

## **BIDBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE BIDBOROUGH VILLAGE HALL ON 26 JANUARY 2026 STARTING AT 7.14 PM**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Mrs Vidler (Chairman) and Councillors Cole, Eames, Hinds, Marriott and Mrs Summers

**In Attendance** – County Councillor Moreland, and Neil Harris (Clerk)

#### **1. Apologies for Absence**

An Apology for Absence was received from Councillor Stevens

#### **2. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Mrs Vidler stated that she had been appointed as Trustees of the Friends of Bidborough Charity but that there was no interest to be disclosed in any of the items on the agenda.

#### **3. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 24 November 2025**

It was **Agreed** that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed.

#### **4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2025**

There were no matters arising

#### **5. Report of the Borough and County Councillors**

County Councillor John Moreland reported that the KCC Council Tax had been set at 3.99% with reserves being used to achieve that amount. KCC were also reviewing the water position and in particular looking at KCC. He also reported that the figures and schemes were coming out of KCC for HIP schemes being funded through the TWBC grant. He also indicated that these were going direct to TWBC from KCC as well as to the Parish Councils.

#### **6. Public Participation**

In response to a question from a Member of the Public a discussion ensued on Spring Lane and which part of the road was adopted and which was not. The Clerk indicated that the position of KCC and TWBC was that the lower section of Spring Lane was not adopted whilst the section leading to that was but indicated that he would look at this again with these Authorities.

## 7. 25/03045/FULL – Brookhill, Barden Road, Bidborough

It was **Agreed** to raise no objection to Planning Application 25/03045/FULL.

## 8. Payment List

It was **Agreed** that the Payment List as circulated at the meeting and as set out below be approved, and that the income received and the Financial Budget Comparison report detailing expenditure and income be noted: -

### Expenditure For Approval

Name	Reason for Invoice	Net	VAT	Gross
Kent Association of Local Councils	Payment of Training course held in March for which just billed - Paid	50.00	10.00	60.00
Buss Murton Law	For work undertaken between 25 September and 23 November - Paid	368.00	73.60	441.60
CTP	Design of Permanent Remedial Works on Southern Lychgate - Paid	540.00	108.00	648.00
MDH Horticultural Contractors	Lengthsman Contract – November - Paid	1360.00	272.00	1632.00
MDH Horticultural Contractors	ANRG works – November - Paid	360.00	72.00	432.00
Pallet Handling Ltd	Payment for works to the entrance gate to Birchwood of St Lawrence Avenue – Paid	1160.00	232.00	1382.00
SSE Energy Solutions	Streetlights Energy Costs for November - Paid	194.34	9.72	204.06
Neil Harris	Payroll for December - Paid	1067.25	0.00	1067.25
HMRC	National Insurance and Tax Payment – Month 9 – Paid	388.83	0.00	388.83
Kent County Council	KHWP Woodland Management Conservation – Paid	1160.00	0.00	1160.00
Lloyds Bank	Bank Service Charge – Paid 19 December	4.25	0.00	4.25
Lloyds Bank	Bank Service Charge – Paid 19 January	4.25	0.00	4.25
MFW	Payroll Services – October to December 2025	60.00	12.00	72.00

Bidborough Village Hall CIO	Hall Hire charges from 1 September to 31 December 2025	48.81	0.00	48.81
SSE Energy Solutions	Streetlights Energy Costs for December	216.80	10.84	227.64
Treework (Tunbridge Wells) Ltd	Ash Dieback Work (Finish)	3800.00	760.00	4560.00
MDH Horticultural Contractors	Lengthsman Contract – Hedge Work	1750.00	350.00	2100.00
MDH Horticultural Contractors	ANRG works – Hedge Work	260.00	56.00	336.00
Neil Harris	Payroll for January	1067.25	0.00	1067.25
HMRC	National Insurance and Tax Payment – Month 10	387.67	0.00	387.67
Thompson Tree Care Ltd	Reduce Oak Tree by 30% next to pond and Spring Lane	690.00	138.00	828.00

#### Income Received since last meeting

Name	Reason for Income	Net	VAT	Gross
Bank	Interest – December	66.27	0.00	66.27
Bank	Interest – January	65.89	0.00	65.89
Allotments	3 Payments	71.60	0.00	71.60

#### Transfers between Council Accounts

Account	Account to be Transferred to	Reason	Amount
Business Reserve	Community Account	Fund approved expenditure	3950
Business Reserve	Community Account	Fund approved expenditure	4500
Business Reserve	Community Account	Fund approved expenditure	2800

#### 9. Reference from Arthur Nicholson Recreation Ground Trust – Costs for Signage

The Council considered the reference from the Arthur Nicholson Recreation Ground Trust which had agreed to have 2 signs one at each end of the path warning of cricket balls and also 2 “at your own risk” signs at a cost of £130 and £158 respectively. The Council was being asked to fund these purchases

It was **Agreed** that the above signs be purchased at a total cost of £288.

## 10. Birch Wood Land

There was nothing to report.

## 11. Bidborough HIP and Submission for funding to TWBC

The Clerk reported that the Council was applying for a grant of up to £25k from TWBC and that the scheme for the replacement of the VAS signs as set out in the Council's HIP had been costed and approved by KCC with a total cost of £22k.

