



Coxheath Parish Council

**Minutes of a Meeting of Coxheath Parish Council held on
Tuesday 25 November 2025 at 7.15pm in the Small Hall, Coxheath Village Hall**

Present: Cllr. N. Gardner (Chairman), D, Carpenter, I. Laponder. K. Laponder, H. Weaver, C. Parker and S. Thomas

In attendance: Louise Goldsmith (Locum Parish Clerk),
Ryan Nicholls, Planning Director, Aspire Estates and 1 member of the public

MINUTES

132/25 ADMINISTRATION

Fire Exits, Fire Meeting Point, Mobile Phones. It was noted that Cllr. Gardner is recording the meeting to assist with the minute taking.

133/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, DECLARATIONS AND DISPENSATIONS

- a) Apologies for absence: **Ward Member Claire Kehily.**
- b) To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in the agenda.
Disclosable Interests: Under the Localism Act 2011: **None received.**
Other Significant Interests: **None received.**
Other Interests: **None received.**
- c) Requests for Dispensations: **None received.**
- d) Declarations of Lobbying: **None received.**

134/25 CO-OPTION

It was agreed to continue to advertise the vacancies.

135/25 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on the 28 October 2025 be approved and confirmed as a true and accurate record.

136/25 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Cllr. Gardner attended the Remembrance Service on Sunday 9 August 2025 and read out the Exhortation on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllr. Gardner and the Locum Clerk attended a virtual meeting with Mazars to discuss the audit for 2024-2025. Cllr. Gardner and the Clerk also met with the President of the Village Hall Management Committee and had an enjoyable and informative afternoon. Cllr. Gardner also attended the Village Hall Management Committee meeting on the same day at which it was agreed to rebuild the relationship between the Parish Council and the Village Hall Management Committee. Cllr. Gardner thanked Cllr. Weaver for all her good works as the Parish Council representative on the Village Hall Committee. Cllr. Gardner commented on all the chaos caused by the recent planned and unplanned roadworks to include the closure of the Linton crossroads along with roadworks and temporary lights in the village. Cllr. Gardner and Ward Member Claire Kehilly were both out on Heath Road on the day of the emergency works assisting

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confused motorists and emergency vehicles and have been posting regular updates on social media. Cllr. Gardner reported that KCC were not aware of the emergency south- east water works in the village but were quite proactive in trying to get the works completed quickly. Cllr. Gardner reported that Ward Member Claire Kehily is having conversations with KCC about the better co-ordination of future roadworks.

137/25 CLERKS REPORT/PAST MATTERS

Nothing additional to report.

138/25 COUNTY COUNCILLOR/WARD MEMBER REPORT

It was noted that Ward Member Claire Kehily has given her apologies.

139/25 ASPIRE ESTATES/GREENSAND PLACE

Cllr. Gardner welcomed Ryan Nicholls, Planning Director, Aspire Estates to the meeting.

It was agreed to lower Standing Orders to allow Ryan Nicholls to speak

Ryan Nicholls explained that he requested to attend the meeting to update Members on the planning proposal 25/504089/HYBRID. Mr. Nicholls explained that the application was submitted to defer, not remove, the delivery of a crossing outside the medical centre on Heath Road until such time that the land required within the Beacon Park site is available. However, Mr Nicholls explained that since the proposal was submitted, KCC has agreed a licence for the land to deliver the crossing. Mr. Nicholls explained that revised plans will now be submitted to MBC to include a reduction in the speed limit and a pathway to the north of the proposed crossing. Mr. Nicholls agreed to share the plans with the Locum Clerk when available and advised that the new crossing could be installed as early as February 2026. Mr Nicholls agreed to ensure that the entrance to the medical centre is kept clear of construction vehicles and that the road is kept clear of mud.

7.37pm Ryan Nicholls left the meeting

140/25 OPEN SESSIONS

No comments made.

141/25 COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS

a) Terms of Reference

Resolved: To adopt the terms of reference for all Committee and Working Groups

Membership of Committees and Working Groups.

Resolved: Cllr. I. Laponder to be a Member of the Finance Committee.

Membership of each Committee and Working Group confirmed as follows:

Planning Committee: Cllrs: Weaver (Chairman), Carpenter, Gardner, Thomas.

Finance Committee: Cllrs: Thomas (Chairman), I. Laponder, Parker, Weaver.

Staffing Committee: Cllrs: K. Laponder (Chairman), Gardner, Thomas.

Events & Communication Committee: Cllrs: Gardner (Chairman). Carpenter, K. Laponder, Thomas.

Traffic & Community Safety Working Group: Cllrs: Gardner, Weaver, Thomas.

Recreation & Open Spaces Working Group: Cllrs: Weaver (Chairman), Parker, Thomas.

Pavilion Working Group: See item 141/25 (h).

