

**Minutes of the Aldington and Bonnington Parish Council meeting held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2024 in Aldington Village Hall at 7:30pm.**

**Present:** Councillors; L Harman (Chair), R Boulding, L Guy, G Taylor and S Wagstaff

**In attendance:** Peter Setterfield PSLCC, Parish Clerk.

Also present: P New (Neighbourhood Watch).

**1552. Apologies for absence:**

Councillors P Hannabuss, H Stebbings and J Weatherall.

**1553. Declarations of interest:**

There were no declarations of interest.

**1554. Sellindge Synchronous Condenser:**

Report submitted by email:

Most notably for the Council, the site will close for the Christmas period from Friday the 20<sup>th</sup> of December until Monday the 6<sup>th</sup> January. There will be some activity on the site during this period, which will be for maintenance and refuelling of the diesel generator as this provides power to the CCTV for the site.

Activities to take place over the coming 2 weeks:

- Switchyard bases will continue to be worked on, this comprising of formwork and concrete pouring, the pours are very small in nature due to the size of the foundations
- Sync Con cooling system foundations are being excavated and blinded, formwork will be prepared as well
- Thrust bore works have now completed, as such we will be backfilling and reinstating excavations
- Site tidy up in preparation for Christmas shutdown
- Finalisation of position of embedded parts (bolts in the foundation for the sync con, grey steelwork
- The main Sync Con pours haven't taken place as planned and these are now due for January.

I am aware there have been a slight concern of water on the road (not site entrance but further down Church Lane). We have investigated this on numerous occasions and believe it to be due to all of the inclement weather opposed to an issue from the site. We will continue to review and monitor the issue. We do have pumping systems and drainage set up on the site to manage any surface water drainage due to rainfall.

**1555. Solar:**

Following the Planning Inspectorate hearings last week written representations are being prepared which will be submitted before the deadline on 10<sup>th</sup> December.

An independent Local Visual Impact Assessment has been prepared and submitted to the Parish Council. The report on the LiDAR data and Heritage statement have

been received today. These documents will be referred to in the submission and added as an appendix.

**1556. Public Participation:**

It has been reported that the Bonnington Village sign has been blown over in the recent storms, the sign is currently in storage and will be reinstated in the new year. The post box at Bonnington Green was reported to Royal Mail as damaged last month, however it has been observed that the box and post have been removed by parties unknown. This is currently being followed up with Royal Mail together with a request that when the box is replaced it is with a heritage box.

**1557. Neighbourhood Watch:**

Report attached.

**1558. Ashford Borough Councillor's Report:**

Today, ABC, moved from the Civic Centre in Tannery Lane into International House which is opposite the station. I haven't seen the new offices yet. All council staff will operate from there as of today. I hope to get a sneak peek tomorrow when I'm visiting the Planning team. The Civic Chamber will continue to operate from the Tannery Lane building as usual for the time being.

Spoke to the East Kent Health and Care Partnership, NHS Kent and Medway at the recent Parish Forum organised by ABC. I have a further online meeting tomorrow: Ashford Borough Council who organise the Eat Well Spend Less Health and Wellbeing Roadshows in Ashford who suggested we might be able to arrange for the KCHFT (Kent Community Health Foundation Trust) Health Check bus to visit the parish (probably February). The bus would offer residents a health MOT, weight management advice, BMI, blood pressure, cholesterol finger prick test, advice and signposting and each health MOT takes around 30 minutes. It may be possible to invite KCC financial hardship and digital inclusion reps, Mental health/talking therapies rep, over 55s wellbeing matters and benefits/cost of living advice. We would need to ensure the event is well socialised to encourage residents to attend. If successful we could potentially arrange for the health check bus to go to the parish every 6 months if helpful.

On a related topic; I was recently in touch with Hamstreet Surgery, and spoke with their Social Prescriber, whom I am hoping will visit us at the Wednesday Hub sometime soon. She is aware of the Hub and has recommended it to some of the patients at the practice that she has been supporting.

This could nicely compliment the Waste Electricals Recycling Days we have had here. ABC funding for these events has now ceased but I've been offered one of the smaller pink WEE bins if we'd like it and we could partner with ABC suppliers to take products collected.

