

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF EAST MALLING AND LARKFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY, 2ND JULY 2025 AT CHURCH FARM AT 7.30P.M.**

PRESENT: Cllrs. D. Thornewell (Chairman), Mrs. M. Moore (Vice-Chairman), T. Bishop, Mrs. L. Cook, R. Haffenden, R. Mitchell, S. Root, R. Roud, Mrs. J. Sharpe, Mrs. C. Shire and Mrs. M. Tatton

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllrs. Mrs. C. Bell, P. Leale, Mrs. A. Oakley and Mrs. C. Woodger

**APPROVAL AND SIGNING OF MINUTES AND APPENDICES OF MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY, 4TH JUNE 2025**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes and Appendices of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 4th June 2025 be **APPROVED AND SIGNED** by the Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING

There were no Matters Arising.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

(i) Ratification of Planning Comments Submitted Since 4th June 2025

The List of Planning Comments submitted to the Borough Council had been **CIRCULATED** and it was **AGREED** that the action taken be **RATIFIED**.

(ii) List of Decision Notices Received since 4th June 2025

The List of Decision Notices issued by the Borough Council had been **CIRCULATED** and was **NOTED**.

(iii) Any Other Planning Matters

The Chairman commented that the development by Churchill at 154 & 156 New Hythe Lane has been mothballed for a period of at least six months due to the decline in the property market.

The Chairman is meeting with residents of Wateringbury Road tomorrow evening to discuss the Appeal by Esquire against the refusal of permission by the Borough Council.

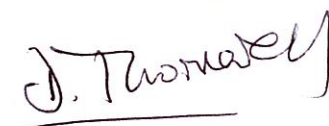
RATIFICATION OF PAYMENTS SINCE LAST MEETING

The Lists of Payment and Direct Debits had been **CIRCULATED** and the action taken was **RATIFIED**.

REPORTS ON STANDING COMMITTEES HELD DURING JUNE

(i) Planning and Development Committee – Wednesday, 18th June 2025

Cllr. Thornewell presented these Minutes which he felt were self-explanatory and it was **AGREED** they be **ADOPTED** as a true record of the Meeting.



(ii) **Finance and General Purposes Committee** – Wednesday, 23rd June 2025

Cllr. Mrs. Moore presented these Minutes which she felt were self-explanatory.

Cllr. Thornewell made comment that he was on the Panel at a public meeting at Tonbridge Castle regarding Tonbridge becoming a Town Council. Most present supported this proposal particularly in view of the Local Government Reorganisation.

Cllr. Thornewell also commented that the tree had been removed on MR122, Lunsford Hall and from the garden of the Coach House.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman's Report had been **CIRCULATED**, as follows:-

Local Government Reorganisation.

Tim Bishop attended as our rep the KALC meeting about local government reorganisation and his report is separately circulated.

Possible Town Council for Tonbridge

I attended as part of the panel a public meeting in Tonbridge regarding the petition received by the borough council seeking a Tonbridge Town Council which would be similar to the parishes existing in the rest of the district.

There seemed to be general support for such a Council as a result of fears that the Town would need local representation with TMBC being abolished and a bigger West Kent unitary council likely to replace it plus a Kent mayor.

Picnic in the Park at East Malling.

This took place last Sunday 29th June and was well attended. It was a hot day and several groups of people sheltered under the trees.

Saturday 5th July 11am to 2pm

A reminder the Communigrow Open Day is this coming Saturday

Picnic on the Rec this coming Sunday 6th July from 1pm to 5pm.

Hopefully they will have a fine day as did the East Malling organisers.

Overgrowth of pavements, Chaucer Way.

Following further complaints KCC have been asked to attend to this overgrowth which in places has halved the width of pavements

Public Path next to Lunsford Hall.

Our contractors have now removed the rest of the tree which was held up by the fence belonging to The Coach House.



Apple Tree room, St James

The frame of this long awaited building is now in place and the roof with some widow frames. When completed it will provide toilets for the church.

Green Spaces in the Local Plan

Further supporting details has been supplied to the borough council relating to East Malling Playing Fields and confirmation we are the owner. It was noticed Larkfield Playing Fields was not on the list being considered and this being also in our ownership has been rectified. Please RATIFY that action as they were seeking a reply by the end of June.

Cllr. Bishop had attended a KALC Meeting regarding the Local Government Reorganisation and his notes had been **CIRCULATED**. He made comment at present it is unclear what will happen as the Government are still considering the options.

The Chairman reported that it has been found out that we are entitled to two Parish Councillors on the KALC – Tonbridge and Malling Committee. At present he is the only representative. Cllr. Haffenden had expressed an interest there it was **PROPOSED** that Cllr. Haffenden become the additional representative. Also a substitute is permitted if either Cllr. Thornewell or Cllr. Haffenden could not attend any meeting and it was **AGREED** that Cllr. Mrs. Tatton be appointed as the substitute Member.

The Chairman reported that he is representing Cllr. Mrs. Oakley at interviews for the appointment of a new Chief Financial Officer to replace Sharon Shelton who is retiring.

REPORT BY BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Cllr. Bishop reported that at the recent Overview and Scrutiny Meeting Empty Properties was discussed and apparently there are retirement apartments at Kings Hill with 44 being vacant.

At the same meeting discussions took place regarding the Agile planning programme which is to be discontinued and will go back to how it was prior to Agile.

Cllr. Bishop said there are 1.1 million properties empty in the country.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Team have been out and about, they have been dealing with parking issues throughout the Borough including Snodland.

Cllr. Roud has found out information regarding Street Naming – the Government have a Policy that names that exist in adjoining cannot be used and each name has to have a suffix. He has been talking to John Hilden at Hillberry Farm, Watlington about the naming of the properties to be built at that site. He has a 1766 map of East Malling Manor and there is a picture of this in the Chatwell Suite at Maidstone Hospital's Oncology Unit which he will be endeavouring to obtain a photograph of.

Cllr. Mrs. Dean reported that she has been attending Policy meetings at Kent County Council.



DS in Chester

Cllr. Mrs. Dean visited the site of the retirement apartments ~~at the bottom of Town Hill, West Malling~~ where there will be 140 apartments, only 5 have sold and 5 other people at thinking about purchasing.

Cllr. Mrs. Dean said that she has heard that the Government are considering abolishing Local Plans.

Cllr. Mrs. Dean has attended a resident in Kipling Drive regarding trees from Leybourne Way growing over her fence and causing damage to the fence on the property. She has taken this up with KCC.

There is a new Empty Properties Officer at the Borough Council and a new head of Enforcement.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr. Roud reported that East Malling Research Trust are not treating any of the fruit on site which is felt to be unusual.

Dial-A-Flight, Mill Street – it has been reported that it appears that they have vacated the premises.

Cllr. Bishop reported that trees on the north-east corner of the Leybourne Way/New Hythe Lane roundabout have been felled. It is unclear who the land belongs to.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, 6th August 2025

CLOSURE

The Chairman declared the Meeting closed at 8.30p.m.

D. Thornwell

Chairman
6th August 2025