



BOBBING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Wednesday 4th February 2026

Present: Cllr. G. Randall Sarah Poole - Clerk
Cllr. R. Richardson Cllr. M. Bencych
Cllr. S. Chapman Cllr. L. Blake-Knowles 19.05-19.19
Cllr. K. Watson

In attendance: Two parishioners

BPCM25/26 – 173 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Cllr. G. Randall welcomed Councillors, the Clerk and members of the public to the meeting.

Cllr. Randall extended a welcome to Cllr. L. Blake-Knowles, attending a Parish Council meeting for the first time since June 2025 following his wife being diagnosed terminally ill. Cllr. Blake-Knowles briefly addressed the Council and apologised for recent absences due to ongoing family circumstances, but does keep up to date with emails etc.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. M. Baldock, Cllr. N. Twardochleb (family reasons), Borough Councillor Cllr. A. Cavanagh (attendance at a Swale Borough Council meeting)

RESOLVED: Apologies for absence were accepted.

BPCM25/26 – 174 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.

A parishioner thanked all those involved in the Friendship Café, having attended for the first time on the previous Saturday. Positive comments were made regarding the welcoming atmosphere and the value of the café for residents who have limited ability to leave their homes.

BPCM25/26 – 175 To receive any report from Borough Councillor

Cllr. A. Cavanagh sent in a detailed report Cllr. Cavanagh advised of continued involvement with Heather House Chatty Café, which operates weekly on Tuesdays and maintains regular attendance. Training and briefings attended during January included the Renters' Rights Act, Council Tax and Business Rates, Houses in Multiple Occupation, Housing Options, and the Queenborough and Rushenden regeneration scheme. Attendance was also



noted at a meeting regarding the Community Governance Review for Sittingbourne. Councillors were reminded that the Community Governance Review consultation closes on 9th February 2026 and the Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation closes on 23rd February 2026.

Cllr. M. Baldock, Cllr. Lloyd Chapman, Cllr. Roger Clarke, Cllr. J. Hunt – No reports received.

BPCM25/26 – 176 To receive any report from County Councillor

A written report was received from Cllr. Richard Palmer, Kent County Councillor for Swale West.

The report advised of attendance at the Swale Borough Council Policy and Resources Committee and provided responses to matters raised previously by the Parish Council. It was confirmed that the most recent recorded Road Traffic Collision at the Sheppey Way/Stickfast Lane junction occurred in 2022, and that locally gathered data may assist in informing future Highway Improvement Plan discussions.

Clarification was also provided that responsibility for the clearance of pigeon droppings rests with Kent County Council where public footpaths are affected, and with National Highways in relation to the A249.

Kent County Council has confirmed that speed or radar-activated speed signs are permitted; however, no funding would be provided for their installation.

The report further noted that Cllr. Richard Palmer, in the capacity of Chair of Kent County Council, is hosting the Kent Reserves and Cadets Event on Tuesday 24th February 2026, from 1.30p.m. to 4.00 p.m., at County Hall, Maidstone. The event is intended for local employers, organisations and employees, including those interested in supporting defence through the Armed Forces Covenant, becoming reservists, or volunteering as Cadet Force Adult Volunteers. Councillors were invited to circulate the invitation more widely and interested parties were advised to register via the Eventbrite link provided.

BPCM25/26 – 177 To receive any report from PC Skye Williams and PC Jacob Boosey, including an update on policing cover for Archers Park and Grove Park.

A written update was received from PC Jacob Boosey, with apologies for non-attendance due to shift commitments.

It was further reported that PC Skye Williams (Iwade and Bobbing) and PC Topham (covering Borden and Grove Park) were unavailable due to compassionate leave.



For the interim period, PC Jacob Boosey confirmed that any ward-related matters should be forwarded directly for attention.

Ward newsletters were circulated as part of the update, and reassurance was provided that policing cover remains in place, including for Archers Park and Grove Park.

PC Jacob Boosey also confirmed willingness to attend future Parish Council meetings or community events where possible.

BPCM25/26 – 178 **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**

Cllr. S. Chapman declared an interest in item BPCM25/26 – 180(b) and confirmed that Cllr. S. Chapman will abstain from any vote under that item.

BPCM25/26 – 179 **Approval and Adoption of Minutes from the previous meetings Minutes of the Council Meeting on 7th January 2026.**

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 7th January 2026, having been circulated in advance, were considered.

