



BOBBING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Wednesday 6th August 2025

Present:

Cllr. G. Randall	Sarah Poole - Clerk
Cllr. R. Richardson	Cllr. M. Bencych
Cllr. S. Chapman	Cllr. P. French
Cllr. M. Baldock	

42 Parishioners (23 parishioner left at 19.18)
Sgt. McLean (14 people left include Sgt. McLean 20.20)
(4 people left at 20.33)

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Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Cllr. Randall welcomed everyone to the meeting and expressed delight at the strong turnout of parishioners. He noted the importance of community engagement and thanked all those who take part in local activities.

Updates were shared on community initiatives, including:

- Bobbing in Bloom was successfully restarted last year, with strong participation this year.
- Friendship Café – which is held on the last Saturday of each month.
- Repair Café – which is held on the second Saturday of each month.
- Village Hall – now has a new website for direct booking of facilities.

Thanks were extended to Councillors and volunteers supporting these activities, with special mention of Cllr. S. Chapman for plans to arrange a Christmas Day community gathering, where she will be cooking a Christmas dinner so people are not on their own on Christmas day.

Cllr. Randall expressed gratitude to all those involved in Bobbing in Bloom, especially the judges, Sarah Poole (Clerk), Ann Cavanagh Borough Councillor and Cllr. Karen Watson, Mayor of Swale – also a resident of Bobbing

Cllr. Randall reflected on the tradition of gardening in Sittingbourne, noting his grandparents had won “Sittingbourne in Bloom” awards.

A special thank you was given to the Clerk, Sarah Poole, for her work behind the scenes to ensure the smooth running of the event.

The Chair invited the Mayor to present the awards, acknowledging her dedication and contribution to the parish.

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Mayor to give out Awards/Trophies for Bobbing in Bloom 2025

The Mayor presented the trophies and Certificates of Appreciation for *Bobbing in Bloom 2025* in the following categories:

- ***Hanging Basket and Window Display***
The overall winner was Ms Sheila Elkin.



- **Wildlife and Garden Award**
The overall winners were Mr and Mrs Bell.
- **Front Garden**
The overall winners were Mr and Mrs Cass.
- **Small Front Garden** (*new category for 2025*)
The overall winners were Mr and Mrs Bradley.

BPCM25/26 – 43 Mayor to give out certificates of appreciation for Bobbing in Bloom 2025

- **Hanging Basket and Window Display**
8 certificates were awarded.
- **Wildlife and Garden Award**
6 certificates were awarded.
- **Front Garden**
14 certificates were awarded.
- **Small Front Garden** (*new category for 2025*)
5 certificates were awarded.

The Mayor thanked all those present for their time and involvement, noting the pleasure of visiting and viewing the gardens, and commenting on the high standard of gardens within Bobbing. Appreciation was expressed to all participants for their efforts.

Cllr Randall also offered thanks to attendees before the meeting proceeded to the formal agenda. Thanks were noted both to those remaining for the meeting and to those who had attended earlier and subsequently departed.

The Council then moved to formal business at 19.17.

BPCM25/26 – 44 Public Session as per our Standing Orders 3 f, g & h and shall not exceed 30 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting. An individual member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting. The chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.

No comments were received from the public.

BPCM25/26 – 45 **To receive any report from Borough Councillor Cllr. Mike Baldock, Cllr Ann. Cavanagh, Cllr. Lloyd Chapman, Cllr. Roger Clarke and Cllr. James Hunt.**

Cllr. Baldock advised that members' grants are now open (£1,000 available). Work continues on the Regulation 18 consultation for the Local Plan. He also highlighted ongoing uncertainty regarding local government structures in Kent and confirmed that budget consultations for the next financial year are underway.



Cllr. Cavanagh reported on recent meetings and training covering community safety, planning policy, and chairing skills. She attended the SBC Mayor's fundraiser and the launch of Heather House's "Chatty Café". She also continues to follow the Highsted Park appeal, which is scheduled to resume in October 2025.

No reports from Cllr. Chapman, Cllr. Hunt or Cllr. Clarke.

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To receive any report from County Councillor Cllr Palmer

No report from Cllr. Palmer.

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To receive any report from PC Philip Clemens.