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b) Planning Committee

i. **Minutes of the meeting held on the 28 October 2025**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 28 October 2025 were noted.

ii. **To receive a report from the meeting held this evening**

Cllr. Weaver reported on the Planning Committee Meeting held before the Full Council Meeting. Cllr. Weaver advised that MBC has agreed with the Parish Council and has refused permission for planning proposal 25/503578/FULL for the installation of a new gated vehicular access to land north of Forstal Lane. In response to the number of lorry movements on Forstal Lane the Locum Clerk is trying to find out the permitted opening times for the site. KCC Highways design team is drawing up a plan for Forstal Lane for HGV directional signage to direct HGVs via an appropriate route back onto Heath Road. Cllr. Weaver has suggested, and it was agreed, for the Locum Clerk to put forward a proposal for an additional 30mph sign in the Coxheath section of Forstal Lane.

c) Staffing Committee

i. **To receive the minutes of the meeting held on the 4 November 2025**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 4 November 2025 were noted.

ii. **To receive feedback from the interviews**

Cllr. K. Laponder advised Members that three applications were received for the Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer role. It was agreed at the meeting held on the 4 November 2025 to interview two of the candidates on Monday 17 November 2025. Cllrs. K. Laponder, Gardner and Thomas formed the selection panel. Both candidates were asked the same questions and a scoring matrix was used and feedback has been provided, as requested, by the unsuccessful candidate.

iii. **To agree the appointment and terms for a new Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer**

Resolved: To ratify a decision between meetings to appoint Louise Goldsmith as the Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer on grade SCP 34 for 25 hours per week. The number of hours to be reviewed at the end of the probation period.

iv. **Next Steps:**

Cllr. K. Laponder advised Members that the contract for the new Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer will commence on the 10 December 2025, the contract for a Locum Clerk with the LCC ends on the 9 December 2025. Cllr. K. Laponder will arrange for the contract to be finalised and signed and for the new Clerk to be set up with a payroll company. Cllr. K. Laponder advised Members that she intends to hold regular one to one review meetings with the new Clerk. Cllr. Gardner thanked Cllr. K. Laponder for all her hard work in organising the interviews leading to the successful appointment of a new Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer.

d) Finance Committee

i. **To receive the minutes of the meeting held on the 13 November 2025**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on the 13 November 2025 were noted.

ii. **To discuss and approve the following recommendations:**

Adoption of an Investment Strategy

Resolved: To adopt the Investment Strategy.

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Adoption of a Reserves Policy

Resolved: To adopt the Reserves Policy.

Football pitch hire fee of the £100.00 for the 2025/2026 season

Resolved: To charge Coxheath and Farleigh Football Club a football pitch hire fee of £100.00 for the 2025/2026 season. Carried: 5 in favour, 2 against.

iii. **Nat West Bank Mandate:**

The Locum Clerk has submitted the new mandate which is currently been processed. Cllrs. Parker and Weaver kindly visited a Nat West Bank and obtained statements for all three accounts as at the 30 October 2025.

iv. **Budget 2026/2027**

Members discussed a draft budget for 2026/2027 considered by the Finance Committee held on the 13 November 2025. The Internal Auditor has advised to either keep the precept the same or reduce slightly rather than take a precept holiday and for the Parish Council to identify projects to spend the reserves. Members noted that the lease for the village green expires in 2033 and asked the Locum Clerk to find out if MBC would consider transferring ownership of this and other parcels of land such as the scout hut car park to the Parish Council as part of the Local Government Reorganisation. The Locum Clerk was asked to obtain a list of assets held by MBC. It was also suggested that the Parish Council could consider approaching the landowner of the area in front of the church to see if they would be willing to sell this land to the Parish Council.

v. **To receive the reports from the Internal Auditor and External Auditor**

Resolved: To discuss this as a confidential item.

vi. **To receive the accounts as at the 30 October 2025**

The accounts as at the 30 October 2025 were received. The Clerk advised Members that the date of the 30 October 2025 aligns with the date of the statements received from Nat West Bank.

vii. **To receive a bank reconciliation as at the 30 October 2025**

A bank reconciliation as the 30 October 2025 was received and signed by Cllr. Parker in line with the adopted Financial Regulations.

viii. **To receive a payments list for ratification and approval**

The invoices and the payment schedule appended to the minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting and checked.

Resolved: Cllrs. Gardner and Parker to authorise the payments online. Cllr.

Gardner, as the Chair, initialled the payments list in accordance with the adopted Financial Regulations.

e) **Recreation and Open Spaces Working Group**

i. **To receive the notes from the meeting held on the 13 November 2025**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on the 13 November 2025 were noted.

ii. **To approve the following recommendations**

To approve the cost of applying for a load test and certification from KCC for the hanging baskets.

Resolved: The Locum Clerk to apply for a load test and certification from KCC for the hanging baskets on 12 columns at a cost of £360.00.

