

Cliffsend Parish Council

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Draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
Held on Wednesday 17th September 2025 at 7.00pm in Cliffsend Village Hall

Present - Councillors: Davis (Chair), Harrison, Rogers, Birchall, Shonk, Mole.
Alison Willoughby-Browne (Clerk), Police Officer and 7 members of the public.

23/25-26 Welcome and apologies for absence -

Cllr Davis welcomed those present. No apologies received.

24/25-26 Declarations of interest -

No interests declared.

25/25-26 Adoption of the minutes of 16th July 2025 as being a true record -

Resolved: the minutes were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

26/25-26 Matters arising from the above minutes -

None other than to be discussed.

27/25-26 Reports -

County Councillor – CCllrs Shonk and Mole welcomed, CCllr Mole introduced himself; working with Pie Factory to try and save selling the building, issues in Ramsgate town centre; rough-sleepers and drug and drink issues. Need to invest in the town to get people in to the centre. Were three drug centres - Broadstairs and Margate now shut so all coming to Ramsgate. KCC - a lot of work into reducing debt, £2k a day saved in interest payments from costs of £84k a day. To meet with Parish Councillors to discuss issues faced in Cliffsend, particularly highways.

District Councillor – DCllr Rogers pleased to see shields back on the Viking Ship, and fence has been painted. District Cllrs met with some of the residents of King Arthur Road re' the children's homes; frequent police and ambulance presence, smashed windows, damaged cars, people stoned with catapults. Resident concerned re' subsidence where sink hole filled in, waiting for update. DCllrs Davis and Rogers still monitoring fields at Pegwell, spoke to a senior planning officer; so much unknown spoil (4m plus) been dumped that the profile of land completely different, also not licensed as a dumping ground. Angela Rayner put at risk legislation that protects gaps between settlements, which would ensure that Cliffsend retained its identity. CCllr Mole will pursue.

Police Officer – PC Howard informed that he has two weeks left in this post. A very busy summer in Ramsgate and Broadstairs meant he has been unable to monitor problem roads in Cliffsend. Has issued s59 notices. The A299 was discussed; noise disturbance, motorbikes. King Arthur Road investigations ongoing, regular calls, residents shared their frustrations. CCllr Mole and PC Howard encouraged residents to report any issues, this will ensure better support. CCllr Mole to check the operating licence with KCC colleagues, possibly not KCC placements, licensing and planning at district and county level might give power to shut the homes down. PC Howard to investigate enforcement of lorries on Canterbury Road West and also to check speeding on the A299, although difficult to enforce speeding through the tunnel (motorbikes). Installation of speed cameras would be difficult but digital speed signs might be possible.

28/25-26 Financial Matters -

Cllrs had checked the payment schedule with supporting paperwork (circulated electronically).
 Contractual payments; Clerk's salary, bought-in services.
 Resolved: the following approved for payment (*italicised already paid*).

Payee	Description	Invoice No	VAT	Ex VAT	Total
<i>Resident</i>	<i>Metal Raised Garden Bed x 2</i>	<i>SUT23385961</i>		86.97	86.97
<i>NJL BoxGreen</i>	<i>Meadow Cut June</i>	<i>19436</i>	14.00	70.00	84.00
Clerk	Mobile Phone Top-Up	-	-	20.00	20.00
Total for Month			14.00	176.97	190.97

29/25-26 Planning Applications -

FH/TH/25/0772 65 Sandwich Road (erection of single storey rear extension, rear dormer window, alterations to roof, enlargement of loft conversion), has been approved.

30/25-26 Current Topics -

Ongoing review of Council procedures – Communications and Public Questions.
 Resolved: to accept the procedures, as circulated.

Councillor vacancies – now able to co-opt to fill role that Marcus Wilkinson left. Unfortunately, another vacancy is now being published due to the resignation of Cllr Philip Corr. Cllr Harrison requested a letter of thanks be sent to Philip.