A report was received from PC Philip Clemens (via Sgt. Claire McLean). Key points included:

- Anti-social behaviour typically increases during the summer, with recent issues involving nuisance vehicles such as off-road bikes and e-scooters. Residents are encouraged to report incidents to assist with enforcement.
- On 9 July 2025, a works van was broken into at the Premier Inn, Bobbing Services, with several hundred pounds' worth of tools stolen. Vehicle owners are reminded to secure vehicles and remove valuables when unattended.
- On 21 July 2025, a car window was damaged at the Bobbing Apple car park, believed to have been caused by a catapult projectile. Similar incidents have been reported elsewhere in Swale, with associated risks to public safety. Residents with information are asked to contact police.

Sgt. McLean reported that additional 5 officers are expected to join the team in September, which will strengthen local policing. PC Clemens has moved to a new role, but updates relevant to the parish will continue to be provided.

Community engagement remains important, and residents are encouraged to report issues such as nuisance vehicles and anti-social behaviour directly to the police. Concerns raised during discussion included:

- **Catapults:** Cllr. Baldock queried their legality. Sgt. McLean confirmed they are not illegal, but misuse can constitute an offence.
- **Traffic and speeding:** Parishioners reported issues with speeding on Bobbing Hill, heavy goods vehicles using unsuitable routes, and concerns at Sonora Way. Sgt. McLean confirmed that officers have been trained in the use of speed guns and will undertake enforcement in problem areas.
- **Motorbikes:** Reports were made of illegal and antisocial use of motorcycles, particularly at weekends. Sgt. McLean noted that enforcement is challenging but urged residents to report incidents with as much detail as possible.
- **Partnership working:** Sgt. McLean confirmed they are working with Kent County Council, the Fire Service and other agencies on problem-solving approaches, particularly in areas affected by fires and anti-social behaviour.

Cllr. Randall thanked the officers for attending and for their continued support.



BPCM25/26 – 48 For Members to make or receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary Interests in regard to any items on the agenda under the Council’s adopted Code of Conduct

None declared

BPCM25/26 – 49 Approval and Adoption of Minutes from the previous meetings Minutes of the Council Meeting on 9th July 2025.

These were all circulated before the meeting all agreed. Cllr. Bencych proposed, and Cllr. Richardson seconded all agreed. All agreed. **Resolved: Accepted.** The Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

BPCM25/26 – 50 Matters arising from the minutes not covered by other agenda items.

a. Update on Kitchen in the Village Hall. Cllr. Chapman

Cllr. Chapman reported that she and the Clerk met with a kitchen supplier who visited the Village Hall to provide a quotation for refurbishment. Proposals include the installation of new kitchen equipment oven, fridge, freezer, cooker, and dishwasher all to industrial specification with stainless steel fittings.

As part of the works, the existing doorway between the kitchen and the storeroom will be blocked up. Access will instead be redirected so that a clean entry and exit routes are separated, improving layout and functionality. A full quotation is awaited.

b. Defibrillator update Cllr. Chapman

Cllr. Chapman reported that enquiries have been made regarding the purchase of a community defibrillator. A number of pledges have already been received, including £100 from Cllr. Baldock and a contribution from Cllr. Lloyd Chapman. The cost of a unit is approximately £1,500 plus the necessary cabinet.

The Clerk explained to members of the public present that several defibrillators are already available locally, including at McDonald’s, the nearby hotel, the Co-op, and Bobbing Hill. A parishioner suggested that local businesses could be approached to contribute towards the project.

Cllr. Randall stated that the intention is for the new defibrillator to be installed outside to ensure public accessibility. Cllr. Richardson confirmed that once installed, it will be registered on the British Heart Foundation’s DefibFinder service. Cllr. Randall also noted that consideration is being given to access improvements around the Village Hall, including a pedestrian gate, to complement the activities already held there.



Councillors discussed whether an additional defibrillator was necessary given existing provision, but it was noted that the unit at Grove Park has already been used three times. Cllr. Baldock expressed support for the proposal, and Cllr. Watson suggested that the Kent County Councillor might also be approached, given his background in first aid.

The Clerk confirmed that she has written to the KCC Councillor and was asked to prepare a letter to local businesses seeking support, which she will also be hand delivered.

