

Linton Parish Council
The Minutes of the Meeting of Linton Parish Council
held in Linton Village Hall on 10th March 2025 at 7:30PM.

*Councillors present: Bernard Cresswell
Anthony DiMarco
Caroline Richer
Patrick Gerrish
Patricia Burden*

Also: Sherrie Babington, Parish Clerk, MBC Cllrs Wales, Clarke and English, and members of the public.

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Cresswell.

1. Apologies.

Members who cannot attend a meeting shall tender their apologies to the Parish Clerk prior to the meetings, under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence shall be accepted.

Apologies were received from the Parish Councillor Peter Paterson and KCC Councillor Simon Webb.

2. Parish Councillor Vacancy.

To consider any applications for the Parish Councillor vacancy.

No applications to consider.

3. Declaration of Interests.

To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers.

Cllr DiMarco declared an interest in planning matters.

To consider any Dispensation requests received by the Parish Clerk and not previously considered.

No Dispensations were considered.

4. Minutes of the previous Meeting.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were circulated to all Members.

These were proposed by Cllr Richer as a true record, seconded by Cllr Cresswell and agreed to by all present.

The minutes were then signed and dated by the Chairman of the meeting.

5. Matters arising from the minutes.

To consider any matters arising, not included on the agenda.

6. **Public Participation.**

A resident attended the meeting to speak regarding allotment matters.

7. **Clerks Report & Correspondence.**

The Clerks Report was noted.

8. **Devolution/Community Governance Review.**

To receive any updates on Devolution and the Community Governance Review.

MBC Cllr Clive English attended the meeting in response to concerns raised by the Parish Council at the previous meeting regarding a report presented by Maidstone Borough Council officer Ryan O'Connell to the Democracy and General Purposes Committee in January 2025. Cllr English that he had attended to address these concerns and provide further context.

He explained that, while other areas of the country were being fast-tracked for local government reorganisation, this did not apply to councils in Kent. Instead, a draft proposal was required to be submitted to the government by 21st March, to be finalised by November, with the outcome expected by December 2025. Elections for a shadow authority were anticipated in 2027, although this timetable may be subject to change.

He advised that the community governance review was not currently a priority due to the Kent County Council elections, but that Maidstone Borough Council would resume work on this in the coming months. Cllr English emphasised that Maidstone Borough Council had no intention of taking over parish councils as part of the review. He confirmed that only two specific areas—Tovil and Grove Green—were scheduled for review. However, Maidstone Borough Council was now undertaking a wider community governance review of Maidstone in order to seek to parish the currently unparished urban areas of the Borough.

He noted that the report by Ryan O'Connell had included surrounding parishes in the initial papers to align with the urban settlement, but this did not reflect the Council's intended direction. Cllr English stated that he would be putting forward a proposal for the creation of a town council covering only the unparished urban areas of Maidstone. He also noted that government guidance allowed for currently unparished areas to become parished if sufficient public support existed.

He informed the meeting that next meeting of the Democracy and General Purposes Committee was scheduled for 26th March 2025, and it was noted that members of the public were able to submit written questions. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council would prepare a question for the Chairman to submit to the meeting as a member of the public.

Action: Clerk and Chairman to progress.

9. **KCC & MBC Ward Councillor Reports.**

To received reports from the KCC and Borough Councillors.

Cllr Gerrish reported that some bins in the parish had not been emptied for over four weeks, with the last collection in February.

Cllr English advised that he would look into the issue if Cllr Gerrish could forward the relevant details to him.

Action: Cllr Gerrish to progress.

Cllr Wales raised spoke regarding the poor condition of the River Beult, and a restoration project led by the National Rivers Authority to address this. He stated that there had not had any engagement with local parishes regarding this.

The Chairman highlighted that the proposed chicken farm application would have a significant impact on the rivers condition and suggested that the relevant authorities should be informed, along with discussions on potential mitigation measures for the river.

Cllr Clarke informed the Parish Council that Maidstone Borough Council was conducting a food waste survey and would circulate details to members. He also spoke regarding a survey regarding smoke-free areas in the Borough.

Local Plan - Cllr Clarke expressed concern that Maidstone Borough Council risked losing its five-year housing supply, which could result in increased speculative development.

He reported that the Borough Council was preparing landscape protection policies to help safeguard vulnerable areas. Although protections had been introduced for landscapes of local value, he noted that a local application previously refused by the Borough Council had unfortunately been approved at appeal by the Planning Inspector due to the lack of a five-year housing supply.

Cllr Clarke reported that the next meeting of the Joint Transportation Board was scheduled for 18th May. He confirmed that funding for the Linton Crossroads improvements was being moved forward and would be included in the next round of bids.

Cllr Wales raised the matter of the Housing Needs Survey and asked whether the Parish Council wished to support this. The Chairman confirmed that the Parish Council had received an invitation to take part in the survey and had agreed that it could be progressed, provided there was no cost to the Parish Council.

10. Financial Matters:

a. Financial Statement.

Financial Statement will be circulated in paperwork at PC meeting.

The financial statement was circulated and approved by members. Proposed by Cllr Cresswell, seconded by Cllr Richer and agreed by all present.

11. Highways Matters and PROW.

To discuss highway related matters.

It was reported that potholes along Redwall Lane had been filled.

Cllr Gerrish noted that the public right of way previously reported to Kent County Council remained blocked.

