

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF GUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

held on Tuesday 20th January 2026 at Guston Village Hall- 6.30pm

PRESENT: Parish Councillors: Chair: Cllr. Tracey Creed, Cllr. Claire Gurraj, Cllr. Matthew Sweetman, Cllr. Angela Surendorff, Cllr. Keith Gowland,

KCC/DDC Members - Cllr. Bridget Porter, Cllr. Martin Bates

Parish Clerk: Mrs Glynis Farthing.

ABSENT:

MEMBERS OF THE PRESS/PUBLIC:

Mr. James Jenkison (GreenTech)

4696 Apologies for absence:

Cllr. Oliver Richardson (DDC)

4697 Declarations of Interest

As in previous Minutes.

4698 Minutes of the last meeting

Proposed for acceptance by Cllr. Gurraj, seconded Cllr Surendorff

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 9th December 2025 be accepted, proposed by Cllr. Sweetman and seconded by Cllr. Surendorff signed by the Chairman.

4699 Planning

- Proposal: Permanent use as a car park
Location: Broadlees Car Park Upper Road Guston CT16 1HW
Ref: 25/01055

The resident, Cllr Bates and Clerk attended a meeting with DDC planning officer and presented the concerns over various aspects of the application. It was a useful meeting. The planning officer was already preparing to request the applicant made a number of clarifications on the application. (See also report from Cllr Bates)

4700 Public Participation

Chairman closed the meeting for public participation.

No public present

Chairman reopened the meeting

4701 Matters arising from Minutes of the last meeting

Nothing that isn't already on the agenda

4702 Solar Park

Cllrs welcomed James Jenkison to the meeting to provide an update on the progress of the solar park.

Cllr Creed had emailed a number of questions to Mr. Jenkison ahead of this meeting for his action. James felt that the construction company are able to deal with the issues raised. The lights and signage are currently needing adjusting. Some of the signage has been left from other works not associated with this development.

The construction is on track. The panels are due to be delivered next month.

Hopefully finished June/July.

4703 Farmstead Way (Fastrack)

At the behest of Guston residents the Parish Council requested the installation of three litter bins on Farmstead Way. Cllr Bates also supported this request. After lengthy correspondence with DDC the local authority are only prepared to install

one bin at the Duke of York bus stop at the Guston end of Farmstead Way (despite the PC offering to pay the installation and associated emptying costs). (See also report from Cllr Bates)

4704 Highways Improvement Plan

Cllr Bates and Clerk had a Teams meeting with East Kent Highways to discuss the road markings at Burgoyne Heights. After discussion Lezanne agreed to discuss this with the team.

Other pertinent matters were also raised – Clerk agreed to report the flooding problems again via the reporting tool and to contact Cllr Porter with the relevant information.

The village gates have been added to the HIP. The white lining around the Parish which needs refreshing, will be reported via KCC reporting tool. (None of the road markings will be done until the Spring)

4705 Dover District Council –Cllrs. Bates/Oliver Richardson

1. Armed Forces Community



2. DDC Website – Car Parking

DDC are in the process of revising the dover.gov.uk website to make it easier for to use their online services and find the information they need. This is being done in a phased way, with council tax, benefits and waste the first sections to go live at the end of last year.

DDC have now gone live with the parking pages and intend for this new section to help residents and visitors carry out tasks more easily, such as applying for permits or finding a car park. Please do take a look Parking - Dover District Council

Going forward, the project team will continue to work with each department to redesign each service's webpages, reviewing and rewriting content, and eventually the whole website will move over to the new look next year. Due to the phased approach, parts of the website will look different to others until the whole site is live. DDC have been communicating this to residents through social media, Keep Me Posted and via notices on the new and existing websites. They have also updated staff so they can reassure residents if they have any concerns about the site looking different. Please can you share any feedback you receive from the public so they can continue to improve the new site.