Post Minute Note: An outdoor polycarbonate locked cabinet with alarm has been identified as suitable, and a Defibtech Lifeline unit with 5-year battery has been recommended. The combined cost is approximately £1,500 for the unit plus £500 for the cabinet.

c. Gardener – Cllr Richardson/Cllr Chapman

Cllr. Richardson reported that HDS are currently contracted to carry out gardening and maintenance tasks for the Parish Council. However, progress has been limited and councillors discussed future arrangements.

Cllr. Chapman proposed to take on the grass cutting at the Village Hall, noting that as she lives opposite, she would be able to undertake the work conveniently and ensure the site is kept under control. She also confirmed her willingness to maintain the area alongside the proposed allotment for the Friendship Café.

The Clerk reported that McDonald's, who had recently provided assistance with planting at the Village Hall, had expressed an interest in supporting further projects. It was noted that McDonald's have offered with maintaining the area on Sheppey Way by the village sign, as well as the opposite verge, which are currently maintained by HDS.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr. Baldock and seconded by Cllr. Bencych that approaches to McDonald's for further support be welcomed. It was further agreed that the Clerk write to HDS advising that their services will no longer be required.

Cllr. Chapman declared an interest in relation to lawn cutting. It was proposed by Cllr. Richardson and seconded by Cllr. Baldock that Cllr. Chapman takes responsibility for the Village Hall grounds. Cllr. Randall expressed the Council's thanks to Sue for her kind offer of help.



d. Nethertoës, Sheppey Way.

The Clerk reported that correspondence was received in May 2025 via Kevin McKenna MP regarding suspected illegal waste activity at the Nethertoës site, Sheppey Way. The Environment Agency confirmed at that time that it had received two reports of alleged illegal waste activity, and that a site visit took place on 16 May 2025. No illegal activity was observed during the visit, and as the property owner was not present, a further inspection was to be arranged. Since that initial communication, no further update has been received from the Environment Agency. The Parish Council agreed that the Clerk will write again to request a progress report and will continue to monitor the situation in conjunction with the MP's office.

e. Community Governance Review

Cllr. Baldock reported that the Community Governance Review has been approved by Swale Borough Council and is now proceeding. Cllr. Baldock discussed the potential implications for Bobbing Parish, including the possibility of boundary changes affecting areas such as The Meads, the Gabby Road estate, and other neighbouring developments.

Cllr Baldock reported that, Swale Borough Council and Kent County Council are expected to be restructured into a unitary authority in the coming years, it will be important to ensure that parishioners retain a strong local voice. Depending on the outcome of the review, Bobbing Parish could find itself incorporated into a larger authority alongside areas such as Sittingbourne, Medway, Gravesend, Dartford, or wider parts of Swale, and potentially Maidstone or Ashford.

Councillors agreed that it is vital to consult residents on their preferences and to seek feedback on whether new governance arrangements should be created or existing boundaries retained. The objective is to ensure that local representation is not diluted as wider local government reforms take place.

BPCM25/26 – 51 **Community Engagement**

i. Report on Loneliness Project 26th July 10.30-12.30 then last Saturday of each month.

Cllr. Chapman reported at the cafe on 26th July 2025 (10.30-12.30) it was attended by 5 people. One attendee celebrated his 88th birthday, which was marked at the event.

Cllr. Baldock requested that project dates for the next six months be included in future advertising. The Clerk confirmed this will be implemented, daily adverts are currently being issued. Cllr. Chapman confirmed attendance has been encouraging, particularly among older residents.



Cllr. Chapman noted that she had spoken to the people that attended the last café about the following:

- Holding a possible Christmas lunch
- Developing future pathways/events
- Exploring a community small allotment at the Village Hall

As well as additional initiatives aimed at bringing the community together.

ii. Feedback on Repair Café starts 12th July 2025 next one 9th August 10.00-14.00

Cllr. Richardson reported that a soft first session was held on 12th July 2025 at Bobbing Village Hall, with the next scheduled for 9th August 2025, 10.00–14.00. The initiative has been formally registered with the Repair Café International Network (Amsterdam).

