

The Minutes of the Meeting of Stockbury Parish Council  
held in Stockbury Village Hall on the 20<sup>th</sup> of November 2024 at 7:30PM.

Councillors present: Cathcart  
Moody  
Tingey  
Southern  
Sumner

Also, present: Parish Clerk and members of the public.

The meeting was chaired by Parish Cllr Southern.

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 Ward Councillors Thompson, Jones and KCC Councillor Prendergast.

2. Parish Councillor Vacancy.

No applications were received.

3. Declaration of Interest.

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.

No interests were declared.

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

No Dispensation requests were considered.

4. Minutes of the previous Meeting.

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

These were proposed by Cllr Moody as a true record, subject to agreed alterations, these were seconded by Cllr Sumner and agreed by all present.

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

5. Matters Arising.

There were no matters arising.

6. Notice of reports from external meetings.

7. Public Comments and Observations.

No matters were raised.

## 8. Police Matters.

To consider police matters.

ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) cameras are used extensively by Kent Police, and nationally by almost all other forces. There are over 13,000 ANPR cameras in use across Great Britain. We use ANPR technology to help detect, deter and disrupt criminal activity at a local, force, regional and national level. This includes travelling criminals (those using the road network to avoid being caught), organised crime groups and terrorists. ANPR also provides key lines of enquiry and evidence in the investigation of crime. ANPR has proved to be important in the detection of many offences, including locating, for example, people wanted for arrest or missing, witnesses, stolen vehicles, uninsured vehicles and uncovering cases of major crime. I personally have used ANPR data on many occasions to track and locate suspect vehicles for a variety of offences.

At present, our ANPR network prioritises key transportation routes, including towns, motorways, A-roads and major junctions due to the nature of vehicle use and the restraints of the budgets. Whilst this is brilliant and very effective, most of the areas I police are rural areas away from Maidstone and these are often a little sparse in terms of CCTV and ANPR opportunities. There are 8 ANPR cameras covering my entire policing area. I have been liaising with the head of the Kent Police ANPR Unit regarding the deployment of our Police ANPR cameras, to see whether there is any opportunity to add to our existing network in more rural areas. So far from our discussions I have established that new ANPR cameras could be made available and installed if funding was obtained. I am quite often asked if there is any way that a Parish Council can help us to fight crime in your areas affecting your residents, and I believe this could be a good opportunity.

Any Parish Council considering funding an ANPR camera in their local area must be aware of the following:

- There will be no exchange of data, and the data captured cannot be used for any purpose other than a policing purpose by Kent Police.
- There would need to be a suitable lighting column for the camera to draw power from.
- There would need to be a cellular network signal of at least 4G available at the lighting column.
- We cannot deploy an ANPR camera without support, which has to be obtained through local consultation and acceptance of the presence of the camera. If you are considering this opportunity, please start canvassing support from district and county councillors.

In terms of pricing, a single ANPR camera costs approximately £6000.00, plus the brackets for installation. There is also a small ongoing maintenance cost to consider, which is also contributed towards by Kent Police. ANPR cameras are also replaced every 6 years, which would also need to be taken into consideration.

*It was agreed that no action would be taken regarding this matter.*

## 9. Highways Matters.

### a. General Highway Matters.

CLlr Moody confirmed that the signed clamps were now in place.

Members discussed a shrine at the bottom of Church Hill and noted that Kent County Council (KCC) was reluctant to act on such sensitive matters at present.

It was agreed that this issue would be discussed with National Highways.

Concerns were raised regarding a raised area near to the layby leading to Church Hill, which was dangerous and misleading for drivers. It was agreed that this matter would also be referred to National Highways.

Cllr Moody reported that a survey of the parish's salt bins had been completed, and confirmed they were full and did not need refilling at this time.

Cllr Sumner reported a water leak outside Guildstead House, which had been reported to KCC and the water company for action.

b. Highways Improvement Plan.

Cllr Moody reported that he was still following up the give way signs.

c. M2 Junction 5 Improvements.

Cllr Moody reported that HGVs were still mistakenly turning onto South Green Lane from the Stockbury Roundabout rather than following the A249. An incident involving an HGV stuck for 27 hours on South Lees Lane highlighted the ongoing issue. Following correspondence with KCC and Cllr Prendergast, a site meeting was now scheduled, additional signs had also been erected by National Highways.

Lorry Watch was discussed, and Cllr Moody stated that details had been provided by Cllr Prendergast. However, the KCC team had not been engaging with the Parish Council. It was agreed that this issue would be raised at the upcoming site meeting.

Cllr Moody reported that the brown sign for The Harrow was now in place, but additional signage is still required to support other local businesses in the parish.

## 10. Planning Matters:

a. Applications Received

24/504574/FULL - Norton Green House Pett Road Stockbury Kent ME9 7RJ

Installation of solar panels on ground racking

***No objections were raised by members.***

24/504671/HEDGE - Land Adjacent to Ecclesbourne South Street Road Stockbury Kent ME9 7RB  
Hedgerow Removal Notice - Removal of 6 meters of hedgerow to restore pre-existing access entrance/gate.