Cllr Gerrish advised that Cllr Patterson had requested the Parish Council send a strongly worded letter to the directors of Driscoll's and ISS, raising concerns about their own drivers and subcontractor lorry drivers speeding along Redwall Lane and damaging the verges. The letter to request that the companies remind their drivers to show greater respect when using the rural lanes, which are shared by both businesses and residential properties.

It was agreed that the Clerk would draft the letter

Action: Clerk to progress.

Cllr Richer asked if the letter could also include a paragraph referencing the parish litter pick, noting that both companies had previously supported these efforts, and asking whether they would consider resuming their assistance in the future.

Action: Clerk to progress.

12. Planning Matters.

a. Planning Applications.

25/500524/FULL - Ranters Linton Hill Linton Kent ME17 4AU

Conversion of existing garage roof space to a gym/office with rear dormer and 2no. roof lights to the front, raised sun deck, balustrade and external stairs. (Retrospective).

No Objections.

25/500219/FULL - Iris House 4 Firmin Close Linton Kent ME17 4XR

Creation of a first floor to existing garage together with insertion of a first-floor rear window and 3 roof lights. Erection of an attached single storey rear extension to existing garage.

No Objections.

25/500636/FULL - The Cherry Patch Linton Hill Linton Kent ME17 4AP

Erection of a two-storey-rear extension and changes to fenestration.

No Objections.

25/500734/FULL - Redwall Farm Redwall Lane Linton Kent ME17 3QY

Demolition of Buildings 1 and 2, reconfiguration of Building 3 and redevelopment of the site to provide 4no. dwellings with private amenity space alongside parking and other associated works.

The Parish Council considered this planning application and agreed that it had no objections to the proposal. It was further agreed that, on this occasion, the Parish Council would record its response directly on the Maidstone Borough Council planning portal.

Action: Clerk to progress.

b. Planning Decisions.

24/504787/LAWPRO24/504924/PCB

Linton Hill Linton Kent ME17 4AW

PCB - Removal

Objections

Following consideration of your application/notification the Local Planning Authority RAISES OBJECTION(S) to the above proposal for the following reason(s).

(1) Objection is raised based on the Parish Council comments which set out :

For many years, BT has neglected its maintenance obligations regarding this structure. The door handle has been removed-seemingly by BT itself-and the glass panes require replacement, rendering the box inaccessible.

It is therefore likely that the data is a misrepresentation of potential demand as the call box has not been useable.

(1) The applicant is reminded that the Call Box is Grade II Listed and that if the objection raised is not upheld, then the works undertaken should still relate solely to the works described in the submission. These are details as :

The proposal is for the removal of telephony and the locking of the kiosks only.

c. Other Planning Matters.

To consider other planning matters.

13. Church Car Park – March 22nd.

Members discussed a rumoured event said to be taking place in the church car park on 22nd March. Cllr Gerrish briefed members on the hearsay surrounding the proposed event and asked what action the Parish Council should consider in response.

It was agreed that, as there was no formal confirmation of the event, no immediate action could be taken by the Parish Council, however the Parish Council would monitor the situation and take appropriate action if necessary.

14. Other Reports.

To received reports for the following:

a. Allotments.

Cllr Gerrish reported that all allotment holders had now been issued with the new tenancy agreement.

He requested that the Clerk check the payment records, as he believed not all payments had been received.

Action: Clerk to check allotment payments.

Cllr Gerrish also raised the condition of the allotment noticeboard on Wheelers Lane, stating that it was broken and in need of repair.

It was noted that there were available Cil allocations that could be used for a replacement. It was therefore proposed and agreed that Cllr Gerrish could select a suitable style for a new double-door noticeboard and email the details to the Clerk, who would then proceed with the order.

Cllr Gerrish confirmed that he would progress this.

He further reported that all allotments were now let and that a fence post next to the gate required repair.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Gerrish for his report and for his ongoing work in managing the allotments.

b. KALC.

No matters were reported.

c. Playground.

No matters were raised.

d. Website.

To consider any matters relating to the Linton Website.

No matters were reported.

e. Speed Watch.

To receive an update regarding Speed Watch.

No matters were raised.

f. Neighbourhood Watch Report.

To receive a report on NHW.

Cllr Gerrish reported that Maidstone Police now had a new Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator and confirmed that he was in contact with him.

He advised that a dedicated WhatsApp group had been set up and was now active.

g. Linton Village Hall.

To receive a report regarding the Village Hall.

No matters were raised.

h. Parish Newsletter.

Cllr Gerrish reported that the parish newsletter was currently in progress and scheduled to be produced by the end of March.

He requested approval to purchase new ink cartridges at a cost of £166.99 to support the printing of the newsletter.

This expenditure was approved by the Parish Council.

i. Parish Litter pick.

To receive an update re Litter Pick.

Cllr Richer confirmed that the next parish litter pick was scheduled to take place on Saturday, 15th March.

15. Annual Meeting of the Parish.

Members agreed that the Annual Meeting of the Parish would be held on Wednesday, 14th May 2025 at 7:30pm. The Clerk was asked to book the hall for this date.

Action: Clerk to progress.

16. Other Matters and Items for the next Agenda.

No other matters were raised.

17. Date of next Meeting – Monday 14th April 2025.

The Chairman thanked all members for attending the meeting.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was closed to the press and public at 9.55pm.

Signed _____

(Chairman)

Date _____