

Birling Parish Council
MINUTES of the MEETING held on
Tuesday 10th June 2025 at 8pm All Saints Church, Birling.

Present: Cllr Westwood (chair); Cllr Hewett; Cllr Hirst; Cllr Nevill; Cllr Walker; Cllr Wright; Cllr Yates.

Also Present: J Miller Clerk; Cllr Paul Boxall (Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council) and Cllr Dodger Sian (Kent County Council).

37. Apologies for absence – there were none.

38. Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interest

Cllr Nevill declared an interest in the planning item.

39. Approval and signing of minutes of meeting of May 13th, 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of May 13th, 2025.

40. Monthly Reports - County, Borough and Police Reports

(a) County Councillor Dodger Sian

Cllr Sian introduced himself and stated that his role is to support local parishes. He advised that he would forward the Clerk details of relevant Cabinet Members and requested to be copied in on any matters that need to be escalated. Concerns regarding local traffic were raised to which Cllr Sian responded by acknowledging the existing Highways Improvement Plan. He encouraged the council to report any specific issues so that he can follow them up accordingly. The council also discussed the lack of a local bus service. Cllr Sian requested that further details be sent to him via email so that he can investigate and address the matter.

(b) Borough Councillors Paul Boxall and Bill Banks

Cllr Boxall reported that the planning application for the Birling Road traveler site, which proposes increasing site density with two additional caravans and washrooms, was recommended for approval by officers. However, councillors voted against the proposal, and it will now be referred to Full Council for a decision on 8 July. Regarding Oast Farm, there is still no officer recommendation report available. An update from the Parish Partnership Panel highlighted two main issues: the process by which the Borough Council allocates housing and manages the waiting list, and the introduction of a new email contact for Clarion Housing, which comes with a five-day response target. There was also discussion around the policing model and how parish councils contribute funding toward local police services.

(c) Kent Police – there was no report provided.

41. Open Forum – Public Participation Session - There were none.

42. (a) Matters arising and last month's circulation

i. Ryarsh School

To receive any update – there was no further update.

ii. Village Hall

To receive any updates on availability of hall – there was no further update.

iii. Horse Rider Safety

Awaiting updates on signage from KCC – This is being followed up.

(b) Matters for Information circulated to councillors

03/06 E Watch 2285
03/06 E Watch 2286
03/06 Local Government Reorganisation training
03/06 Training Bulletin
03/06 Kent Plan Bee's
03/06 Chief Executive Bulletin
03/06 KALC T&M Minute
03/06 Planning Conference 2025
03/06 KALC Update Bulletin
03/06 E Watch 2287
03/06 E Watch 2288
03/06 Chief Executive's Bulletin
03/06 Road safety advice and active travel group
03/06 E Watch 2289
03/06 Local Government Reorganisation Training
03/06 E Watch 2290
03/06 South Eastern Summer Stakeholder Forum
03/06 E Watch 2291
03/06 E Watch 2292

43. Meetings

(a) Meetings attended on behalf of the parish council

- i. Parish Partnership Panel 29/05/2025- this was covered earlier in the meeting by Cllr Boxall (TMBC)

(b) Future meetings

- i. Snodland Asphalt Meeting 17/06/2025 – Cllr Hewett.
- ii. KALC EGM 19/06/2025 – Cllr Hewett & Cllr Westwood.
- iii. Parish Partnership Panel 28/08/2025 – Cllr Westwood.

44. Parish Business for Decisions

(a) Oast Park Golf Course

- i. To receive any updates – this was covered earlier in the meeting by Cllr Boxall (TMBC).

(b) Highways Improvement Plan

- i. To receive any updates – the white lining is being followed up.

(c) Local Plan

- i. To receive any updates – there was no further update.

(d) Community Transport Grant / Bus Services

- i. To receive update on KALC T&M parish council initiatives – there was no further update.

(e) Jubilee and Coronation

- i. To receive update – It was noted that payment is being made, and the project is progressing well. Thanks were noted to Cllr Hirst for his continued work on this matter.

(f) Village Maintenance, Waste and Litter

- i. To receive any updates – there were none.

