

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF GUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

held on Tuesday 3rd March 2026 at Guston Village Hall- 6.30pm

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

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

Parish Clerk: Mrs Glynis Farthing.

ABSENT:

MEMBERS OF THE PRESS/PUBLIC:

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4711 Apologies for absence:

Cllr. Matt Sweetman

4712 Declarations of Interest

As in previous Minutes.

4713 Minutes of the last meeting

Proposed for acceptance by Cllr. Gowland, seconded Cllr. Gurraj

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 20th January 2026 be accepted, proposed by Cllr. Sweetman and seconded by Cllr. Surendorff signed by the Chairman.

4714 Planning

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

There have been some updated documents added to the planning application which appear to have acknowledged some of the concerns that had been raised. See also Cllr Bates report.

4715 Public Participation

Chairman closed the meeting for public participation.

Some dirt track bikes coming down Farmstead Way and onto the main road. No helmets or number plates. With pillion riders. No pattern to it.

Chairman reopened the meeting

4716 Matters arising from Minutes of the last meeting

Nothing that isn't already on the agenda

4717 Solar Park

Update from James Jenkison- *Construction work is continuing to occur in accordance with the original schedule and we are now in the most intensive delivery phase.*

We are intentionally ensuring that deliveries and the most intensive work only occurs on Mondays through Fridays, with only minor occasional weekend work on the DNO substation - which should not be causing a disturbance.

4718 Farmstead Way (Fastrack)

The electric buses are now operational.

Litter bin request – With lots of pressure from Cllr Bates the bins we requested have been approved. They are going to cost more money than anticipated but hopefully will alleviate some of the dog waste issues.

Bus Shelter at Burgoyne Heights -a shelter is going to be erected, this is a different design to the ones on the rest of the route but much more suitable for the location. Costs being met by KCC. Guston PC will be responsible for future maintenance.

4719 Highways Improvement Plan

Cllr Bates and Clerk will organize a date to consider the road markings at Burgoyne Heights. Road resurfacing, Dover Road, and The Lane from the railway bridge to the Dover/Deal road..

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)

4720Dover District Council –Cllrs. Bates/Oliver Richardson

LOCAL ISSUES

1. DOVER FAST TRACK

The electric buses were eventually launched at an event at the Stagecoach Whitfield Depot on 26th February and there are currently four in operation. Waste Services have now agreed to provide the additional two bins in Farmstead Way and KCC Transport have located a bus shelter which they intend to install outside Burgoyne Heights. Installation dates are awaited.

2. BROADLEES CAR PARK

We received the following update from the Planning Officer on 25th February:

Following our meeting in January I have had productive separate meetings with KCC Highways and the applicant regarding the issues/outstanding matters with this case.

I am currently awaiting the formal updated comment from KCC Highways which I require to progress this application further. Once received I will contact the agent to resolve the outstanding matters. I will be able to provide a more detailed update following this.

In terms of works to trees, the red line of the site location plan for this application only goes around the access and hard surfaced areas of the car park, and therefore any works to trees/landscaping beyond this area falls outside of the scope of the application. I have reviewed our GIS mapping and it does not appear that any trees in the vicinity of the site are TPO'd. I believe the car park and surrounding area is managed by DDC Open Spaces and may be able to advise regarding this.

I have written to the Head of Parks and Open Spaces requesting any information she has on the tree felling and have updated the resident.

3. FLOODING ON ROMAN RD

We received the following update from Barry Stiff on 31st January:

I'm just following up on my email below following a site visit by a colleague to look at the BOAT.

He doesn't believe that the alleged flooding issues at the properties south of the BOAT are because of the new Fastrack road. There is a high point in the land approximately 100m south of the road. This results in water from this point flowing in both directions, and consequently water flows toward the road from this point.

As advised, we are aware of an issue of ponding water on the BOAT to the south of the road and we are currently looking at possible solutions to deal with this. I have requested an update from Barry on this.