***Members discussed the application and agreed to raise no objections, leaving the decision to the Planning Officer.***

24/504604/FULL - Hillside Farm Stockbury Valley Stockbury Kent ME9 7QH

Change of use of former agricultural, farm shop, office and furniture removal/ storage business barns to light industrial (E(g), general industrial (B2) and storage and distribution (B8) uses including repairs and changes to fenestration (Barn 1) and provision of 9 car, and 4 light goods vehicle parking spaces and 8 cycle stands.

Concerns were raised regarding this application, particularly the proposed new access onto the A249 from a commercial site. Members highlighted the increased HGV traffic and risks associated with vehicles turning onto the A249. The recent changes to the road layout due to the new flyover, resulting in speed variances that exacerbated safety concerns.

Members referenced National Highways' previous rejection of a proposed South Green Lane access due to safety risks and felt this application posed similar dangers.

It was unanimously agreed to object to this application.

**Action: Clerk to submit objections.**

b. Application Decisions by MBC

24/503368/SUB

Hill Green Farm Hill Green Road Stockbury Kent ME9 7UP

Submission of Details pursuant to condition 1 (Ecological Enhancement Scheme) of application 24/501352/FULL.

Application Permitted

c. Appeals

d. Other Planning Matters

Maidstone Borough Gypsy, Traveller and Traveling Show People Development Plan Document – Preferred Approaches (Regulation 18b) Consultation

Maidstone Borough Council has published the Regulation 18b version of its Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show People Development Plan Document, which sets out the preferred policy approaches to meeting accommodation needs and the reasonable alternatives being considered. In some instances, the preferred policies are more fully formed whilst in others the policies are more indicative in nature. There are no sites identified or allocated at this stage, as we are seeking views on the spatial strategy approach before committing to identifying sites.

How to view the documents: During the consultation period the Regulation 18b Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show People DPD, the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal Report, Consultation Response Forms and all supporting materials will be available on the Council's webpage at:

<https://localplan.maidstone.gov.uk/home/gypsy-traveller-development-plan-document>

The DPD consultation document and Sustainability Appraisal Report are also available for public inspection at all libraries in Maidstone Borough during normal opening hours.

There is a six-week period during which time comments may be submitted. Only representations received within this period, which runs from 9.30am on 31st October to 5.00pm on 12th December 2024, may be considered. Where possible, please respond online:

Online: <https://maidstone.objective.co.uk/portal/>

Alternatively, please complete and submit a Consultation Response Form (available to download/print from the Council's webpage or request a paper copy by contacting the Council):

By email: [ldf@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@maidstone.gov.uk) or

By post: Strategic Planning Team, Maidstone Borough Council, Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 6JQ.

By phone: 01622 602000

The outcomes of this consultation will help inform the next stage of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show People DPD.

Cllr Moody highlighted the need to establish an accurate record of existing Gypsy and Traveller sites within Stockbury. He noted that the Parish had a high proportion of G&T sites.

Cllr Cathcart reported that the last update received from MBC was in 2012, which recorded 39 sites. Members discussed this and agreed that accurate figures were necessary.

It was noted that the MBC Enforcement Officer had been attending other parish council meetings, and it was agreed to invite her to a future meeting in Stockbury.

**Action: Clerk to action.**

## 11. Financial Matters:

### a. Statement of Accounts & Cheques for signature.

To consider the Financial Statement circulated with meeting papers.

The financial statement was proposed by Cllr Southern and seconded Cllr Moody and agreed by all present.

The Clerk reported on an email from the VHMC regarding the inspections of the play equipment and the finance of these. She confirmed that when the PC received its Parish Services Grant from MBC, this included an allocation for the play area.

It was agreed that the PC would inform the VHMC.

### b. 2025/2026 Accounts and AGAR Audit Conclusion.

Audit Conclusion Certificate circulated to all members.

### c. 2025/2026 Budget.

The draft budget will be circulated when MBC have released their Band D figures in late December. The Precept figure will need to be approved by the end of January 2025.

## 12. External Reports:

### a. Parish Councillors.

No matters were reported.

Cllr Moody provided a report on a meeting he and the Chairman had attended with MP Helen Whateley to discuss ongoing issues related to traffic and antisocial behaviour within the parish.

Cllr Southern reported on an email received from a Hartlip resident seeking the Parish Council's views on a proposal to work jointly with the Hartlip Forum.

Following discussions, it was agreed that as the Parish Council already has its own parish magazine, The Stockbury Observer, it could not justify direct support for the Hartlip Forum. However, the PC would be happy to advertise the Hartlip Forum in the Stockbury Observer to help publicise their publication. Cllr Southern was tasked with responding to the email on behalf of Stockbury Parish Council.

