



The tools that shaped our village

**Full Council Minutes of the Otham Parish Council Meeting
held on Monday, 10 March 2025 at 7.45 pm
in the Village Hall**

Persons Present: Cllrs Kevin Hipkins - Chairman; Val Moon; Jenny Hollingsworth; Alan Chard; Mick Read; Sally Christodoulou, Clint Hickmott, Teresa Irving – Clerk/RFO.

1. **APOLOGIES:** No apologies were received.
- 2 **NOTIFICATION OF WHETHER ANYONE WISHES TO FILM, PHOTOGRAPH OR RECORD ANY ITEMS** – None provided.
- 3 **CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLORS:** Not applicable.
- 4 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS:** None declared.
- 5 **CRIME REPORT & POLICING UPDATE:** The following reports were obtained from e-watch.co:

Stacksteads Place. On 28 January between 14.00 and 15.30. A lock on a residential property shed was damaged.

Buffkyn Way for info (unparished). On 22 February between 21.40 and 2153. Windows of a Vauxhall Vivaro that was parked on the road were smashed
- 6 **ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** No members of the public were present.
- 7 **APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS HELDS ON 13 JANUARY 2025:** The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings & were duly signed by Councillor Hipkins
- 8 **RECEIVE BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPORT:** Not available.
- 9 **RECEIVE COUNTY COUNCILLOR’S REPORT:** Not available
- 10 **VILLAGE GREEN:**
 - 10.1 **Parking contract update:** Not available. **ACTION: Cllr Hipkins**
 - 10.2 **Confirm Maintenance Requirements for War Memorial/Consider Previously Circulated Qotations:** One company submitted an updated quotation that incorporates additional work on the surrounding wall. Following due consideration, the quotation from Malling Masonry was approved. **ACTION: Clerk**
 - 10.3 **Consider Footpath Quotations:** Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation from Abacus Playgrounds. **ACTION: Clerk**

11. FINANCE:

11.1 Approve Statement of Account:

OTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCIAL REPORT FROM 01.01.25 TO 28.02.25

	UNITY BANK Current Acct	UNITY BANK Savings Acct	NATWEST 95 Day Acct	NATWEST Business Reserve Acct
Balance b/f 31/12/2024	-	-	19,787.96	200,484.38
			0.00	202,016.97
Expenses: Name				
Spectulise - Annual Website Charge	100.00			
Paul Waring - Village Green, Car Park & VH	2,170.56			
Staffing Costs January	959.04			
Service Charge January	6.00			
Fitzpatrick Woolmer - Deposit VG Lectern	1,422.60			
Staffing Costs February	967.45			
Service Charge February	6.00			
Total expenditure:	5,631.65			
Receipts:	0.00			
Transferred Funds:				
In: NatWest Transfer			85,000.00	
Sub total:	14,156.31			
Out - Transf'd to NatWest 95 Day Saver Acct				85,000
Interest				
Nov/Dec				456.04
January		N/A		228.27
February		N/A		153.62
Total income:				
Balance c/f	14,156.31	200,484.38	85,000.00	117,854.90
Bank Statements:	14,156.31	200,484.38	85,000.00	117,854.90

Approval of the above was proposed by Cllr Moon, seconded Cllr Hollingsworth and unanimously agreed. **RESOLVED**

11.2 Accounts Update: NatWest verbally confirmed that the Business Account transfer to Unity Bank will take place by close of business today.

11.3 Consider Grant Request from Otham Village Hall for Guttering & Roof Repairs: Following due consideration of the quotations that were provided, it was **RESOLVED** to provide a grant from CIL funds in the sum of £2,400. OPC to be invoiced for the work.

11.3 Consider Grant Requests from: The Heart of Kent Hospice & St Nicholas Church. In accordance with LGA S137, it was **RESOLVED** to donate £100 to each organisation

Minutes 10.03.25

Signed:

11.5 Consider SLCC Membership: A resolution to pay 50% of the membership cost (£120) was agreed (Downswood PC has also agreed to pay 50% of the membership).

11.6 Other Matters to Report. No further matters to report.

12 CONSIDER PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED/GRANTED:

To consider and resolve the council's response to planning applications listed below and any additional applications advised by Maidstone Borough Council and are available on their website between the circulation of the agenda and the meeting to which it pertains.

New Applications – None received.

13 HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN/JOINT PARISHES TRANSPORT GRP INC SPEEDWATCH UPDATE:

- Parish Speed Indicator Device (SID – Shared across Parishes) Update: A request for a SID & additional speed survey(s) for White Horse Lane & other appropriate locations within the parish to be considered.
- Gateway to be requested for the grass verge on Gore Court Road, at the parish boundary, just north of the junction with Buffkyn Way.
- Clerk to request signage to advise residents/visitors to The Coppice and Monchelsea Park that they are in the parish of Otham.
- Update re Flooding/Blocked gullies in White Horse Lane/Honey Lane. Highways have designated a target completion date of 8 April for the work.

14 REVIEW OF RISK ASSESSMENT: Acceptance of the previously circulated draft Risk Assessment was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed. **RESOLVED**

15 AGREE DATE FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING & ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING:

Dates of Monday, 28 April & Monday, 19 May respectively were agreed, with the meetings taking place at 7.30 pm. **RESOLVED**

16 CONSERVATION AREA CONSULTATION UPDATE: The consultation, which was well attended, closed on 9 March. MBCs project team will report back on key outcomes in due course.

17 RECEIVE REPORT OF MEETINGS AND SEMINARS ATTENDED:

- Cllr Christodoulou attended a Flood Warden Training on 03.12.24
- Clerk attended KALC's Webinar 'What a Council should publish on their website, why and how' on 30.01.25
- Cllrs Hipkins & Hickmott attended the KALC Chairman's Conference on 27.02.25.
- Clerk's Forum 07.03.25. The main discussion centred around Devolution. KALC assured everyone that PCs will remain unchanged (a Community Governance Review would be necessary to abolish PCs). Town Councils will also remain unaffected.

Kent has been informed that they will not be in the fast-track devolution deal, but changes must be agreed for local government reorganisation. Unparished areas

should have some form of governance. Every parish should be able to make their own decisions.

Boundary reviews will only be considered if there is a compelling argument for a review.

KALC is currently meeting with KCC and all Borough Chief Executives to discuss concerns that have been raised.

18 CIL PROJECTS: Updates.

Interpretation Lectern. Photographs have been obtained. Accompanying text to be prepared shortly.

ACTION: Clerk

Book Swap Cabinet. The quotation of £485 from S Butler was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed. **RESOLVED.**

ACTION: Cllr Christodoulou

Signage for Gore Court/Church Rd Junction – see Item 13 (Gateway request).

Drinking Fountain for the Green. Cllr Read is investigating a water supply for the fountain.

ACTION: Cllr Read

19 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED: Various correspondence circulated by email for consideration.

- In response to a request from a resident, Cllr Hipkins to ask if the farmer will consider a new cycle gate for KM88, with a view to preventing bikes and motorcycles from unlawfully using the footpaths. **ACTION: Cllr Hipkins**
- A response from Cllr Neil Baker, KCCs Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation, regarding the impact of local road closures has been shared online with residents.

20 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION: Post Boxes/Kerb for Gore Court Road.

Please contact the Clerk if you have items that you wish to be considered for the agenda.

21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Following discussion, it was agreed to delay the May Full Council meeting by one week. The meeting will now take place on Monday, 19 May at 19.45 hrs in the village Hall, preceded by the Annual Parish Council meeting, which will commence at 19.30 hrs.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.00 pm.