3. Street Lighting

During a recent conversation we had with the clerk at St Margaret's we were advised that several of the streetlights were failing. Following contact with DDC Property Services we discovered that a number of the LED replacements which were installed two or three years ago were faulty. The supplier has admitted liability and DDC will be replacing them over the next few months. If you discover any issues within the parish could you please let Keith Watson know. A link to the spreadsheet is attached and we have also forwarded it by email to all parish councils within our ward.



DOVER INVENTORY
FINAL VERSION.xlsx

LOCAL ISSUES

1. Dover Fastrack

There will be an official event launching the transition to electric vehicle buses in Dover on 30th January. This does not mean that they will be going into service immediately. Martin will be at the event and will find out more information at the network session on the day. DDC waste services have agreed to approve the siting of a bin at the junction with Dover Rd and Farmstead Way but are adamantly refusing to approve the provision of more. A question is being raised by the shadow portfolio holder for waste at the full council meeting which is likely to highlight this issue.

2. Broadlees Car Park

A recent application has been submitted to change its use to a “full time car park.” We were asked to find out from DDC why, as the car park was in the parish the council, was not consulted. I received a reply stating that car park was within the parish of Dover Town Council but nevertheless they would still welcome Guston’s comments should they wish to send them in the normal manner. I attended a meeting on 12th January with the planning officer, a resident and Glynis. The officer took all our concerns on board and has promised to relay them to the applicant and KCC Highways ahead of deciding on the application.

4. Flooding On Roman Road

This was raised in an email from Tracey on 4th December and I wrote to Barry Stiff the same day. He responded by saying that he would investigate it but needed some clarification on the precise location. I forwarded his request to Tracey but after that the trail seems to have gone cold.

5. Parking Issues at Burgoyne Heights

Glynis and I attended a meeting with KCC Highways on 13th January wherein we discussed the possibility of introducing dog bone markers along the arterial road to highlight the drop kerbs in the hope that this will help deter poor parking. The Highways Team have agreed to consider this but require evidence. Glynis and I are arranging a walk round to acquire it.

4705 Kent County Council – Cllr. Bridget Porter

KCC Report January

On November 28th 2025 KCC Leader Linden Kemkaren announced our proposed Kent and Medway Unitary Council with 3 Area Assemblies covering North, East and West Kent.

Our aims are that decisions about things that you see every day like local highways, parks, libraries, town centres, community safety are taken locally.

- We will cut bureaucracy and simplify who does what.
- Transparent local budgets.
- Performance dashboards.
- KCC will publish where every £ goes
- Resident engagement
- Local area assemblies does not mean small and weak . Local means empowered and responsible
- Stronger local say and countywide clout

Seminar for Local Businesses

KCC announced in December a full day Seminar for local businesses to better understand how to work with us.

This will take place on Tuesday 27th January at Clive Emson Hall ,Kent Showground . The event will bring together suppliers, business partners and KCC Officers to launch our Commercial Strategy.

This event is free to attend and can be booked on Eventbrite <https://loom.ly/BpLQzBg>

KCC Draft Budget

On 8th January KCC published the 2026 Draft Budget which stabilises KCC’s finances, protects frontline services, reflects residents’ priorities, and limits council tax to 3.99% through sound financial management.

When Reform UK took over the administration in May 2025 KCC was in a dire financial position with £732 million of debt and £84,000 being paid every day just in interest .

Doing nothing was not an option.

We acted calmly and responsibly, delivering £100 million of savings, reprofiled £39.5 million of future spending, and reduced debt by £67 million. The council’s finances are now stable.

Council Tax

KCC inherited the expected council tax increase of 4.99 %

Through sound financial management this administration reduced that to 3.99 %, without cutting frontline services.

We are committed to managing and reducing historic borrowing, so future generations are not left paying for past mistakes.

The Draft Budget is honest ,responsible , and focused on delivering stability ,value and quality of life for the people of Kent.