NEWS FROM DDC

1. DDC BUDGET

At its meeting on 2nd February, Cabinet agreed to a proposed increase in the district council part of the Council Tax bill for a Band D property for 2026/27 of 2.98% (or £6.57 per year).

The capital programme includes a range of affordable housing developments and regeneration projects across the district. These include major projects like Dover Beacon project and Deal Leisure Centre development. The budget report also notes some budgetary pressures facing the council, including homelessness and inflationary pressures.

Following the meeting, the budget was considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 February, returned to Cabinet on 2 March and will go to the Council Meeting on 4 March. For more details, please see the draft budget report to Cabinet on the [DDC website](#).

2. PAYMENT PARKING BOOKS

Residents can buy daily visitor permit books allowing their guests to park in designated spaces while visiting (where resident parking schemes are in place). This system helps manage parking and ensures visitors to restricted areas have a place to park.

We are changing the way you can buy daily visitor permit books. From Monday 2 February, these will be available to purchase through your online My Permit account. DDC will be keeping a small amount of paper daily visitor books to help with the transition, but these will be gradually phased out. If you have a supply of paper permits, these will still be valid.

For further information, see [visitor permits](#). If you need any help, please contact parking@dover.gov.uk

3. AFTER SCHOOL SPORTS SESSIONS

Sessions were previously held by DDC from June to October 2025, funded by the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), and proved so popular that they are returning. They will again be funded by the PCC and will run through February and March this year.

Delivered by the charity [Uprising Youth and Community](#) as part of its Hang10 project, the sessions will offer a range of sporting activities. These include football, swing ball, badminton and Panna football skills – and young people attending will also have a say in what they would like to do. The sessions are aimed at 11 to 16-year-olds, but all ages are welcome to join in. There's no need to book – just turn up. Activities will take place on the grassed areas at Pencester Gardens. They begin on Wednesday, 4 February, from 3:30pm to 5:30pm, and will run every Wednesday until 25 March. A full list of dates is available at www.dover.gov.uk/pencester-sport-session

4. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION UPDATE

Government ministers launched a consultation on 5 February about the future number of councils in Kent and Medway and the areas they should cover.

They want to hear your views on the biggest proposed shake up of local government in 50 years.

Ministers asked councils to come up with plans to create unitary councils in a process known as local government reorganisation (LGR). Under the current system Kent County Council (KCC) delivers some services such as education, social services and roads, and district or borough councils deliver others like emptying your bins and providing housing services. Under the proposed system, a much smaller number of unitary councils would deliver all council services in one area. Medway Council operates in that way today. Councils across Kent and Medway have worked together to draw up a series of options for the number of unitaries needed and what areas they should cover.

To take part in the government's consultation, visit [Proposals for local government reorganisation in Kent and Medway](#). Councils may also contact residents and other organisations to explain why they think their preferred option should be chosen by the government. Once the consultation closes, the civil servants and ministers will consider everyone's

responses alongside the evidence that has been presented to them. A decision on which option ministers have chosen is likely to be announced in the summer.

The deadline for responses is 11.59pm on Thursday 26 March 2026.

5. REACH AWARDS

Dover District Council has launched the fifth year of its well-established REACH Awards scheme, celebrating the outstanding environmental and community contributions made across the district. The REACH Awards (Recognising Environmental and Community Heroes) shine a spotlight on the individuals, groups, and organisations whose ongoing efforts help enhance the appearance of the district, protect the environment, and nurture the local community spirit. This year's programme features four award categories, each designed to highlight the wide range of work taking place locally. The scheme recognises dedicated volunteers and community projects, as well as organisations that are placing sustainability at the heart of what they do.

Award categories for 2026

- Litter Picker of the Year (over 18)
- Junior Litter Picker of the Year (under 18)
- Community Project of the Year
- Green Organisation of the Year

Entry is free, and nominations are welcome from individuals, groups, or those wishing to put someone forward. For further information please read the [full press release](#)

6. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

A Community Governance Review is the process used to consider parish arrangements. A review can cover the whole or part of the district and may look at a range of options, including (but not limited to) the electoral arrangements for parishes — such as the number of councillors for each parish or parish ward, and the ordinary year of election. The Council must ensure that community governance within the review area reflects local identities and interests, and that it is effective and convenient.

