



ACOL PARISH COUNCIL

The Village Hall
The Street
Acol
Kent CT7 0JA
e-mail: clerk@acol-pc.gov.uk

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 20th August 2026 at 7.30pm, Acol Village Hall

Present: Parish Councillors Richard Steel – Chairman [RS], Sarah Corby [SC], Gavin Winpenny [GW], Wendy Winpenny [WW]

In Attendance: Sara Archer – Clerk, District Cllr Abi Smith plus 3 members of the public.

27/26-27 CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLOR

Following an informal interview, Laura Jones had been invited to be co-opted on to the Parish Council. All relevant forms were duly signed and completed. **Proposed: Cllr Steel, Seconded: Cllr W Winpenny**

28/26-27 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from KCC Cllr Luke Evans and Community Warden Gary Groombridge.

29/26-27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Corby and Cllr Steel declared an interest Item 36 (a) repayment of expenses.

30/26-27 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 18th June 2026.

These were proposed by Cllr Corby, seconded by Cllr G Winpenny, all were in agreement and therefore signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

31/26-27 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman reminded members that nominations for the Freedom of the Parish award were to be considered. No further update regarding the 20mph speed reduction scheme. Cllr Luke Evans had offered to raise this delay with the cabinet member for highways. Cllr Steel would enquire on the progress. Cllr Steel proposed that the purchase of a litter cart was considered at the next meeting. This would enable a greater capacity of litter to be collected in a safer way. It was confirmed that the defibrillator contract was due for renewal. The Clerk advised that a three month period of notice was required to cancel the contract. She would write to the suppliers to advise of the intention to terminate the contract. The Parish Council agreed to accept future responsibility of the defibrillator, and would look into options for a replacement unit. **Proposed: Cllr Steel, seconded: Cllr Jones** The Village Hall had requested that the Parish Council pay for the use of the hall for future meetings. This was discussed and agreed in principle. To be included on the agenda for a decision at the next meeting. Cllr Steel and the Clerk would be meeting with Rod Giddins who had been instrumental in the production of the Birchington Neighbourhood Plan. The signage and hi-vis vests had been received from KCC for Lorry Watch. The scheme would now be introduced in the village, as soon as possible. The use of social media to promote events and news in the village, was discussed. The facebook page would be linked to Instagram and threads.

32/26-27 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk advised she had been approached by a KCC representative who would like to host a free Safer Road Users workshop for mature drivers and passengers. Details of the event and dates would be circulated once confirmed. A representative was requested to attend a zoom conference regarding asset transfer and the impact of LGR. Cllr Steel would be attending for the Parish Council. The Clerk had been requested to complete the documentation for KCC to enable the permits to be renewed for the CCTV. TDC had advised that it was no longer a requirement for Councillors addresses to be published on the website. Details regarding the annual reception of the Powell Cotton Trust were circulated. Cllr Steel would attend, 10th September.

33/26-27 COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS

Cllr W Winpenny reported there had been positive feedback regarding the newly installed pedestrian gate at the Recreation Ground.

It was suggested that a harder surface was installed around the basketball hoop to make it more usable. This would be explored when the equipment was renewed.

Cllr Winpenny had mowed the bottom end of the footpath to Quex. The crossing at the far end of the footpath was discussed. It would be included in the HIP to be discussed further.

The volunteers looking after the village planters were thanked for maintaining them, particularly in the recent heat.

Cllr Sarah Corby confirmed that the last bites and banter afternoon which ran alongside the craft fair, was very well received. A donation had been made to the Village Hall. The next event had been arranged for 26th September, with the following event to be incorporated with the Christmas Fair. Any proceeds made will be donated to the Village Hall.

Cllr Gavin Winpenny had been nominated as a representative for the LGR. A letter would be circulated to all Parish Clerks inviting them to submit comments on the initiative, and Local Plan review. Cllr Smith advised she would follow up on any comments as necessary.