To approve the terms and conditions of hire for the football club

Resolved: To approve the terms and conditions of hire for the football club with the addition of the wording for cars to not drive over the open space.

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To approve the specification for the grounds maintenance requirements.

Resolved: To approve the specification for the grounds maintenance requirements and for the Locum Clerk to obtain quotes.

Submission of a pre-planning application for a 40 foot container on the recreation ground to replace the existing two containers.

Cllr. Gardner advised Members that the S106 team at ABC has suggested that the purchase of a new storage container may qualify for monies available from planning proposal 17/09/2015.

Resolved: To approve the Locum Clerk submitting a pre-planning application to MBC for a 40 foot container on the recreation ground to replace the existing two containers.

Quotes:

Resolved:

To approve a quote from Capel Groundcare of £7,793.70 (excluding VAT) for all the remedial works identified in the RoSPA reports to include replacing all three gates on the playground. To approve a quote from Capel Groundcare of £840.00 per annum (excluding VAT) to carry out monthly Operational Playground Inspections covering the Play Park, Gym Equipment, Kick Wall and MUGA and submitting a full written report.

f) Traffic & Community Safety Working Group

i. Highways Improvement Plan

Cllr. Gardner has received a copy of the updated Highways Improvement Plan from the Community Engagement Officer and advised Members that a request to add double yellow lines on both sides of Heath Road and at the junction of Parkway and Aspian Drive and also on Stockett Lane has been approved by KCC. The Locum Clerk was asked to find out if these requests are subject to Traffic Regulation Orders. The Community Engagement Officer has advised that the design team are drawing up a plan for directional signage for Forstal Lane/Mill Lane to direct HGVs via an appropriate route back onto Heath Road. The Locum Clerk was asked to submit a new request for an additional 30mph sign in the Coxheath section of Forstal Lane. Cllr. Gardner advised that KCC is happy to consider improvements to the parking issues at the junction of Westway and Parkway and Orchard Close but need photographic evidence. It was agreed for Members to send any photographic evidence to the Locum Clerk.

ii. Faults

Cllr. Gardner advised Members to forward details of any faults to either himself or the Locum Clerk to report on the portal. Cllr. Gardner has requested that the white lines on the buildouts along Heath Road are refreshed and that a bollard is replaced.

g) Events and Communication Committee

i. To receive the minutes of the meeting held on the 23 October 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on the 23 October 2025 were noted. Cllr. Gardner thanked everyone that attended and/or helped out at the Remembrance Service held on the 9 November 2025. It was noted that the Parish Council needs to arrange for the Order of Service to be printed each year and it was suggested that these could be laminated so that they can be reused.

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ii. **Christmas Lights Switch On 7 December 2025:**

Cllr. Gardner reported that KCC has now issued the BESN Load Testing Certificate and licence for the streetlights to be used for the Christmas lights. The signed contract has been sent to Gala Lights. The Locum Clerk has been granted permission for the Parish Council to use the land adjacent to the Church. Cllr. Parker has sent the recipe for the mulled wine to the Locum Clerk who will source the ingredients, soft drinks, mince pies and snacks for the children. It was noted that the Tesco in Coxheath has donated 48 mince pies to the event. A poster designed by Cllr. Gardner giving details of the 'Switch -On' due to take place on Sunday 7 December at 4.30pm has been placed on social media, the website and noticeboards. Cllr. Weaver offered to take some posters to the school and to deliver to all the shops. Cllr. Gardner has arranged for 250 carol sheets to be printed and laminated. Gala Lights is expected to install the lights next week. Cllr. Carpenter reported that the Christmas Tree is due to be delivered to the Church on Thursday. Cllrs. Gardner and Thomas will erect the tree. Cllr. Gardner suggested that at the next meeting the Committee consider purchasing a couple of gazebos and possibly a sound system. It was agreed for the Clerk to purchase some Coxheath Parish Council hi viz vests.

h) **Pavilion Working Group**

It was noted that the S106 team has confirmed that the available funds do not have to be just used for providing a pavilion. It was therefore suggested and agreed to rename this group as the S106 Working Group. Cllrs. Gardner, Weaver, Carpenter and I. Laponder offered to be Members of the Working Group. The Locum Clerk will draft some terms of reference for consideration at the first meeting.

142/25 ADMINISTRATION

i. **Email accounts and .gov.uk domain**

Cllr. Thomas gave some examples and costings for different email and website providers. It was agreed for the Locum Clerk and Cllr. Thomas to explore this further. In the meantime, the Locum Clerk was asked to arrange for the Hugo Fox, the current website provider, to change the website to a .gov.uk domain and to find out if the current email provider, Ionos, can offer a .gov.uk email address.

ii. **Passwords and Documents**

Resolved: To discuss as a Confidential Item.

iii. **Appointment of a solicitor for legal advice**

Resolved: To discuss as a Confidential Item.

iv. **Dates of Meetings 2026**

Members considered a table of dates of meetings prepared and circulated by the Locum Clerk. A few amendments were suggested. The Clerk will circulate a revised table and will book the village hall where appropriate.

