

BIDBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE BIDBOROUGH VILLAGE HALL ON 27 JULY 2026 STARTING AT 7.00 PM

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

In Attendance – County Councillor Moreland, Borough Councillors Ellis and Johnson and Neil Harris (Clerk)

1. Apologies for Absence

An Apology for Absence was received from Councillors Marriott

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Stevens and Mrs Vidler stated that they 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 29 June 2026

It was **Agreed** that the minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2026

(1) Minute 11(3) Final Audit Report 2025/26

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting it was agreed that he would check the valuation of the Playground equipment on the Council's insurance. He reported that for this insurance year he had increased the valuation from £54105 to £80577. It was **Agreed** to note the report.

5. Report of the Borough and County Councillors

County Councillor John Moreland reported that KCC were consulting on their Council Tax rise, and people were welcome to comment. He also indicated that he had been in touch with Mr Strong and his questions were being dealt with as a Freedom of Information request and that there would not be a charge of £250.

Borough Councillor Mark Ellis updated the Council on Local Government Reorganisation and that Tunbridge Wells was merging with Maidstone, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling Councils to form a new West Kent Unitary Council. He also stated that he would look into the position where rubbish was being left on the streets after collection and the bins being left everywhere and not always returned to property and would come back to the Council.

Borough Councillor Johnson indicated that she had been looking into the matter of 30 Woodland Way including talking to Planning Enforcement who had stated that as they had not looked at this since November last year they could look at this again and she was getting confirmation of this in writing and that it would be actioned. She also reported that if there were any instances of illegal access to the property or vermin sighted at the property people should report this to Environmental Health. She had also taken up the matter up of the payment of Council Tax with them and similar to Councillor Cole the response was that nothing could be discussed because of GDPR, but Councillor Cole stated that all he needed to know was whether Council Tax was being paid or not. He also indicated that his land registry search showed that the owner was the deceased mother.

6. Public Participation

Further to the point raised at the last meeting regarding funding for rural roads there was further discussion, but it was accepted that everyone would have to await further announcements from the Government and to also understand the definition for rural roads being used in respect of this funding.

Concern was also raised regarding the condition of the Town and Country property in Bidborough Ridge which they were emptying for a future sale. The question being asked would they continue the garden maintenance once the building had been completely vacated. Concern was also raised about vermin being at the property and the water leak down the side of the building.

7. 26/01633/FULL – 1 Cedar Barn, Hayesden Lane, Bidborough

It was **Agreed** to raise no objection to Planning Application 26/01633/FULL.

8. 26/01258/FULL – Land South of Mill Court, Bidborough

It was **Agreed** that the Council request that the Planning Authority consider all of the comments made by local residents and that it also reassures itself that the original planning applications have been correctly implemented.

9. Finance

(1) 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 be noted: -

Expenditure For Approval

Name	Reason for Invoice	Net	VAT	Gross
Pierson Agriculture	Gang Mowing Recreation Ground and Peter Roberts Field - Paid	511.96	102.39	614.35

SSE Energy Solutions	Streetlights Energy Costs for June - Paid	103.67	5.18	108.85
MDH Horticultural Contractors	Ashes Burial - Paid	50.00	0.00	50.00
Lloyds Bank	Bank Service Charge – To be Paid 20 July	4.25	0.00	4.25
Vision ICT	Website Hosting and support September 26 to August 27	201.25	40.25	241.50
Neil Harris	Payroll for July	1067.25	0.00	1067.25
HMRC	National Insurance and Tax Payment – Month 4	388.25	0.00	388.25
ROSPA Play Safety	Annual Inspection of Peter Roberts Field and ANRG	210.00	42.00	252.00
MDH Horticultural Contractors	ANRG works – July	360.00	72.00	432.00
MDH Horticultural Contractors	Lengthsman Contract – July	1360.00	272.00	1632.00
Councillor Cole	Land Registry Search Fee	7.00	0.00	7.00
Councillor Stevens	New Padlock and Hasp for the Pond Gate approved by the Committee of Management	21.34	0.00	21.34
TWBC Planning Portal	Payment for Cricket Pavilion Planning Application submission	701.00	0.00	701.00

Income Received since last meeting

Name	Reason for Income	Net	VAT	Gross
Bank	Interest – July	46.05	0.00	46.05
Cemetery	Ashes Burial	100.00	0.00	100.00
HMRC	VAT Reclaim for April to June 26	5476.16	0.00	5476.16

Transfers between Council Accounts

Account	Account to be Transferred to	Reason	Amount
Business Reserve	Community Account	Fund approved expenditure	7400

(2) Budget Report

The Council considered the Financial Budget Comparison report detailing expenditure and income received by the Council up to the end of June as submitted by the Clerk.

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

10. Birch Wood Land

It was reported that there was tree work being undertaken by a local resident where a tree in his garden had fallen into the area around the Summer Steps.