Bridget Porter- KCC Councillor -Dover North

4706 Feedback from Council Representatives and Matters arising from previously circulated material.

No reports – KALC area committee are due to meet on 21st January.

4707 Financial Reports/Accounts/Payments

a) The Financial statement for December has been prepared and circulated to Cllrs.

The balance on current account as of 20th January 2026 = £91,888.59

b) Items for payment: to be made by electronic payment.

DDC – Bin emptying £390.00

MSCAPE – Christmas Tree invoice £230.00

Eyelid Productions – website support £100.00

MSCAPE January Maintenance £663.42 (SO)

G. Farthing (January salary £1030.05+£12) £1042.05

Total: £2,425.47

Above payments all made

No further payments currently outstanding.

Total: £2,425.47

Payments proposed for acceptance by Cllr. Sweetman, seconded by Cllr. Gurraj

Clerk has submitted a VAT reclaim for £1,428.51 – this has been credited to our account.

Cllr. Gowland raised the possibility of investing some of the reserves with a CCLA account. The Clerk also has some knowledge of this account through the Church of England. We will investigate this to get the best possible return on the money invested.

Precept requirement 2026/27

Cllrs discussed the precept requirement for 2026/27 and considered the expected expenditure along with the current levels of reserves available. Discussion of current levels of inflation and whether this request needs to be raised in line with inflation figures.

It was noted that at some point during the next financial year the PC would be receiving some income from the solar park construction and therefore in view of this it was deemed appropriate not to increase the precept request.

It was agreed to leave the precept request at the level of 2025/26 (£43,773.00) and this would allow for all expenditure to be met.

Proposed for approval by Cllr. Sweetman, seconded by Cllr. Gowland.

RESOLVED: (b) To approve payments, and Clerk to raise electronic transfers for dual authorization

(c) To approve precept requirement for 2026/27

4708 Roads, Footpaths and other Parish Matters

- Thursday 18th December 1pm – 2.30pm- PC Sophie Bramble, Community Warden Martin Dadd and Dog Warden was again reasonably well attended

The next meeting is scheduled meeting – Thursday 29th January 2026 1pm-2.30pm

- Village Hall redecoration and floor clean– Probably looking at the Easter holidays. Cllr Sweetman will investigate the costs of a floor cleaning machine
- St Martin of Tours Church – application for support to pay for the repairs to the porch roof (the battens had rotted and had to be replaced) £1,200. Cllrs agreed this grant payment. The church is a Community Asset.
- Neighbourhood Watch – Burgoyne Heights resident has agreed to be the single point of access for the whole community. Need to register the streets with Neighbourhood Watch team.
- Burgoyne Heights

Parking – consider road markings (see previous notes from Cllr. Bates). Cllr Surendoff will ask for community support from Burgoyne Heights residents

Bin beside the bus stop at Burgoyne Heights – this has been approved by MOD and ordered with DDC

- Broadband – email from resident regarding the installation of fast broadband. Email reply from Cllr. Bates.
- Annual Playground inspection has been booked (£231.60)– there are items that need to be addressed (identified by Mscape). These will all be addressed after the inspection. The goal mouths need re-seeding and some work to the summerhouse access.
- KALC Community Award – no nominations for this year
- Mini Meadow trees and overhanging branches and ivy. This is a health and safety issue and must be addressed – Clerk to contact the neighbour regarding this tree.

4694 Items for consultation and other correspondence received

All email correspondence and consultation documents forwarded to Cllrs. All consultation items and news articles have been added to the parish website for information.

Wednesday 4th February – Teams meeting -Infrastructure Funding Statement and Delivery Plan 4.30pm

Wednesday 18th February – DDC Community Resilience Plan workshop – 5.30pm-8pm

4695 Dates and venues for future meetings

Parish Council Meeting: Tuesday 3rd March 2026, Tuesday 21st April 2026 at 6.30pm

This meeting closed at 20.50pm

CHAIRMAN

DATE