The project is led by Cllr. Lewis Blake-Knowles and Cllr. Richardson, supported by volunteers including Ivan Woolard (electrical repairs), Graham Goldsmith, and Uwe.

The objectives for the Parish Council include:

- Reducing local waste and prolonging the life of everyday items
- Restoring repair knowledge and practical skills in the community
- Combating social isolation by providing a welcoming, sociable environment
- Supporting the global *Right to Repair* movement

The Repair Café offers free monthly sessions, with tea, coffee, cake, and conversation provided. The repairs include: electrical, IT/software, small household items, toys, and general DIY.

We are still looking for support seek funding for tools, consumables, safety equipment, marketing, and storage. Donated tools and reusable parts are welcomed. The Parish Council is also seeking additional skilled volunteers in electrical, woodwork, dressmaking, crafts, glass, china, IT troubleshooting, DIY, and hospitality to support future sessions.

The Clerk said All you need to do is bring your broken items to the Village Hall on the second Saturday of the month. One of our team will do their best to fix it during the session. If it can't be repaired on the spot, they'll take it away and return it the following month. And the best part – it's all completely free!

iii. Repair Café Insurance

The Clerk reported that cover has been arranged under the Community Combined Scheme with Talisman Specialty UK Limited, via Wessex Insurance Brokers, the Policy term: 09 August 2025 – 08 August 2026, and the total cost: £272.70 (including Insurance Premium Tax and admin fee). This ensures adequate protection for the monthly Repair Café activities.



iv. Community library at the Village Hall

Cllr. Chapman and Cllr. Richardson have been working to establish a small community library space at the Village Hall. Cllr. Chapman has provided two bookcase and stocked with donated books, and DVDs are also being collected. The library will be accessible particularly during the Friendship Café sessions as well as the Repair Café sessions.

Cllr. Chapman advised that additional equipment such as a DVD player and VHS unit are being made available for community use, along with mobility aids to assist visitors who may need support getting home. Cllr. Chapman aim is to create a welcoming, accessible space where residents can relax, borrow books or films, and enjoy time together.

v. Feedback from Community Funday 3rd August 2025

Cllr. Baldock reported that the Community Funday at Gore Court Cricket Club was considered a success overall, providing the Parish Council with an opportunity to engage with members of the public.

Cllr. Randall expressed thanks to Cllr. Bencych for the loan of his marquee and collecting the tables. Cllr. Baldock, Cllr. Chapman, Cllr. French, Cllr. Bencych and the Clerk all took turns in manning the Parish Council stall. The stall raised funds through a tombola, with proceeds going towards the Christmas Meal Fund.

Cllr. Baldock noted that publicity by CDS had been limited, with some residents in nearby Grove Park Avenue only discovering the event on the day itself when walking past.

Cllr. Richardson reported mixed feedback from residents. Families enjoyed the day, but the layout across the field was challenging for those with young children. Publicity had consisted of a single banner on the A2, an article in the Parish Magazine several months earlier, and word of mouth.

It was further observed that CDS had not made effective use of social media, posting only after the event. In contrast, the Parish Council had promoted the day consistently on its own channels.

Cllr. Watson, speaking as a local resident, advised she had been unaware of the event due to the absence of leaflet distribution. She suggested that future publicity should include posters in local shops, schools and community venues, as well as leaflets to neighboring households. Councillors also noted that no posters had been displayed within the Cricket Club itself, which may have reduced awareness.

Councillors remarked that there had been no organised outdoor entertainment. A DJ had played music inside the clubhouse bar, but this was not audible outside. Announcements about raffle tickets were only occasionally heard. Councillors felt that background music or additional entertainment would have created a more engaging atmosphere.



The Clerk reminded members that the Parish Council had donated £150 towards venue hire. CDS had subsequently offered to return this donation. Cllr. Baldock proposed, seconded by Cllr. Bencych, that the donation should not be returned, as had been given in good faith. This was agreed unanimously. Councilors also felt that public acknowledgement of the Council's support by CDS would have been beneficial in raising awareness of its contribution.

Cllr. Bencych proposed that the Parish Council consider hosting its own community event next year, building on the enthusiasm and lessons learned from this year's CDS event. Councillors agreed that improvements in advertising, layout and entertainment would be essential to ensure greater success.

