potential overall cost cap of £30,000.

Unanimous

FC 028

Financial Matters

FC 028.1

Reserves: Members considered the reserves and confirmed that all earmarked reserves remained allocated for their specific intended purposes and continued to reflect KHPC's financial priorities. General Reserves were also reviewed and confirmed to be within the recommended levels. Following a discussion it was proposed by Cllr Petty, seconded by Cllr. Vincent and:

RESOLVED: To approve the earmarked reserves to be carried forward from 2024/25. **By Majority**
One abstention (Cllr Rush).

FC 028.2

Financial Policies: The Council considered the recommendations of the Finance Committee. It was proposed by Cllr Petty, seconded by Cllr McLymont and:

RESOLVED: To note and/or reapprove the policies as follows: **Unanimous**

FC 028.2.1

Review of Regular Payments and Direct Debits: The information regarding regular payments and direct debits was noted. It was further noted that regular payments were reviewed routinely, and any no longer required were removed accordingly. **Noted**

FC 028.2.2

Risk Assessment & Risk Management
RESOLVED: To reapprove and readopt **Unanimous**

FC 028.2.3

Internal Controls
RESOLVED: To reapprove and readopt **Unanimous**

FC 028.2.4

Investment Policy
RESOLVED: To reapprove and readopt **Unanimous**

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FC 028.2.5 **Review of Insurance Arrangements:** It was noted that the Insurance Schedule was available to view. The following key points were highlighted:

Sums Insured, Fidelity Guarantee, Business Interruption & Loss of Earnings, Employers' Liability, Public Liability, Personal Accident, Claims, Additions and Insurance Premium

Noted

FC 028.2.6 **Procurement Policy**

RESOLVED: To reapprove and readopt

Unanimous

FC 028.2.7 **Payments and Receipts Policy**

RESOLVED: To reapprove and readopt

Unanimous

FC 028.2.8 **General & Earmarked Reserves Policy**

RESOLVED: To reapprove and readopt

Unanimous

FC 028.2.9 **Financial Regulations:** It was proposed by Cllr Petty, seconded by Cllr. McIymont and:

RESOLVED: To re-adopt the 2024 Financial Regulations and that the Finance Committee would undertake a full review incorporating the 2025 NALC Model Financial Regulations, prior to considering any future amendments or formal adoption.

Unanimous

FC 028.3 **Bank Reconciliation:** Total balance of £891,581.13 as of 31 May 2025.

Noted

Cllr Rush expressed surprise that only a summary reconciliation had been circulated and further noted that the credit card transactions were not included in the documentation provided. The Clerk explained that it was important to ensure councillors received the reconciliation in good time and that, although the credit card statement had been reconciled earlier in the week, the relevant transactions had not yet been input into the Xero accounting system at the time of reporting and both current and historical information was available.

Noted

FC 028.4 **Payments:** It was proposed by Cllr. Vincent, seconded by Cllr Petty and:

RESOLVED: To approve payments up to 10 June 2025. The payment listings were to be appended to the final minutes and website.

Unanimous

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FC 028.5 **Receipts:** The receipts up to 10 June 2025 were noted. The listings were to be appended to the final minutes and website.

Noted

FC 028.6 **Budgetary Control at 31.05.2025.**

Noted

FC 028.7 **Allotment Rents:** The Council considered a recommendation arising from the Climate Change & Environment Committee regarding allotment rents for the 2026/27 season. Cllr Rush declared a personal interest as an allotment holder and did not participate in the discussion or vote on this item. It was proposed by Cllr. Vincent, seconded by Cllr. Petty and:

RESOLVED: That allotment rents would remain at **£39.95 for the 2026/27 season.**

Unanimous (By those eligible to vote)

It was noted that allotment holders would be informed of this decision with the 2025/26 renewal notices, which were scheduled to be issued in **July 2025.**

FC 028.8 **Funding Requests:** Following a discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Petty, seconded by Cllr. Vincent and:

RESOLVED: To approve the following grants:

- Kinara: £750
- Malling Sea Cadets: £750
- Valley Invicta Primary School: £350
- Kings Hill WI: £900
- Homestart: £500

Unanimous

FC 029

Reports

FC 029.1 **Sports Park Committee:** Draft minutes of 20 May 2025
Noted.

FC 029.2 **Planning & Transport Committee:** Draft minutes of 5 June 2025
Noted

FC 029.3 **Finance Committee:** Draft minutes of 12 June 2025 noted.
Noted

FC 029.4 **Working Groups**

Events & Communications: VE Day 80th Anniversary: Council expressed appreciation to all involved for the two successful events (National and Civic) **Noted**

Cllr Petty thanked everyone involved, particularly the officers who worked diligently to coordinate the events. He also highlighted the upcoming End of Summer Party and warmly encouraged councillors to attend, supporting the officers and engaging with the community. Cllr Petty emphasised that these events were a collective effort, and greater involvement from councillors would enhance the experience and shared success of community celebrations.

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Town Council Working Group: Discussions to continue over the summer. **Noted**

FC 029.5 Parish Partnership Panel: No report **Noted**

FC 029.6 Prologis Meeting (9 June 2025): Notes from the meeting which had been prepared by the Clerk and copied to members. **Noted**

FC 029.7 Member Reports: Cllrs. Colman and Vincent and the Clerk had attended recent KALC seminars on the use of AI. **Noted**

FC 029.8 Reporting Protocol: It was confirmed that Members attending meetings on behalf of KHPC would report back to the Council either verbally at the next appropriate meeting or in writing. This ensures transparency, accountability, and the effective sharing of information relevant to Council business. **Noted**

FC 030

Administration

FC 030.1 Councillor Vacancies: The Council noted its position remained unchanged, recognising the requirements of legislation but agreeing that it was not the right time to advertise the councillor vacancies. Cllr McKay raised a question regarding the election process. It was explained that the Parish Council would publish notices for the vacancies, after which Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council (T&MBC) would oversee the process and advise on whether the vacancies could be filled by co-option or if a by-election was required. It was proposed by Cllr Mackay, seconded by Cllr. Sherlaw and:

RESOLVED: That the Council would proceed with publishing notices for two councillor vacancies only upon the conclusion of all ongoing legal matters.

By Majority

Cllr Rush voted against and requested that his vote be recorded.

FC 030.2 Civility & Respect Reminder: **Noted**

FC 030.3 Local Government Reorganisation: The Council noted the contents of the briefing paper which had been prepared by the Clerk and the latest updates regarding local government reorganisation. It was further noted that the Clerk would be attending the upcoming KALC seminar on asset transfers to support the Council's preparedness and understanding of potential implications. **Noted**

FC 031 Matters for the Next Agenda: None **Noted**

FC 032 Date of Next Meeting: Confirmed as Thursday 31 July 2025 which was a change to the current scheduled date and time. **Unanimous**

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FC 033

Exclusion of Press and Public: In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Section 1(2), it was **AGREED** that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items, on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of confidential information.

FC 033.1 Staffing Matters: The Council received an update on staffing, including progress on professional development and current capacity within the team. It was noted that officers were providing internal support to maintain service levels during a period of staff absence.

FC 033.2 Legal Matters: An update was provided on an ongoing legal case. It was noted that the matter remained pending, with no further developments expected until early 2026.

FC 033.3 Lease Renewal Updates: The Council continued to engage with relevant stakeholders and legal advisors regarding lease renewals. Discussions were ongoing and updates would be brought forward as appropriate.

The meeting closed at 9.25 p.m.

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