**1559. Minutes:**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024 were submitted, agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

**1560. Chairman’s Report:**

The Parish Forum event in November brought all Ashford Borough parishes together at the Singleton Environment Centre. The agenda covered presentations from ABC on the new Borough Plan with a focus on climate change and initiatives that the council is championing a discussion about how parishes can get involved. The Planning team gave an update on work on the Ashford Local Plan, outlining the timetable and explaining the process.

The Percy Earl Trust have been in touch once more and are asking for recommendations for recipients of their grant monies. If anyone would like to suggest an individual or couple who might appreciate a small financial grant then please let me know.

Stephen, myself and the clerk had a long conversation with KCC Highways about our proposed Highways Improvement Plan. In summary, the improvements to village gateways on all four approaches to the village did not appear to be contentious and are likely to be supported. On other topics such as management of parking near junctions the officer has committed to visit and report back to us with his observations, recommendations and costings. Disrespectful parking is an increasing problem. I have been in contact with the ABC Enforcement Team and have requested that we have a visit from a parking warden. If, however, anyone sees parking that poses a danger to other motorists or pedestrians – please report to the police with a photograph as this is the quickest way to get action.

**1561. Finance:**

Schedule of payments:

Payee	Purpose	Amount
J Aiken	MUGA Lights	£9,460.80
Staff costs		£3,258.57
Harmer & Sons	Grounds maintenance	£990.00
Aldington Village Hall	Room hire	£220.50
JRB Enterprise	Dog waste bags	£485.40
KALC	Climate change conference	£168.00
P Spencer	LiDAR report on Solar area	£1,068.75

**Resolved:**

- 1. To authorise the payment of the items in the schedule of payments.**
- 2. To authorise the transfer of £5,000.00 from deposit account to current account.**

**1562. Budget and Precept 2025/26:**

**Report ABPC/24/015** concludes the budget making process for 2025 / 2026 and makes recommendations to enable the Parish Council to set its precept for 2025 / 2026 and to notify the tax collecting authority, Ashford Borough Council, in accordance with statutory legislation.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To receive and note Report ABPC/24/015.**
- 2. To confirm the Parish Council's budget for the 2025 / 2026 financial year as:**

<b>Staffing &amp; Professional</b>	<b>£36,860.00</b>
<b>Office &amp; Administration</b>	<b>£6,892.00</b>
<b>Environment</b>	<b>£17,500.00</b>
<b>Community</b>	<b>£1,200.00</b>
<b>Provisions</b>	<b>£15,375.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£77,827.00</b>
<b>Funded by</b>	
<b>Precept</b>	<b>£75,727.00</b>
<b>Grounds maintenance</b>	<b>£900.00</b>
<b>Bank interest</b>	<b>£1,000.00</b>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	<b>£200.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£77,827.00</b>

- 3. To confirm the Precept for 2025 / 2026 at £75,727.00 in accordance with the provisions in Sections 39, 41 and 49A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.**
- 4. To authorise the Parish Clerk to sign the Precept demand on the Borough Council.**

**Councillor Taylor left the meeting.**

**1563. Planning Committee:**

No planning applications have been received for consideration since the last meeting of the Planning Committee.

**1564. Highways Improvement Plan:**

The Parish Council's Highways Improvement Plan is currently being considered by the Community Engagement Team at KCC. They will be undertaking a site visit to ascertain the viability of the requests that have been submitted, early indication is that this will be in February.

**1565. Events Committee:**

There was nothing to report.

**1566. Quarry Field and Pond:**

There was nothing to report.

**1567. Aldington Meadows:**

There was nothing to report.