Cllr. R. Richardson proposed that the Minutes be approved and adopted as a true record of the meeting, Cllr. M. Bencych seconded the proposal.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 7th January 2026 be approved and adopted. The Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

BPCM25/26 – 180 **Matters arising from the minutes not covered by other agenda items.**

a. *Kitchen quotation – Bobbing Village Hall*

No update was available. Cllr. R. Richardson will continue liaison and provide an update when available.

b. *Gardening and maintenance contract – Bobbing Village Hall*

Councillors considered five quotations received for the gardening and maintenance contract at Bobbing Village Hall.

Discussion focused on pricing, scope of works, insurance provision and contractor experience.

- Cllr. G. Randall proposed that the contract be awarded to Cherished.
- Cllr. R. Richardson proposed Cllr. S. Chapman as an alternative contractor.
- Cllr. K. Watson seconded the proposal for Cherished, subject to clarification of service requirements prior to commencement. It was noted that Cherished had



offered a free trial period and that references/testimonials would be requested for review by the Clerk.

- Cllr. M. Bencych supported the proposal for Cherished.

Cllr. R. Richardson and Cllr. S. Chapman abstained from the vote.

RESOLVED: That the gardening and maintenance contract be awarded to Cherished, subject to confirmation of service details and receipt of satisfactory references.

c. *Laptop for the Clerk*

An update was provided regarding the replacement laptop and the return of existing equipment.

The Clerk confirmed that a refund is being processed for the previously purchased refurbished Dell Latitude laptop. The refund reference number is 1834013, with funds expected within three working days.

Councillors considered alternative replacement options to ensure suitability for Parish Council business use.

Cllr. M. Bencych proposed, and Cllr. G. Randall seconded, the purchase of a Lenovo ThinkPad business laptop (Windows 11 Pro, 16GB RAM, high-capacity storage). All agreed **RESOLVED**, accepted That the Lenovo ThinkPad laptop be purchased for the Clerk.

That a Computer Expert be instructed to set up the new laptop upon delivery.

BPCM25/26 – 181 Community Engagement

a. *Feedback on Repair Café and Friendship Café*

The Repair Café held on 10th January 2026 (second Saturday of each month, 10.00–14.00) was reported as successful.

An expression of interest was received from Mr Roger Fox, a retired engineer with City and Guilds qualifications, who has offered to support future sessions.

Correspondence was noted from Kent County Council confirming:

- ongoing support for Repair Cafés across Kent;
- provision of a funded PAT testing kit and calibration certificate;
- engagement with the e-Waste Warriors project, including potential attendance at future Bobbing Repair Café sessions; and



- an invitation to attend the Kent Repair Café Conference on Friday 19th June 2026, to be held at Sessions House, Maidstone.

Future collaboration with local schools and Kent County Council officers was welcomed.

b. *Report on Loneliness Project*

The session held on 31st January 2026 (10.30–12.30) was attended by over 30 residents, with positive feedback received and a number of new attendees noted.

A request was raised regarding support for older residents who do not drive.

The Clerk will explore potential options with CVS Sittingbourne.

The project will continue on the last Saturday of each month.

c. *Newsletter information*

The Clerk requested that Councillors submit reports and contributions for the next edition of The Bobbing Reporter by mid-February 2026.

Cllr. R. Richardson suggested including a Bobbing-themed word search in the newsletter.

d. *Allotment Project*

The commencement of the next stage of the Allotment Project on 28th March 2026 (11.00–13.00) was noted.

Cllr. S. Chapman requested the purchase of grids for the allotment shed and shingle.

The Clerk will arrange delivery.

BPCM25/26 – 182 General matters raised by Parish Councillor's Reports for discussion.

Cllr. S. Chapman raised concerns regarding the condition of the verge along Sheppey Way, advising that inappropriate parking has caused significant damage to the grassed area. The matter has been reported to Borough Councillors. Councillors discussed the potential need for physical measures, such as bollards, to prevent further parking on the verge.

Cllr. K. Watson reported similar issues within The Grove, noting that while schools attempt to manage parking behaviour, problems persist largely due to parental parking practices.



Cllr. K. Watson, in the capacity of Mayor of Swale, advised that the forthcoming Drag Bingo Night is fully sold out.

Cllr. M. Bencych advised that comparable issues continue around Aspire, with vehicles double-parking despite previous consultation. It was agreed that a Highway Improvement Plan (HIP) meeting is required to progress these concerns further.