34/26-27 INDIVIDUAL OFFICER REPORTS

a) **County Councillor Luke Evans** was not in attendance, however, he had submitted a report which is appended to the minutes.

b) **District Councillor Peter Evans** was not in attendance and no report available.

District Councillor Abi Smith reported as follows:

Waste management issues

Briefing for councillors last Tuesday: Primarily concerned with how to communicate the issue with residents. Are there many people in flats or otherwise subject to 'simpler recycling' scheme? Please let me know of any specific complaints. The following is excerpted from a statement given to district councillors by TDC's Director of the Environment:

"In recent weeks the Cleansing team has worked hard to increase the number of household waste and recycling collections completed on schedule. Recently, daily collection rates have reached up to 97%.

Although there has been an improvement in the collection rate compared with the period from April-June, this week in particular we have a shortage of HGV drivers which is impacting the level of missed collections.

There are a number of reasons for the shortage and there is a lot of work going on to increase driver availability.

We have prioritised refuse and food waste collections, however this has resulted in paper and card collections being impacted...

We appreciate that you're receiving contact from residents about these issues. Please keep using the dedicated email address: household.collections@thanet.gov.uk Thank you for your continued patience."

Pride in Place grants awarded: Congrats to Sara on achieving a £19,600 grant!

TheThanetTrustAssociation.org.uk: David Peerless has been running an almost single-handed campaign against landowner St John's College, Cambridge, which has been selling land acquired through a 1642 will, which it has failed to produce. Please consider supporting him via the links available from his website.

Westgate and Garlinge Action Group Against Housing Development on Farmland will be discussing the forthcoming Thanet Local Plan at its next meeting on Wednesday 26th August, from 7pm at The Bakehouse in Westgate (located between the betting shop and The Carlton cinema, and behind the Bake & Alehouse micropub). It may be of interest to those wishing to know about the future of planning in Thanet.

Controversial tree felling in Sarre: I am following up with officers regarding the removal of 30-40 trees in Sarre, causing concern for residents in seven surrounding homes due to the unstable land left behind. TDC claims it had no powers to act, so reported it to the Forestry Commission, which confirmed an offence had been committed but also declined to act!

c) **PC Owen Crush** was not in attendance, no report available.

d) **Community Warden Gary Groombridge** offered his apologies, nothing to report.

35/26-27 HIGHWAYS

a) Street Cleansing, litter, fly-tipping

b) Highways Improvement Plan – 20mph scheme

c) Lorry Watch

a), b) & c) *previously covered in item 31.*

d) North Thanet Link Road update

Letter of support submitted in response to the consultation. Concern noted from horse riders, crossing potentially more difficult.

36/26-27 FINANCE

a) The Clerk presented the monthly payment schedule which included the following payments:

S. Archer - Clerk's salary & expenses	
Hughes & Son - Grounds maintenance	£204.00
ATS Accounting - Payroll	£66.00
Hugofox - Clerk email address	£2.99
Hugofox - Website hosting fee	£11.99
Neil - Pedestrian gate	£512.00
Village Hall - Contribution towards CPRE membership	£75.00
Trophies Gifts - Honourboard update	£25.00
R. Steel - Certificate frame	£14.98
S. Corby - Refreshments	£24.00
S. Archer - Clerk's salary & expenses	£381.30
HMRC - Employee PAYE	£299.58
Ionos - email hosting fee	£7.20
Unity Trust - Service charge	£7.00
Hugofox - Clerk email address	£2.99
Hugofox - Website hosting fee	£11.99
RoSPA Playsafety - Annual Inspection fee	£109.20
Ionos - email hosting fee	£7.20
S. Archer - Clerk's salary & expenses	
Unity Trust - Service charge	£7.00

Receipts:

Unity Trust - Interest	£52.97
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RESOLVED: To approve payment of invoices included in the monthly payment schedule for August.

(Proposed: Cllr Corby, Seconded: Cllr W Winpenny).

b) The Clerk presented the monthly bank reconciliation between the cash book and bank accounts.