11. Bidborough HIP and Submission for funding to TWBC

Councillor Stevens reported that he had consulted with local residents regarding the High Street double yellow lines and there had not been any major resistance but before seeking confirmation from the Council to proceed he wished to obtain from KCC the exact location of the lines and consult further. There had been no comment on the proposal for double yellow lines on the main road at Gate Farm Cottages but in respect of the proposal for a yellow line outside the Old School House in Spring Lane he and Councillor Cole had not been able to speak to the School before it broke up as they had not responded to their request to meet. They would look to do that early in the new school year together with the issue of the danger for children crossing at the Twitten at Woodland Way.

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

12. Speedwatch

Councillor Cole reported that the first session had been held and the local PC Danny Barnes had been present on his day off. There was also other Police support present as well. The session had gone well but he was still concerned about its continued existence and that more volunteers were needed.

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

13. Church Lychgates, Wall and Bank

The Clerk reported that he had nothing new to report though he had been hoping to have more information on the potential cost of the works on the Lychgates. He indicated that he would write to the Council when he had more information including the funding options available to the Council before the next meeting.

It was **Agreed** that the report and that it might be necessary to have a meeting of the Council before the scheduled meeting in September be noted

14. TWBC Local Plan Scoping Consultation Document

The Council considered the TWBC Local Plan Scoping Consultation document and the Call for Sites, and it was **Agreed** that the Council had no comment at this stage.

15. Appointment of Internal Auditor

The Clerk reported that he had not received the proposed fees for the Internal Auditor as he was currently away. The Council confirmed that they would wish to retain April Skies Accounting subject to agreement on the fee

It was **Agreed** that

(1) April Skies Accounting be appointed to complete the 2026/27 internal audit subject to final agreement by the Council on the fee

(2) the independence of April Skies Accounting from the Council

16. ROSPA Playground Inspection Reports

The Clerk reported that the play inspection reports on both the Arthur Nicholson Recreation Ground and the Peter Roberts Field had been received. As they had only just been received, he had only had the opportunity to go through them very quickly, but he had noted that there was no significant or urgent repair required. He would now go through the reports in detail highlighting the action required and implementing this work either internally or through contractors by seeking quotes and report back to Councillors for approval as required.

It was **Agreed** that the action of the Clerk as described above be endorsed for implementation.

17. Cricket Pavilion

The Chairman reported that the planning application had been submitted and the cost of this was £701. She also reported that a further invoice had been received from the Architect for the works relating to the submission of the planning application and the completion of the Package 1 works. The cost of the work was £3400 excl VAT.

The Council currently had £3000 of funding still set aside for works on the pavilion leaving a shortfall of £1101.

It was **Agreed** that the payment of the cost of submitting the planning application at £701 and the payment of the invoice from Michael Dillon Ltd for the remaining works at a cost of £3400 excl VAT with the shortfall of funding of £1101 being funded by a transfer of reserves for Highways be approved.

18. Condition of Paths between Bidborough Ridge and Woodland Way and Rectory Drive to the Recreation Ground/Churchyard

It was **Agreed** that the action of the Clerk to obtain a quote from MDH Horticultural Ltd to undertake the works on the paths between Bidborough Ridge and Woodland Way and Rectory Drive to the Recreation Ground/Churchyard in the sum of £250 and to authorise the work be confirmed.

19. Play Park Jetwash

The Clerk reported that he was in the process of obtaining quotes.

20. 30 Woodland Way

Councillor Cole reported that he had written to Mike Martin MP again, but he had seemed to step away from the process. The Chairman indicated that she would speak to the other Chairmen of Parish Councils to see if they had been through something similar and if they had any advice for the Council.

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

21. Post and Chain, High Street

Councillor Stevens reported that the post and chain at the top of the High Street was in a poor condition and needed replacing or removing.

It was **Agreed** that the Clerk obtain a quote from Pallet Handling for the replacement of the post and chain at the top of the High Street.

22. Brookhurst Field

Councillor Stevens reported that the other kissing gate in the Brookhurst Field needed replacing and the Clerk reported that he had already sought a quote.

23. Local Government Reorganisation – Transfer of Responsibilities and Assets

The Chairman indicated that Councillors should come back to her on this matter.

24. Allotments

Councillor Stevens reported that the School were having problems with their allotment and in the short term he had agreed to put a cover over it. He also indicated that action needed to be taken to remove a tenant and that there were a few vacancies with no waiting list.

In the circumstance of there being a number of vacancies it was **Agreed** that the previously agreed 10% increase in allotment rents to take place in October 26 be deferred for this year

25. Bowls Pavilion and Lawn

The Chairman reported that there was a meeting being set up by the BSA to which the Council had been invited to discuss the security of the Bowls Lawn and Pavilion.

26. Duration of Meeting

7.00pm to 9.08pm