The Clerk to write to CDS confirming that the Parish Council will not be accepting the return of the £150 donation, and to provide constructive feedback on the event.

vi. Planting borders Cllr. Sue Chapman, the Clerk and McDonalds

Cllr. Sue Chapman, the Clerk, and representatives from McDonald's recently assisted with planting at Bobbing Village Hall. A number of plants, including hydrangeas and salvias, have been added to improve the appearance of the hall's borders by the fence line.

Suspension of Standing Orders

It was proposed by Cllr. Baldock, seconded by Cllr. Randall, and agreed that Standing Orders be suspended at 20:22 to allow a short comfort break. Members of the public were also invited to join councillors in having refreshments.

Before the suspension, Cllr. Randall presented thanks to Cllr. Cavanagh, Cllr. Watson, and the Clerk for their assistance in judging *Bobbing in Bloom* this year.

The meeting was reconvened at 20:33.

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General matters raised by Parish Councillor's Reports for discussion.

Cllr Richardson (Chair of the Village Hall Committee) expressed thanks to all those involved in the ongoing improvements at Bobbing Village Hall. Cllr. Richardson highlighted progress in enhancing the outside space, making the hall an attractive and welcoming venue. Cllr. Richardson emphasised the importance of sustaining these improvements and recorded appreciation for the contributions of volunteers and local businesses.



Cllr Richardson further reported that a local developer, exploring the establishment of a nearby solar farm, had approached the Parish Council regarding potential funding support for local projects. Following discussion, members identified the following proposals:

- A new roof for Bobbing Village Hall.
- Replacement fascias and guttering.
- Provision of a free electric car charging facility on site.

The developer responded positively, requesting a second quotation and details of the next steps. If secured, this would represent a significant investment in the future of the Village Hall.

Cllr Randall thanked Cllr Richardson for his initiative in pursuing this opportunity.

Cllr Bencych suggested that the Council explore the organisation of a “Big Lunch” style community event, in line with the Eden Project’s national initiative.

During discussion, the following points were raised:

- Cllr Richardson proposed inviting local bands to perform.
- Cllr Chapman suggested a picnic-style family day.
- Cllr Bencych recommended approaching local radio stations for publicity.
- Reference was made to Faversham and Sheerness Town Councils, which hold annual events.

Councillors considered developing the event into a “Bobbing Village Country Fair”, possibly in partnership with Gore Court Cricket Club.

Discussion extended to the possibility of a Christmas event, but this was deemed impractical due to short notice and existing commitments. It was agreed to focus on a summer event, with volunteer support essential. Cllr Baldock proposed agreement in principle. Cllr Randall cautioned about the level of workload required, drawing on prior experience. Cllr French and Cllr Randall abstained, citing workload concerns. All other councillors as agreed which voted as **RESOLVED**: To support in principle the organisation of an annual summer community event, subject to volunteer recruitment and further planning.

Cllr Baldock proposed establishing a working group. Cllr. Baldock Cllr. Richardson, Cllr. Bencych Chairing it, Cllr. Chapman, and the Clerk to attend the first meeting and report back.

Cllr Baldock noted volunteer and marshal recruitment should not present difficulty, with the main challenge being administrative paperwork. The Clerk will include a call for volunteers in the next *Bobbing Reporter*.

Cllr Bencych suggested fewer than ten volunteers may be sufficient. Cllr French reported that CDS had five marshals at their recent event. A parishioner suggested approaching police cadets or scouts for support.



Cllr Chapman advised that she had spoken to Grace, from *Bubbles Waffles*, that attended the recent Community Funday and offered assistance to Cllr Chapman with assistants in preparations for the Christmas Meals.

Cllr. Chapman reported that she has written to Swale Borough Council regarding pigeon waste under the bridge (response awaited).

Cllr. Chapman reported that she has written to Kent Highways requesting, a solid white line opposite the school, a pedestrian crossing, and a reduction of speed limit to 20mph (response awaited).

Cllr. Chapman reported that she has written to the National Lottery for funding towards a new roof for the Village Hall, with supporting photographs.