**Action: Cllr Southern to progress.**

### b. KCC Councillor.

KCC Councillor Prendergast gave her apologies to the meeting.

c. MBC Councillor.

MBC Councillors Jones and Thompson gave their apologies to the meeting.

**13. Correspondence Report.**

The correspondence report was noted by members.

**KALC Community Awards Scheme 2025**

We are delighted to announce that we have now launched the 2025 KALC Community Awards Scheme, with support from Kent County Council, the High Sheriff of Kent, and the Mayor of Medway. This follows a very successful 2024 Awards Scheme, which was adopted by 85 member Councils.

The Award Winners receive a Framed Certificate. The Council can decide whether to present something extra to their winner.

Please find attached the following documents:

- An outline of the 2025 Awards Scheme.
- A Nomination Form for member Councils to complete and send to KALC
- A Nomination Form for residents to send to the Council, if the Council decides to seek nominations from the local community.

The first step is for the Council to agree to adopt the Scheme. The Council would then need to submit its Nomination to [manager@kentalc.gov.uk](mailto:manager@kentalc.gov.uk) by Friday 7th February 2025.

*It was agreed that the PC would consider this and agreed a recipient in January 2025.*

**Concern: Leaning Electrical Pole Stockbury**

Members noted an email regarding a UKPN pole leaning dangerously near the highway. It was agreed that this should be reported to KCC as a matter of urgency.

Additionally, a similar leaning pole near Tomsetts was identified and would also be reported.

**Action: Clerk to report both poles to KCC.**

**Proposed diversion of part of public footpath KH92 at Hucking, postcode ME17 1QT****Re: Highways Act 1980 - Section 119**

An application has been made by the landowners, to divert part of Public Footpath KH92 for reasons of privacy and security as well as enabling them to make better use of their land.

I enclose an extract from the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way showing Public Footpath KH92 and a larger scale map (1:1250) showing the proposed diversion.

The length of path to be diverted is shown by a solid black line between points A-B.

The proposed new route is shown by bold black dashes between points B-C.

Public Footpath KH92, where it passes through the land concerned, is not open on its definitive alignment, but a route is open and available on a similar alignment, commencing approximately 17 metres north of its connection with Church Road and Public Footpath KH93B.

The proposed new route cannot be walked currently, and it will require the removal and clearance of a number of trees and shrubs, some of which are ash trees and need to be removed irrespective of the diversion proposal.

The new route will be sited 2 metres from the north-eastern boundary fence and will be 2.5 metres wide.

**Proposed diversion of Bridleways KH99, KH89 and KH98 at Stockbury and Thurnham**

Following consideration of comments raised during and since the consultation, I believe the impact on the public enjoyment and convenience is significant, even if the obstructions (the airsoft etc) are not considered when looking at the diversion legal tests (this is what the national government advises KCC should do). Objections raised around the impact on enjoyment and convenience of having the route closer to the main road remain relevant and valid.

As such, I shall be recommending the County Council do not pursue the diversions as proposed, the applicant is being informed of this.

I have offered the landowner the opportunity to pursue the small diversion around a gate on the track leading to the wedding venue (see snapshot below). However, KCC will not be funding this, the applicant must agree to meet the costs of this for us to consider taking this forward. This section of the proposal appears to meet the legal tests and is without concern. Should they proceed with this, you shall be consulted.

***This response was noted by members.***

**14. Stockbury Bus**

Cllr Moody updated members on the progress of the Stockbury Bus.

The PC received an update on the Stockbury Bus, confirming it now has a valid MOT certificate. Issues were raised regarding phone charges for the bus and a query concerning the associated bank account.

***Action: Clerk to investigate and report back at a future meeting.***

**15. Stockbury Orchard.**

Cllr Tingey reported on a meeting of the Orchard Committee and raised their request for a discussion on the Orchard's bank account and signatory arrangements.

Members agreed that the Parish Council was responsible for the Orchard as the Lease was held between the Council and the Landowner. It was resolved that a new bank account would be opened with the Council's existing bank, with funds to be transferred from the current Orchard account. This arrangement would ensure financial control remain with the Parish Council and allow for internet banking.

It was further agreed to implement the same arrangement for the Stockbury Bus account.

***Action: Clerk to progress arrangements for both accounts.***

**16. Stockbury Observer.**

Cllr Moody provided an update on the progress of the Stockbury Observer. It was agreed that a repeat advert would be placed in the publication, encouraging residents to volunteer for the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme to ensure coverage within the parish.

**17. Any Other Business:****a. Raised by Public.**

No matters were raised.

**b. Raised by Parish Councillors.**

Cllr Moody reported on a Freedom of Information (FOI) request submitted to National Highways.

The response indicated that the requested information would not be available until the end of the year.

It was agreed that the Clerk would schedule a follow-up FOI request to be submitted on 31st December 2024.

***Action: Clerk to progress.***

**18. Date of next Meeting.**

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was closed to the press and public at 8.50pm.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_