Cllr. M. Bencych confirmed continued support for the Friendship Café, noting its ongoing value to the community.

Cllr. R. Richardson proposed organising a community litter pick, particularly focusing on verges adjoining the A249 and Sheppey Way.

The Clerk advised that any litter picking on these roads would require Highways approval, including potential temporary road management. It was further noted that, at the meeting held on 5th November, litter picks were agreed to commence in January; however, this did not take place.

Previously agreed dates of 28th February and 28th March were confirmed. While an hour was originally suggested, Councillors agreed that a two-hour session (11.00–13.00) would be more appropriate.

It was agreed that:

- The Clerk will design and circulate a poster promoting the litter pick
- The Clerk will purchase high-visibility tabards marked “Bobbing Parish Council”

Cllr. R. Richardson suggested renewed outreach to local schools to encourage involvement with the Lamp of Peace initiative for Remembrance Day. The Clerk will contact the schools to explore participation.

Cllr. G. Randall displayed Lions Bottles to Councillors. The Clerk explained their purpose and background, advising that additional bottles can be obtained if required

Lions Bottles are part of a community safety initiative supported by Lions Clubs. The bottles are intended to provide emergency medical information for individuals, particularly older or vulnerable residents.

Each bottle contains a medical information form on which the resident records important details such as:

- name and address, next of kin, emergency contact, medical conditions, current medication and GP details



The completed bottle is stored in the refrigerator, a place that emergency services are trained to check. A green cross sticker is placed on the inside of the front door and/or fridge door to alert emergency responders that a Lions Bottle is present.

The initiative helps paramedics and other emergency services access vital information quickly when a person is unable to communicate, potentially improving response times and outcomes.

BPCM25/26 – 183 Financial Statement and Authorisation of Payments

- a) The Clerk will make payments under the delegated powers of the Clerk/RFO and to seek approval of any additional payments as necessary.

The Clerk/RFO outlined financial transactions scheduled for processing following the meeting, recorded on the Scribe accounting platform. It was confirmed that Cllr. R. Richardson has full access to reconciliations and payment records within the system.

Several payments by Direct Debit or Standing Order had already been processed under delegated authority. The Parish Council was asked to approve remaining transactions requiring authorisation. They were proposed: Cllr. G. Randall and seconded: Cllr. M. Bencych, all agreed **RESOLVED** accepted. That all payments be authorised.

The Clerk reported that the Unity Trust Bank balance prior to processing payments stood at £79,545.64. Payment instructions had been prepared online and Councillors with banking access were requested to complete authorisations.

BPCM25/26 – 184 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.



BPCM25/26 – 185 Appeals:

No appeals were received.

BPCM25/26 – 186 Consultations

a. *Community Governance Review (closing 9 February 2026)*

The Community Governance Review consultation was completed during the meeting, with all Councillors present participating in the response.

It was further noted that a letter to residents had been devised to support the consultation and that distribution of the letter commenced on Monday 2nd February 2026, with Councillors hand-delivering copies to encourage resident engagement with the review.

b. *Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation (12 January 2026 to 23 February 2026)*

Councillors considered the Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation.

Due to the length and complexity of the consultation document, Councillors requested that the Clerk complete and submit the Parish Council response following the meeting, taking into account previous Council discussions and agreed positions.

BPCM25/26 – 187 Correspondence

a. *Loneliness in Swale – Local Insight and Next Steps*

Correspondence from Swale CVS was received outlining the findings of the *Loneliness in Swale* survey and associated next steps, including the launch of the Swale Community Activities Directory and the roll-out of Loneliness Champion training. The role of parish councils in supporting community wellbeing was acknowledged.

b. *Bobbing Parish Council Website*

An update was noted that Cllr. M. Bencych and the Clerk continue to work on the development of the Parish Council website, which is nearing completion.

c. A249 Traffic Management

Correspondence relating to traffic management and updates to the A249 Grovehurst Road Improvement Scheme was received and noted.

d. *Breast Screening in Swale*

Information regarding breast screening services in Swale was received and noted. Cllr. G. Randall will put into the noticeboards.



e. Key Street Newsletter – January 2026

The newsletter was received and noted.

f. Member Grant Offer Letter

The Member Grant Offer Letter was received and noted, it was noted that Cllr. Lloyd Chapman has not authorised his grant with Swale Borough Council. Cllr. S. Chapman will chase this.

g. Illuminate Event – April 2026 (Final Promotion Posters)

Final promotional posters for the Illuminate Mental Health and Wellbeing Workshop, organised by Sheppey Pulse Network Charity, were received.