Village Christmas tree purchase – Christmas tree to be erected in November so an early decision on purchase necessary. Cllr Davis suggested that we make a donation towards new commercial Christmas lights, rather than domestic, to avoid having to keep replacing. Circa £500. £132 paid for Christmas tree last year, CCllr Mole offered to pay for the tree, thanked for the offer. To liaise with Hall Committee re' a grant for the lights.

Open Gardens/Gardening Club – Cllr Harrison would like to resurrect the Gardening Club, could be held at her home where resources from last club are stored. Suggested monthly meetings, anyone interested please contact Cllr Harrison (01843 594094). Used to have 'Open Gardens' in the village; a list of gardens produced and a small donation to visit them would generate funds for charities, the Parish Council can be the promoters and coordinators for the scheme – next year. Anything that gets communities to bond and share interests and have pride in the village is good. Horticulture changing, by getting people together can discuss changes.

To consider the motion to appoint an independent HR/H&S consultancy – (first consideration under 'Current Topics') Cllr Davis proposed the following motion be adopted:

'That this council approves the appointment of an independent HR/H&S consultancy, to review current arrangements, advise on areas in which we can improve our performance as a Parish Council, and ensure ongoing statutory compliance. This appointment will be for a period of up to three years, with a budget of up to £8,000 per annum, to be selected by a majority agreement of members, from at least three comparative quotes. This process will help ensure this council becomes an exemplar of best practice.'

Cllr Davis explained that historically Cliffsend Parish Council has fulfilled its functions, with Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) it will need to be more relevant and provide a voice for residents, that quite a normal thing to bring in an HR and H&S consultancy who will review all the procedures and protocols to ensure that we are compliant. Also, a lot of changes going on within the law, vital to make sure that we are fit for purpose on an ongoing basis and that we make all the improvements we can around structure and performance. Cllr Harrison was concerned re' the cost involved, that residents would be upset if it impacts on their council tax, that we pay money to KALC to advise us. Cllr Davis stated that won't come to as much as that but we have to have a budget which reflects market value, the motion is to approve the principle and set out the ability to look at the market and select a provider. Cllr Rogers explained that TDC do this. Cllr Birchall stated that the big picture is the Devolution Bill - essential that we look at what we are doing now - not people telling us what we should do, working out our role. CCllr advised us to wait until November before expenditure, Clerk advised not in the budget for this financial year, explained the audit process – our financial management and governance is considered strong. Cllr Davis confirmed that lots of discussions have been had at various meetings and KALC have made

recommendations. Motion seconded by Cllr Rogers, carried with a majority vote.

31/25-26 Clerk's Reports -

- Applicant for one of the Councillor positions.
- TDC are happy with the current design of the shields on Viking Ship but thanked Cllr Harrison for offer to paint/decorate them as they were originally – brightly coloured with emblems, a professional signwriter was ready to help. Cllr Davis has discussed with TDC about setting up a trust to take responsibility for the Viking Ship so that it is protected ongoing, and to secure within the community. Cllr Birchall has experience of forming trusts.
- Sea link; ground investigation works at converter station site.
- Combination lock on meadow gate had to be replaced as meadow contractor couldn't access meadow to mow.

32/25-26 Correspondence Received -

- Resident – overgrowth Foads Hill; reported to landowner, cut back
- Resident – speed cameras on A299; discussed with Police Officer
- Resident – road issues due to Sandwich Road diversion; updated
- Resident – trenches near St Augustine's Cross; responded

33/25-26 Public Questions -

Resident explained that damage to Viking Ship was caused because it was set on a concrete base, now on a wooden one. Also, confirmed that there are holes in the base for drainage and will share details of the contractor who refurbished it.

Cllr Harrison is looking for volunteers to help erect further silhouettes for a display on Bakers Field for Remembrance Sunday.

Meeting concluded at 8.34pm

Date of next meeting - 7pm, Wednesday 19th November 2025