This Review will focus on the number of councillors allocated to each town/parish council. Further information is available on our website: www.dover.gov.uk/elections. The Community Governance Review is a public consultation, and DDC welcome responses from residents, town councils, and parish councils.

You can take part in the first stage of the consultation by completing the online form by **2 April 2026**: <https://forms.office.com/e/FL9WeT9bkr>. Alternatively, you can submit your representation in writing by **2 April 2026**:

- **Email:** elections@dover.gov.uk
- **Post:** Electoral Services (CGR), Council Offices, White Cliffs Business Park, Whitfield, Dover CT16 3PJ

All representations on councillor numbers will be considered. Consultees who provide contact details will be notified of the outcome of the Review. The names of individual consultees will not be published, and all personal information (names, addresses, and email addresses) will be destroyed one month after the Community Governance Reorganisation Order has been made.

GUSTON – We have been told that DDC's proposal is to increase your current cadre of parish councillors from 7 to 8.

7. LOCAL APPRENTICESHIPS

DDC is reminding local businesses they can apply for funding to support them in taking on an apprentice. Funds continue to be made available through the scheme to encourage employers to boost their businesses and discover new talent or

develop the skills of existing employees through apprenticeships. The council continues to provide this opportunity by offering to transfer part of its apprenticeship levy fund to local businesses.

DDC has also offered a range of apprenticeships, graduate placements and work experience within the authority, and currently has three apprentices. For more information on apprenticeships, or full eligibility criteria for the Apprenticeship Levy scheme in the district or details on how to apply to the scheme, please see the [Apprenticeships](#) page on the DDC website.

4721 Kent County Council – Cllr. Bridget Porter

KCC Report March

Forever Active Kent Service

KCC Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Diane Morton announced funding for 28 charities, social enterprises and clubs of over £6,000 a year over 3 years to help run activities for KCC's new Forever Active Kent Service.

Supported by Active Kent and Medway, the Forever Active Kent Service kicks off in April 2026 to inspire residents 50 years and older to be active and along the way.....

Meet new friends, helping to boost mental health and wellbeing.

Improve strength and balance and lower the risk of long-term health conditions including cancer and depression.

In this area Deal and Sandwich Primary Care network have received the funding and are running activity sessions from Age Concern, Sandwich.

Further information is available on the KCC website.

Secondary School Placements for September 2026. 96% of Kent pupils have been offered a place at one of their preferred Secondary Schools.

Beverley Fordham KCC Cabinet Member for Education and Skills reported that 79% of children have been offered a place at their 1st preference.

This year children will be enrolled on the waiting lists of higher preference schools they are eligible for but were not offered.

Appeals must be lodged by Monday 30th March.

KCC will hold a 2nd round of offers on Thursday 23rd April for any spaces that become available.

Industry Leaders Inspire Young People to take up careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. (STEM)

Worldly Wise, a community interest company, which partners industry ambassadors with schools received a £43,840 grant to deliver talks to young people to encourage them into STEM subjects. Over 18 months Worldly Wise connected 85 STEM companies with 800 pupils over 44 schools.

KCC Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Special Projects, David Wimble said ...

Championing careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics is crucial to ensuring our young people have the role models to inspire them into doing great things.

The scheme targets young people, particularly young girls, between the ages of 11 and 18 within a sector where only 28% of the workforce are women.

More information is available on www.worldly-wise.org or email info@worldly-wise.org to find out what's involved, either as an education provider or business ambassador.

4722 Feedback from Council Representatives and Matters arising from previously circulated material.

Clerk and Cllr Gowland attended Resilience Forum meeting at DDC offices on Wednesday 18th February – very useful but sadly not many Parish Councils were represented. Emergency planning was highlighted. Guston needs to develop a resilience plan. Clerk will start this and circulate.