- ii. To receive updates on quotes for repair and/or replacement of noticeboard – there was none. An eco-style will be investigated.
- iii. Quote for grass & hedge for the war memorial site. The contractor was **AGREED** at £20 per cut eight times per year.

(g) Village Fete

- i. To consider contributing to the village fete.
It was **RESOLVED** to contribute £390 towards the entertainment at the village fete.

(h) Focus Session on Long Term Vision

- i. To hold one hour session to discuss future Long-Term Vision.

A discussion was held on the future vision for Birling Parish, focusing on the evolving needs of the community and opportunities for sustainable development. Thanks were expressed to Cllr Nevill who presented research into model village concepts. The following key areas were identified:

Housing

- There is a growing need for smaller homes to accommodate the aging population wishing to downsize.
- The parish also welcomes young families with primary school-aged children, indicating a need for family-friendly housing.
- A gap was noted in provision for teenagers, with limited recreational or social facilities currently available.

Village Centre and Community Facilities

- The parish currently lacks a village shop, café, or central community hub.
- There are no sports or recreational facilities to serve residents of different age groups.
- The idea of creating a shared growing space, such as allotments or a community market garden, was discussed as a means of promoting sustainability and community interaction.

Transport and Connectivity

- Limited public transport options, particularly the lack of a regular bus service, was highlighted as a barrier to accessibility and independence, especially for non-drivers.

Heritage and Development

- The parish values its rich heritage, including the church and historic buildings within the conservation area.
- There was a strong consensus to avoid *ribbon development* and instead support thoughtful, community-focused planning that preserves the character of the village.

45. Parish Business for Noting

(a) Website/social media update

- i. To note the following added to the website:-
 - Road Closures

(b) Parochial Church Council

- i. To receive regular update.

(c) Resident Matters

- i. To note any recent local issues raised - recent power cuts were noted.

46. Correspondence

- (a) Request for assistance with land for Remote Control Car Club – noted. Send to estate Email for Guy.**

47. Finance & Accounts

- (b) To approve Bank Reconciliation May 2025**

Net Bank Balances as at 01/06/2025 £18,556.40

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Bank Reconciliation as of May 2025.

- (c) To note budget position year to date May 2025 – noted.**

- (d) To approve PAYE record June 2025.**

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the PAYE Record June 2025.

- (e) BACS to be approved and signed:**

Payee	Budget	Amount Gross	Amount Net	VAT	Description
Various	Staff Costs	£ 791.56			Staff Costs June
LASER	Streetlighting	£ 26.67	£ 25.34	£ 1.33	Streetlight energy costs
Waveney IT	IT Costs	£ 63.65	£ 53.04	£ 10.61	Monthly Mailbox Costs
HugoFox	IT Costs	£ 11.99	£ 9.99	£ 2.00	Monthly website costs
JF Stoneworks	Reserves	£ 857.04	£ 714.20	£ 142.84	Granite tablet for QEII Stone
Lionel Robbins	Audit	£ 105.00			Annual internal audit
Poppy Appeal	Donations	£ 50.00			Wreath

32. Roads

- (a) To report any road issues.**

It was noted that the signage at the roundabout is covered by brambles and will be reported to KCC.

It was also noted that the annual inspection of the streetlights was complete, and some remedial works is being organised.

- (b) Road Closures**

- i. To note temporary road closures affecting Birling.
Birling Road, Snodland Road,

33. Planning

- (a) Applications to be considered**

- i. 25/00842/PA Proposal: Proposed new 5 bay modular office block and removal of existing container Location: FARM BUILDINGS PART OF BIRLING PLACE FARM, Stangate Road, Birling, West Malling
it was **RESOLVED** no objection.

- (b) Decisions by Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council**

There are none.

34. Matters for future meetings – the usual substantive items.

35. Date of next meeting: Dates suggested as follows:

Tuesday 1st July 2025; Tuesday 2nd September 2025; Tuesday 14th October 2025; Tuesday 4th November 2025; Tuesday 2nd December 2025; Tuesday 6th January 2026; Tuesday 17th March 2026; Tuesday 26th May 2026.

Meeting closed at 21:51pm

Signed.....

Date.....

DRAFT