Cllr. Chapman reported that she has written to, Mr Harwood at Bobbing Primary School, regarding two sheds from the school, as they are due to go in there skip this week, with plans to repurpose them for the Friendship Community Allotment. The Repair Café may carry out necessary repairs.

Cllr Chapman reported her intention to approach *Hamex* regarding the installation of a safer replacement fence for the area designated for the *Friendship Allotments*. Cllr French also expressed safety concerns regarding barbed wire fencing. This would replace the existing barbed wire fencing, with options of either a 4ft or 6ft height.

Cllr Randall expressed concerns about the proposal and recommended that neighbouring residents be consulted before any decision is taken. The Clerk confirmed that residents had already raised concerns about weeds and debris in the area. The Clerk confirmed that the fencing under discussion lies on Parish land and remains the responsibility of the Parish Council.

Cllr Richardson commended Cllr Chapman for her energy and commitment to progressing the project.

Cllr French reported that the bench and bin at *Jacinth Way* remain missing. Contact has been made with Cllr James Hunt at Swale Borough Council, but no update has been received.

Cllr French raised concerns about speeding on *Sonora Way* and congestion on *Staplehurst Way*.

Cllr French noted the potential for anti-social behaviour linked to the installation of benches but stressed the need to balance this against their wider community benefit.

Cllr Richardson observed that floral displays are being obscured by banners on the fence line, reducing their visual impact.

The Clerk reminded councillors that submissions are urgently required for the next edition of *The Bobbing Reporter*. Even short contributions would be welcomed.



BPCM25/26 – 53

Financial Statement and Authorisation of Payments

The Clerk provided a summary of financial transactions since the last meeting, The Clerk presented a summary of financial transactions since the last meeting, recorded through the Scribe accounting platform. A printed schedule of payments was circulated. It was noted that Cllr Richardson has access to reconciliation and payments within the system.

Several payments had already been processed under delegated authority of the Clerk/RFO. The Council was asked to approve these, together with any outstanding payments Cllr Richardson Proposed and Seconded by: Cllr Baldock **RESOLVED:** Accepted unanimously.

The Clerk confirmed the Unity Trust Bank balance stood at £80,516.20 prior to processing the listed payments. Payment instructions had been prepared online, and Cllrs Richardson and Randall were requested to log in and authorise them by the following evening.

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Planning Application – viewable on: Swale:

<http://pa.midkent.gov.uk/onlineapplications>;

- a. ***Just for note:*** Application No: 22/503654/EIOUT Location: Land To The West Of Bobbing Sittingbourne Kent ME9 8QL Proposal: Outline application (all matters reserved except for access) for a mixed used development comprising up to 2,500 dwellings, a 5.21 ha commercial employment zone including doctors' surgery, a 4.35 ha sports hub (and sports pitches), 3FE primary school, community facilities, local retail provision, public open space, children's play areas and associated parking, servicing, utilities, footpath and cycle links, drainage, ground and other infrastructure. This application was noted by the Council as a standing item. No further discussion took place at this meeting.
- b. Planning Application Ref. No: 25/502198/FULL [Replacement bay window with single storey front extension, including extending driveway and dropped kerb.](#) 6 Sandford Road Sittingbourne Kent ME10 1PR

The Council reviewed the application. Councillors noted that there appeared to be no objections from neighbouring residents and that the proposed works did not represent a significant change to the property.

Proposed by Cllr Baldock, seconded by Cllr Randall, and agreed unanimously that the Parish Council raise **no objection** to this application.

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Appeals:

- a) **Appeal Notification – Application Ref. 24/504803/FULL (PINS Ref. APP/V2255/W/25/3368690)**

Proposal: Erection of a self-build two-bed dwelling with associated parking and landscaping at Webbenditch Cottage, Cold Harbour Lane, Bobbing.



Councillors noted that an appeal has been lodged by Mr Jake Shaw following the refusal of planning permission by Swale Borough Council. The Planning Inspectorate has confirmed that the appeal will be determined by *Written Representations*.

It was agreed that The Clerk should write again to the Planning Inspector, restating the Parish Council's earlier comments on the application.

Cllr. Randall asked if there had been any further report regarding the Eden Top planning appeal. The Clerk confirmed that she has not had a response. Cllr. Baldock noted that the decision appeared to have been issued by the Planning Inspectorate rather than the local Planning Committee. Concern was expressed regarding the outcome of the appeal and the potential implications for the Parish Council's previous decision.