143/25 PARISH MATTERS

i. **KALC Community Award Scheme 2026**

It was noted that the Locum Clerk has posted an online survey on social media, the website and noticeboards asking for members of the public to nominate local residents for the award. A decision will be made at the next meeting.

ii. **Local Government Reorganisation:**

Cllr. Weaver attended the Parish Conference held on the 10 November 2025. Alison Broom, Chief Executive at MBC, gave a presentation on Local Government Reorganisation and a copy

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of the presentation slides have been circulated. Options 3a and 4b have been selected to progress to the business case stage. The three options not selected are being developed independently by their promoters – Option 1a – KCC, Option 4d – Medway Option 5 – Dartford and Gravesham.

iii. **Kent Police:**

There was no update

iv. **Litter Picking:**

Cllr. Weaver reported that the voluntary litter pickers have pencilled in some dates for December 2025. It was agreed to purchase 3 more hoops and pickers for the litter pickers.

144/25 REPRESENTATION AT MEETINGS

- i. Village Hall Committee: See 136/25.
- ii. KALC Area Committee: It was noted that the meeting due to take place on the 24 November 2025 was cancelled.
- iii. Coxheath Community Group: There has been no meeting.
- iv. Other Meetings: Cllr. Weaver advised Members that she would be attending Coxheath Primary School's Eco-Council meeting on Friday to talk about litter picking and a bug hotel.

145/25 CORRESPONDENCE/CONSULTATIONS

Parish Conference: See 143/25 (ii). Cllr. Weaver advised Members that the Conference had been a useful opportunity to meet Officers and receive updates. It was noted that MBC is keen to support the Big Day Out week commencing on the 13 June 2026.

Cllr. Gardner reported that a new DAB transmitter is to be installed on the water storage container primarily for a new radio station. The new radio station will launch on the 6 January 2026 and will be known as Weald Radio Station. Cllr. Gardner will be one of the presenters and will be able to share updates with the Parish Council.

Part 2 Exclusion of Public and Press – In accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings Act 1960), the public and press be excluded from the meeting by the reason of its confidential nature.

The meeting closed to the public at 9.41pm

146/25 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

9.45pm: In accordance with the Standing Orders a resolution was passed to continue with the meeting.

141/25 v) **Reports from the Internal Auditor and External Auditor:** Members noted the report from Lionel Robbins, the Internal Auditor for the year ending 31 March 2025 and for the year to date. It was agreed for the Finance Committee to address the areas of concern and to take on board any recommendations. Correspondence from Mazars, the external auditor, following a virtual meeting with the for the year ending the 31 March 2025 was noted. Mazars have advised that the auditor's certificate means that all the auditor's responsibilities, duties and powers in respect of that particular financial year have ended. Once issued, it is no longer possible for the auditor to issue any further reports in respect of that year or revisit any conclusions. In addition, the auditor is no longer able to consider any matters

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brought to their attention, formal questions or objections in respect of that year. The recommendations from Mazars were noted.

142/25 ii. **Passwords and Documents:** The Locum Clerk is in the process of preparing a list of documents and passwords that are required from the previous Clerk. The previous Clerk has not been able to provide any details for accessing the HMRC account.

142/25 iii. **Appointment of a Solicitor for legal advice:** Resolved to appoint Tom Elstone from Whitehead Monckton at a cost of £250.00 per hour (excluding VAT) for an initial estimated period of 2-3 hours.

147/25 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING: Full Council Meeting Tuesday 20 January 2026

With no further business to transact the meeting closed at 10.05pm

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Date:

Payments November 2025

Ref:	Payee	Description	Gross	VAT	Net
BACs Payments for ratification on 25 November 2025					
BACS 11-01	SLCC Enterprises	Locum Fees	5,492.04	915.34	4,576.70
BACS 11-02	D. Mann	Grounds Maintenance	1,533.00	-	1,533.00
BACS 11-03	Louise Goldsmith	Reimbursement Ionos £56.40, Adobe: £34.98 Coffee Cups £56.33	147.71	18.79	128.92
BACS 11-04	Lionel Robbins	Internal Auditor Services	980.00	-	980.00
BACS 11-05	Coxheath Residents Village Hall	Hall Hire, Parish Office expenses & utilities	216.25	-	216.25
TOTAL			8,369.00	934.13	7,434.87

Date	Payee	Description	Gross	VAT	Net
Direct Debits and Standing Orders for ratification 25 November 2025					
31/10/2025	Unity Trust	Service Charge	7.35	-	7.35
TOTAL			7.35	-	7.35

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