Cllr. G. Randall agreed to display the posters on Parish Council noticeboards.

h. Sheppey Pulse Network Event – April 2026

Correspondence was received inviting Councillors to share details of the Sheppey Pulse Network Mental Health and Wellbeing Workshop, to be held on 4th April 2026, from 10.00am to 4.00pm, at The Criterion Theatre, Blue Town, Sheerness. The event is free to attend and open to all residents.

i. Request to Display Jigsaw Project Poster

A request to display a Jigsaw Project poster on local Parish Council noticeboards was received, Cllr. G. Randall will display these.

j. Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust – Public Governor Elections

Correspondence was received from Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust seeking community voices to stand in the forthcoming Public Governor elections. The information was noted.

k. AED Aftercare Report

Correspondence was received from Hopkins+ Training and Support confirming the purchase of the Village Hall AED, cabinet, bleed kits and associated aftercare package. The aftercare invoice and supporting information were received and noted.

The correspondence highlighted the importance of ongoing governance, maintenance and community resilience through the provision of life-saving equipment and training support.



l. Kent Police and Crime Commissioner – Winter Newsletter

The Kent Police and Crime Commissioner Winter Newsletter (2026) was received and noted.

Key points highlighted included:

- Allocation of £88,031.86 to 49 community projects across Kent through the Police Property Act Fund, supporting initiatives such as youth safety, violence against women and girls, and family support programmes.
- Notification that the next round of Police Property Act Fund applications will open in March 2026.
- A Police Funding Consultation seeking public views on future policing funding and potential precept increases, noting that Kent Police remains among the lowest-funded forces per head nationally.
- PCC priorities for 2026, including tackling rural crime, road safety initiatives, reducing violence against women and girls, promoting mental health and wellbeing, and encouraging volunteering and active citizenship.

m. South East Guide to SEND

The South East Guide to SEND was received. Copies have been made available at the Village Hall, with a number taken for distribution through the Friendship Café and for use by the local church.

n. Kent County Council Draft Budget

The Councillors noted receipt of the Kent County Council Draft Budget Report January 2026, which sets out proposals for the 2026/27 revenue budget, the 2026–2036 capital programme, and the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2026–2029.

It was noted that the draft budget proposes a balanced net revenue expenditure of £1,647.8 million for 2026/27, representing an overall increase of £116.5 million (7.6%) compared with the previous financial year. Significant allocations are proposed for adult social care and children’s services, reflecting continued demand pressures.

Funding is proposed to be met through a combination of council tax income of £1,048.1 million (a 5.1% increase) and a central government settlement of £595.4 million.

The capital programme outlines planned investment of £1.901 billion over the period 2026–2037, with no new borrowing impacting the 2026/27 revenue budget.



Councillors further noted that the report highlights ongoing financial challenges, including the use of one-off measures and reserves to achieve a balanced position, and forecasts additional spending pressures in 2027/28 and 2028/29.

Contextual information relating to planning assumptions, financial resilience, risk assessment, and the statutory requirements for local authority budget setting was also noted.

It was noted that the final budget proposals will be considered by Kent County Council at its budget meeting in February 2026.

o. Correspondence from the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC)

Correspondence was received from the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) seeking feedback from Clerks and Councils to inform the future development of its training programme.

The correspondence invited views on specific training needs, including planning-related matters, and requested information on parish council experiences relating to requests for double yellow lines, particularly where such requests have been refused by Kent County Council. KALC is seeking examples of how issues were progressed, whether refusals were overturned, and whether specialist advice or expertise had been helpful.

The correspondence was received and noted.

p. Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 – “Martyn’s Law”

Information was received regarding the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, commonly known as Martyn’s Law, which received Royal Assent on 3 April 2025.

It was noted that the legislation introduces proportionate, tiered security requirements for public premises and events, based on venue size and capacity, with the aim of improving public safety and reducing the risk of terrorist attacks.

Councillors noted that the Government has confirmed an implementation period of at least 24 months before the Act comes into force, allowing time for the Security Industry Authority (SIA) to establish its new functions and for responsible bodies to prepare for compliance.

It was further noted that the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) are working collaboratively to support local councils, including the publication of advisory notes to raise awareness of the legislation and its implications for parish and town councils.



Further definitive guidance and training will be provided once Home Office guidance is issued.