BPCM25/26 – 56

Consultations

The Clerk advised that a public consultation is now open regarding the Statement of Licensing Policy 2025–2030. This consultation is relevant to all parishes and towns, as the policy will guide the way to Swale Borough Council regulates licensed premises and activities over the next five years. The closing date for comments is 19 September 2025. Details and documents are available on the Council's *Consultations – Statement of Licensing Policy* webpage.

Cllr. Baldock asked whether the consultation regarding Area Committees had been completed. The Clerk reported that she had circulated the consultation documents on two occasions but had not received any responses. Following discussion, it was noted that Cllr. Richardson had submitted a response individually, expressing his own views. Councillors acknowledged that consultation responses may be submitted either individually or collectively on behalf of the Parish Council.

Councillors further expressed concern regarding the format of the consultation feedback forms, noting that they are restrictive in nature and rely heavily on tick-box responses, which may not fully capture community views. It was suggested that the Parish Council consider submitting supplementary comments in letter form, highlighting local issues such as traffic, housing, crime, and rural priorities. The Clerk will submit a response on behalf of the Parish Council and, where appropriate, include supplementary comments alongside the standard feedback form to ensure local concerns are fully represented.

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Correspondence

The Clerk reported on correspondence which has been received regarding Highways matters, A249 Key Street and Grovehurst Schemes.



- Key Street Improvement Scheme (Issue 5, July 2025): Ongoing works at Chestnut Street are continuing, with full closure until September. A further closure of the A2 at Key Street roundabout is scheduled for 11–21 August 2025, with diversion routes via Sheppey Way and Bobbing Interchange. Works include service crossings, splitter island construction, drainage, kerbing and slip-road cabling diversions.
- Grovehurst Improvement Scheme (Issue 23, July 2025): The new Grovehurst bridge has now opened to traffic and the junction is operating to its permanent design. Final works continue on the gyratory, including kerbing, drainage, and access roads. A final drop-in session will be held on 29 July 2025. Collaboration with Southern Water has delivered the installation of a major new water pipe to support Sheppey.

The Clerk raised concerns that had been submitted to Cllr Richard Palmer (KCC) and subsequently referred to Mrs Jennie Watson (KCC Road Safety & Active Travel). A resident of Grovehurst Road, who is a serving Police Officer, had reported excessive speeding, near misses and three recent accidents, and suggested the installation of speed bumps or a speed camera.

KCC's response advised that crash data up to 31 March 2025 recorded only one slight incident (April 2024, mobile phone use). Average recorded speeds were 29.2 mph northbound and 27.9 mph southbound, both below the 60 mph limit. KCC confirmed that formal requests for intervention must come via the Police Traffic Management Unit and offered to discuss the criteria for any future measures.

Clarification was requested as to the involvement of Bobbing Parish Council, given that this matter lies outside the Parish and should be directed to Cllr Palmer. Concerns regarding the Parish Council being copied into correspondence, and issues of clarity and responsibility, were noted. It was further acknowledged that any initiative proposed by the resident must be formally directed through the appropriate administrative channels.

The Clerk advised that an email had been received from Shawn Kelf Peak Developers (Land Solutions) providing an update on the Quinton Road development following pre-application discussions with KCC Highways. Proposals include: reprofiling of the Quinton Road/Sheppey Way corner to slow traffic; provision of a new right-turn ghost lane; upgraded pedestrian crossings (two new locations identified); a new traffic island; and widened pedestrian footways. The Option 3 plan (Drawing Ref P24174_003_A) illustrates these proposals, including cycleways and visibility splays.

Cllr Chapman expressed concerns regarding an anticipated increase of over 500 vehicles, safety issues associated with the single-track railway bridge, and wider congestion risks.



Training Reports

The Clerk confirmed that a meeting will be held with Aubergine, Cllr. Bencych, and the Clerk, scheduled on Monday 18 August 2025 (12:00–12:30), to discuss the transfer of the Parish website from HugoFOX to Aubergine.