Wednesday 4th February – Teams meeting -Infrastructure Funding Statement and Delivery Plan 4.30pm – Clerk attended this meeting. Some useful information regarding 106 monies and how it is allocated.

Clerk and Cllr. Gowland attended Mature Drivers course. Reasonable presentation but nothing new.

Cllr. Gowland attended Chairmanship Conference- mainly focused on Local Government Re-organisation rather than Chairmanship. Good presentations from a number of speakers. A lot of information about assets and dealing with assets. Assets that raise cash are unlikely to be devolved to Parish Councils.

Parish Councils are unlikely to be given any substantial opportunities for decision making. Most Parish Councils do not wish their organizations to become political as this approach does not benefit residents. Only two of the five suggestions for reorganization are worth considering. Cllrs. considered the various options that have been proposed. Consultation ends on 26th March.

KALC area meeting –held on Wednesday 21st January. Included a presentation from KCC Health Alliances and their Impact on Local Councils, this was circulated to members. Next meeting on April 22 is the AGM followed by an ordinary meeting.

KALC Executive meeting – via Teams as previously arranged meeting wasn't quorate.

4723 Financial Reports/Accounts/Payments

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

The balance on current account as of 3rd March 2026 = £88,482.56

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

MSCAPE February Maintenance £663.42 (SO)

MSCAPE March Maintenance £663.42 (SO)

Home Heroes (VH cleaning) £627.12

Forvis Mazars (Audit fee) £252.00

Total: £2,205.96

Above payments all made

Glynis Farthing (Clerk's salary, Feb £1030.05/March £1055.05 + £24 exp = £2,109.10). This includes salary scale point increase to point 28

HMRC (PAYE) £1175.48

Cllr. Keith Gowland (expenses) £55.80

Total: £3,340.38

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

It is likely that there will be a balance of £85,000 at the end of the financial year. (This is before receiving interest of the monies currently held on deposit).

Cllr. remuneration 2026/27. Cllr Gowland proposed that the council accepts the recommendations of the recent review on Cllrs. remuneration. This is the last review before Local Government Organization is put in place, then the changes and responsibilities will be substantially different. Proposal seconded by Cllr Gurraj.

Chair allowance-£560

Cllr. Allowance-£280

These allowances will be paid in April.

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.

Cllrs were sent some information – concern that it could be an investment account which can go down as well as up. Currently the money in HSBC is held in a deposit account which has a defined interest rate. This will be given further consideration.

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

(c) To approve Cllr. remuneration for 2026/27

4724 Roads, Footpaths and other Parish Matters

- Thursday 29th January 1pm – 2.30pm- PC Sophie Bramble, Community Warden Martin Dadd and Dog Warden was again reasonably well attended.
Saturday 21st February 9am-11am. A very disappointing response – only one resident attended.
The next meeting is scheduled for Sunday 22nd March 10am-Midday.
April 29th 6pm-8pm
May 27th 6pm-8pm.
- Village Hall redecoration and floor clean– second week of the Easter holidays. Fire extinguishers need to be checked. Safe and Sound – Clerk to contact.
- St Martin of Tours Church – Rev Sean Sheffield is leaving Bewsborough Parish to take up a new post at St Georges Church in Deal.
Currently Let's Play is being run at the village hall and we would like this to continue. Clerk will approach a couple of local people for support. The day may change from Wednesday to Tuesday morning.
- Neighbourhood Watch –Clerk needs to register the streets with Neighbourhood Watch team.
- Cllr. Surendorff has provided some photos of parking issues at Burgoyne Heights, these can be used to support the need for 'dog bone' markings on the dropped kerb areas. The main concern is the risks associated with the main road into the estate but there are currently no photos which provide supporting evidence of need in this area.

4725 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.

4726 Dates and venues for future meetings

Parish Council Meeting: Tuesday 21st April (+Annual Parish Meeting) 2026 at 6.30pm, Tuesday 2nd June 2026 at 6.30pm

This meeting closed at 20.50pm

CHAIRMAN

DATE