RESOLVED: To approve the monthly bank reconciliation for June & July

(Proposed: Cllr Steel, seconded Cllr G Winpenny).

c) The Clerk presented the budget review which had been circulated to councillors. No comments to note.

RESOLVED: To approve the quarterly budget review.

(Proposed: Cllr Corby, seconded: Cllr Steel).

d) The award of the PiPF grant of £19,600 was noted. Quotes had been circulated to renew the basketball court and multiplay equipment in the play area. It was discussed and agreed to appoint Sovereign Play to carry out the replacement works. All were in agreement. The Clerk would confirm the appointment.

RESOLVED: To approve the quote from Sovereign Play to replace the equipment as outlined.

(Proposed: Cllr Steel, seconded: Cllr Jones).

The fence was in need of replacement, the Clerk would make enquiries for further grant funding options.

37/26-27 POLICY FOR ADOPTION

The Clerk advised that Thanet District Council recently agreed during a Full Council meeting to update the Code of Conduct for Parish Councils across the District to mirror changes made to the Council's own Code of Conduct. The document had been circulated to Councillors.

RESOLVED: To approve the adoption of the revised Code of Conduct.

(Proposed: Cllr W Winpenny, seconded: Cllr Steel.)

38/26-27 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

- It was suggested the play area plans were shared on the website for information.

39/26-27 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 15th October 2026, 7:30pm, Acol Village Hall

The meeting was closed by the chairman at 20:50hrs

APPENDIX

KCC update to cover the month of July 2026 – Cllr Luke Evans

Thanet Way Update

After 12 months of a temporary 50mph speed limit on the Thanet Way, I am pleased to confirm that the necessary repairs have been completed and the national speed limit has now been restored.

I attended the Thanet Way Speed Programme in early July and witnessed an operation carried out with military precision. Highways teams from across Kent worked over two nights to replace lighting, repair and resurface sections of road, clear drains and gullies, cut grass, collect litter, and remove the temporary speed restrictions.

I even had the pleasure of helping Cllr Peter Osborne, Kent County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways, remove one of the 50mph signs. I suspect it may have been one of the most popular sign removals in Kent this year!

Bus Services Update

Many residents will have heard concerns about the future of the 32 and 9 bus routes which basically cover the whole of my division from the borders with Margate division in Garlinge up to Birchington and throughout all my rural villages to the borders with Ramsgate Division. While it is true that both services were under threat, it is important to clarify that Kent County Council was not responsible for the proposed withdrawals. Bus services are operated by private companies which have faced significant financial pressures due to Government policies such as increased employer NIC and the £2 bus fares. Polly Billington MP blaming these route withdrawals on KCC was either a blatant lie on her behalf in a game of political point scoring or she simply didn't know what she was talking about. Either way it is a bad look for an MP.

As soon as I became aware of the situation, I worked closely with Cllr Spencer Dixon, Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways, council officers, and the operators to find a solution.

I am delighted to report that those efforts have been successful and both routes have been saved. While KCC did not remove these services, we have worked hard behind the scenes to help secure their future for local residents.

Kent's First-Ever Fly-Tipping Conference

On 10 July, Kent County Council hosted the county's first-ever Fly-Tipping Conference, bringing together local authorities, the Environment Agency, Kent Police, government representatives, landowners and waste industry professionals to tackle waste crime head-on.

Leader Linden Kemkaran did not hold back on the scale of the problem, warning that fly-tipping "scars neighbourhoods, damages our countryside and places a real financial burden on the people of Kent," and that letting it persist in the same places risks it becoming normalised. The conference has led to a new partnership and the development of a Kent Fly-Tipping Action Plan to keep the momentum going.

Read more here:

<https://news.kent.gov.uk/articles/partners-unite-to-tackle-fly-tipping-and-waste-crime-across-kent>

<https://x.com/LeaderofKCC/status/2075521592088531300?s=20>