It was noted that Aubergine is also providing guidance on Website Accessibility Compliance (WCAG 2.2 Level A). A training session has been arranged as follows on 27 August 2025, 11:30–13:00, Online (Zoom) Mark Tomkins (Aubergine) £10 + VAT Members wishing to attend should register individually.

The Clerk highlighted several upcoming KALC training sessions and strongly encouraged councillors to attend where possible. Key recommendations include:

Local Government Reorganisation – Procurement 8 Sept 2025, 10:00–11:30am, £30+VAT

Planning: Understanding the Local Plan Process 18 Sept 2025, 6:30–7:30pm, £35+VAT

The Nuts and Bolts of Parish Councils – For Councillors 6 Oct 2025, 6:00–8:00pm, £50+VAT

The Clerk encouraged all councillors to do the following training:

Planning: Appeals and Enforcement – 9 Oct 2025

Planning: Policy v Material Considerations – 23 Oct 2025

Planning: Policy Update – 12 Nov 2025

Planning: Climate Change and Planning – 20 Nov 2025

Planning: Design Codes and Guidance – 4 Dec 2025 6:30–7:30pm,

The Essentials of Being a Good Employer 16 June 2026, 10:00am–12:00pm,

The Clerk has attended the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) training, launched by KALC. The next LGR training session, on Procurement, will take place online on 8 September 2025, 10:00–11:30.

The Clerk reported from the Swale LGR Workshop that concerns were raised about communication, responsibilities, and clarity of roles, alongside discussions regarding the Parish website transfer. Swale Borough Council will be hosting further LGR Workshop sessions at Swale House, Sittingbourne on Thursday 16 October 2025, 19:00–21:00 or Saturday 18 October 2025, 12:30–14:30 (*subject to a minimum attendance of five Parishes*)

The Clerk encouraged new Councillors to attend the “Nuts and Bolts of Parish Councils” training session, which has been scheduled for 6 October 2025, 18:00–20:00 (online).

The Clerk will be attending ScribeFest (online) on 9 October 2025, 09:30–16:00, which will include sessions on Assertion 10 (digital and data compliance) Funding opportunities Parish management Website Accessibility (WCAG 2.2 AA) if Councillors want to join in please let the Clerk know.



The Clerk encouraged Councillors to attend training sessions online where possible, now we have the facilities at the Village Hall the Clerk can arrange for her to be present.

BPCM25/26 – 59 Reports from representatives

a. Village Hall Committee: Cllr. Randall

Cllr. Randall reported that the Village Hall Committee continues to work hard to improve the hall for the benefit of parishioners. Current efforts include essential maintenance updates and consideration of opportunities to enhance facilities and encourage wider community use.

Cllr. Randall expressed thanks to Uwe for his work over the weekend in clearing redundant wires, including old camera and mains connections, which has made future electrical support and development much easier. This has significantly tidied the space and ensures clarity regarding what wiring is actually in use.

Further work, such as redecorating, is being explored, and the Committee will consider suitable timing for repainting the room. Cllr. Randall concluded by reiterating his appreciation for the voluntary contributions made to the upkeep of the hall.

b. Local KALC – Rural Parishes: Cllr. French, Cllr. Twardochleb

No update as no meeting had been held.

c. Friends of Rose Hill: Cllr. Baldock

No update as no meeting had been held.

d. The Meads Community Woodland: Cllr. French

Cllr. French reported that the group has been largely inactive due to other commitments. It is hoped that the group will reconvene and resume work soon.

e. Joint Transportation Board (JTB): Cllr. Bencych

No update as no meeting had been held.

f. Western Area Committee: Cllr. Richardson, Cllr. Bencych

No meeting had been held. The next meeting is Tuesday 9th September at Swale House at 19.00. Cllr. Richardson has given his apologies in advance.

g. Swale Liaison Forum

No meeting has been held. Cllr. Baldock asked that the Council write to enquire when the next meeting will take place, as it has been some time since the last one and the sessions are considered very beneficial. The Clerk will action this.

BPCM25/26 – 60 Recommendations to next Full Council

None



BPCM25/26 – 61

Dates of Next Meeting:

3rd September at 19.00

BPCM25/26 – 63

Closure of Meeting

The meeting closed at 21.25

These minutes are certified to be a true and just record.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____