In the meantime, the Clerk was also enquiring of the cost of the other schemes in the HIP with KCC to see if these could be moved forward in the future.

Discussion also took place on whether it would be possible to help fund the purchase of speed guns as a joint purchase by several parish Councils from unused funds. The Chairman indicated that she would follow up on this idea.

It was **Agreed** that the Clerk be authorised to submit the application regarding the replacement of the VAS signs at a cost of £22k to TWBC.

## 12. Speedwatch

Councillor Cole reported that the coordinators of Speedwatch were retiring leaving not enough people to be able to keep it operating. The Council agreed to help nurture volunteers to come forward and would help by putting notices on the notice board, website and social media.

## 13. Church Lychgates

The Clerk reported that last Friday there had been a meeting between himself, Councillor Marriott, Helen Dye (the Council's Architect on this project) and Mark Lauder of CTP (the Council's Structural Engineer on this project). Following that meeting he was able to report that first stage of the Faculty had been submitted to the Diocese and that they had approved it. The first stage allowed the investigation works on both Lychgates to be undertaken. With the cost of the works likely to be below £3000, the need to proceed quickly to reduce costs arising from the scaffolding and the specialist nature of the work a quote was sought and received from the one contractor namely Watts Construction RM Ltd that had been recommended by both the Architect and the Structural Engineer. The quote received was in the sum of £972 to £1398 depending on whether the works took 1 or 2 days.

The next stage after the investigation works was for the Structural Engineer to draw up the design for the repair/remedial works for both Lychgates and the quote for this work was £2200 plus VAT for the South Lychgate and £600 plus VAT for the North Lychgate. There was also a quote of £350 plus VAT per inspection visits received from them.

In addition, an option that might be considered if the project was likely to be prolonged was to replace the scaffolding by the erection of a temporary timber frame gate at the south

entrance. The Structural Engineer quoted the cost of designing this gate would be £2200 plus VAT. However, it was hoped that this would not be required.

However, once the investigation works had been completed the second stage of the Faculty would need to be submitted regarding the actual undertaking of the works of repair.

The Council considered that there was a need to maintain the momentum in this project with the need to avoid delays and it was felt appropriate that a delegation be given to the Clerk to make decisions on this project, where necessary, to avoid any unnecessary delay subject to consultation with all Councillors and the agreement of his proposed action by a majority of Councillors.

It was **Agreed** that

(1) the current position with the progress on the Faculty be noted

(2) with the cost of the works likely to be below £3000, the need to proceed quickly to reduce costs arising from the scaffolding and the specialist nature of the work a quote be sought and received from one contractor namely Watts Construction RM Ltd and the quote received in the sum of £972 to £1398 be accepted

(3) the next stage after the investigation works was for the Structural Engineer CTP to draw up the design for the repair/remedial works for both Lychgates and that the quote for this work of £2200 plus VAT for the South Lychgate and £600 plus VAT for the North Lychgate together with a quote of £350 plus VAT per inspection visits for 2 visits be accepted.

(4) to note that an option being considered, that if the project was likely to be prolonged was to replace the scaffolding by the erection of a temporary timber frame gate at the south entrance and the quote from the Structural Engineer CTP for the cost of designing this gate of £2200 plus VAT be accepted.

(5) a delegation be given to the Clerk to make decisions on this project, where necessary, to avoid any unnecessary delay subject to consultation with all Councillors and the agreement of his proposed action be a majority of the same Councillors.

#### **14. Church Wall and Church Tombs**

The Clerk reported that he had clarified with Helen Dye that the monitoring of the Church Wall would not require faculty approval and would now proceed with the appointment of a contractor to undertake the work.

In addition, he took the opportunity to remind the Council that there could be further work required to the tombs in the near future and that would probably require faculty approval. However, the Council would look at that in the future after progressing the work on the Lychgates and Church Wall.

It was **Agreed** that the report be noted.

## **15. Bidborough Ridge – Gap in Hedge**

The Council considered the matter of the need for the repair to the gap in the hedge in Bidborough Ridge and it was **Agreed** that the matter be deferred until the next meeting of the Council.

## **16. Dates for Council Meeting 2026/27**

The Council considered the report on the dates for Council Meetings in 2026/27, and it was **Agreed** that the dates for the Council meetings for 2026/27 as set out below be approved

23 February 2026

30 March 2026

27 April 2025 (Council Meeting and Annual Parish Meeting)

1 June 2026 (Annual Meeting of the Council)

29 June 2026

27 July 2026

28 September 2026

26 October 2026

30 November 2026

25 January 2027

22 February 2027

29 March 2027

26 April 2027 (Council Meeting and Annual Parish Meeting)

## **17. Cricket Pavilion**

There was nothing to report.

## **18. Local PC**

Councillor Cole reported that the Local PC had agreed to come to a meeting of the Council and was hoping that he would attend the meeting in February.

## **19. Exclusion of the Press and Public – Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960**

It was **Agreed** that the press and public be excluded from the meeting in accordance with the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to enable the Council to consider confidential information.

## **20. Duration of Meeting**

7.00pm to 9.28pm