**1568. Items for information:**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:55pm.



**REPORT FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH.  
ALDINGTON & BONNINGTON P.C. DECEMBER 2024.**



**THE THEFT OF INTERNET SHOPPING PARCELS & PACKAGES FROM OFF OF  
HOUSEHOLD DOORSTEPS**

**COURIER FRAUD.**

**Courier Fraud is where a package is delivered to your property and moments later a person calls saying the delivery was made in error. Only when a bill later arrives do people realise, they have been a victim of crime.**

- 1. The theft of a parcel from a doorstep mainly in town areas where there is foot traffic by a “Chancer and opportunists” Sometimes the thief had no intention of committing the crime but there was a parcel and then it was gone!**

**2 Vans now followed no property is safe.**

**My work will need to address this risk in the coming months as we start to move towards Christmas.**

**We must encourage safe delivery arrangements.**



CRIME

## Parcel thefts rise from doorsteps as gangs follow courier vans



**COURIER FRAUD WARNINGS HAVE ALSO BEEN ISSUED**

**I will update council on my work with E-SCOOTER/ELECTRIC BIKE FIRE RISK**

**I will address the work that I will carry out towards Christmas.**

**I will raise concerns of the failure of Ashford Police to attend council meetings throughout 2024 and in fact since the June 2023 launch of the Kent Police Model and the switch from PCSOs to the Beat Police Officers.**



1. For example, Father Christmas as we all know often stores extra Christmas presents in residents sheds.... Criminals know this!!
2. Residents store extra drink supplies in the run up to Christmas and New Year in sheds and garages .... Criminals know this!!
3. Christmas shopping and leaving items in cars then going off for lunch before continuing shopping. Criminals know this!
4. Packing cars to travel the night before, criminals will be aware and looking for targets. Criminals know this they will be walking around in the early hours looking for targets
5. Children playing with new Xmas gifts and leaving them outside properties and then going in for Xmas Lunch. Criminals will drive around in vans and pick up items to hand.
6. Alert when shopping at Christmas for distraction thefts especially in crowded supermarkets as you scramble for the cream and brandy butter. Handbags on shopping trollies a special risk.
7. Theft from external post boxes

**These are the types of risks we will face. Stay alert and vigilant.**

**IT IS ESSENTIAL ALL CRIMES/ATTEMPTED/FAILED CRIMES/ASB and CRIMINAL DAMAGE ARE REPORTED**

# Contacting Kent Police



Report a non-urgent crime or incident online at [www.kent.police/report](http://www.kent.police/report) or click the **Live Chat** button



In an emergency, if crime is in progress or life is in danger, call **999**



If you are hearing or speech impaired, use the textphone service **18000** or download the **BT Relay app**



Sign up to [www.MyCommunityVoiceKent.co.uk](http://www.MyCommunityVoiceKent.co.uk) to receive and respond to community alerts from your local officers



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For non-urgent issues, if you are unable to get online, call **101**



**Kent Police**

[www.kent.police.uk](http://www.kent.police.uk)



**INTO 2025**

**The work is now also underway to build my work plan for 2025.**

**It will be much of the same, but we must prepare for a flood of scams that can hit our residents whilst they are in the safety of their own homes with all doors securely locked.**

**In closing I always record my thanks as it is the last meeting in 2024 I would wish to thank you all for the support for Neighbourhood Watch and as important for me personally.**

**My work is on occasions very lonely and can bring me into conflict with many organisations as I strive to be better and to make our community safer. We have in your area some of the most vulnerable people in the Ashford District. Criminals work tirelessly to identify them and target them, we must match those efforts.**

**It is going into battle knowing you all so well and your deep community values that is so important. It is understanding your concerns and worries.**

**Our work together is so important in fact vital and essential but please never ever think that I take your support for granted. Support is earned through hard work, outcomes and results.**

**It may sound very similar words, but it will be same again please as we head into 2025.**

**I will be focused on crime and crime prevention, but I also possess the ability to lift my head and see clouds on the horizon that could hit us.**

**NEVER EVER FORGET “CRIME CANNOT FLOURISH IN COMMUNITIES THAT CARE”**

**Our resident’s care! and I care, and the most certain thing is I know is how much each and every one of you on the council care as individuals and as a team.**

**It has been an honour and a privilege to work with you in 2024 onward and forwards together in 2025. May I wish you all and your families a very happy Christmas and a Healthy Happy New Year**

Thank you all as always for your solid backing and support. I really appreciate that.

Stay safe, secure, alert and vigilant

Peter New ([peternew1@aol.com](mailto:peternew1@aol.com)) KENT POLICE VOLUNTEER & COMMUNITY NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