The information was received and noted.

q. *Household Emergency Plan*

Correspondence and information relating to household and community emergency planning were considered.

It was agreed that this work should be progressed through the establishment of a working group, to develop and review emergency planning arrangements and associated guidance for residents.

r. *Road Safety and Active Travel Plan*

Correspondence relating to a Road Safety and Active Travel Plan was received.

It was noted that the plan had been attached and distributed to Councillors for information and consideration.

s. *Lamp Light of Peace – Remembrance 2026*

Correspondence was received regarding the Lamp Light of Peace initiative, inviting participation in a national act of remembrance to take place at 11.00am on 11th November 2026, with lamps to be lit at 10.57am in advance of the two minutes' silence.

It was noted that the initiative aims to promote remembrance and peace, encourage community and youth involvement, and may be repeated annually. Guidance and supporting materials were provided for those wishing to take part.

The correspondence was received and noted.

t. *Swale Community Preparedness Webinar Series (January–March 2026)*

Correspondence was received from the Kent and Medway Resilience Forum, Communities Prepared, and partner organisations regarding a free Swale Community Preparedness Webinar Series running from January to March 2026.

The webinars cover topics including winter preparedness, community emergency planning, flood and storm volunteering, and preparing for utilities outages, and are open to all Swale residents. An in-person Flood Volunteer workshop hosted by Minster-on-Sea Parish Council was also noted.

Councillors noted the request to share and promote the webinars via Parish Council communication channels where possible.



u. Citizens Advice Swale – February 2026 Update

Correspondence was received from Citizens Advice Swale providing a February 2026 update for parish sharing.

The update included information on consumer rights, particularly in relation to counterfeit goods, guidance on refunds and chargeback schemes, and details of local drop-in sessions, telephone advice and online services available to residents across Swale.

The correspondence was received and noted.

BPCM25/26 – 188 Training Reports

Councillors noted receipt of information relating to forthcoming Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) training events and conferences scheduled for 2026.

The programme includes the following training opportunities:

- KALC Chairmanship Conference 2026 – 26th February 2026
- From Awareness to Action: Supporting Older People Locally – 6th March 2026
- Standards Conference 2026 – 12th March 2026
- KALC Climate Change Conference 2026 – 27th March 2026
- Nuts and Bolts of Parish Councils (for Councillors) – 19th May 2026
- Introduction to Planning – 20th May 2026
- The Essentials of Being a Good Employer – 16th June 2026

Councillors were encouraged to advise the Clerk of any training they wish to attend.

BPCM25/26 – 189 Reports from representatives

a) *Village Hall Committee – 26th January 2026*

Cllr. G. Randall reported that a meeting of the Village Hall Trustee/Management Committee had been held on Monday 26th January 2026.

It was reported that Cllr. R. Richardson had signed, on behalf of the Village Hall, the Deed of Gift from the Raspberry Solar Farm Community Fund to support



provision of a new roof at Bobbing Village Hall. The report was received and noted.

b) KALC Swale Area Committee – Next meeting 16 February 2026

It was noted that the next KALC Swale Area Committee meeting will be held on 16th February 2026 at 7.00pm at Swale House, Council Chambers, and that an agenda had been circulated. Cllr. N. Twardochleb and the Clerk will attend.

c) Friends of Rose Hill

No report was received from Cllr. M. Baldock.

d) The Meads Community Woodland

No report was received.

e) Joint Transportation Board – 9th March 2026

It was noted that the next Swale Joint Transportation Board meeting will take place on Monday 9th March 2026 at 5.30 p.m. The Clerk reminded Cllr. S. Chapman that any requested agenda items must be submitted by the stated deadline.

f) Western Area Committee – 12th February 2026

It was noted that the next Western Area Committee meeting will be held on Thursday 12th February 2026 at 7.00pm at Swale House, Sittingbourne, and that the meeting will be held as a hybrid meeting. Cllr. R. Richardson and Cllr. M. Bencych will attend.

g) Swale Liaison Forum – 9th February 2026

It was noted that the Swale Local Parish Council Liaison Forum has been rescheduled to Monday 9th February 2026, 7.00-8.30pm, to be held online via Microsoft Teams.

BPCM25/26 – 190 Recommendations to Next Full Council

None.

BPCM25/26 – 191 Dates of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 4th March 2026 at 7.00 p.m.



BPCM25/26 – 192 Closure of Meeting

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21.21

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

Signed: _____

Date: _____