



Minutes of the Full Council Meeting

Held at the Westgate-on-Sea Town Council Office

78 St Mildreds Road, Westgate-on-Sea CT8 8RF

on Wednesday 12th November 2025 at 7.00pm

Present:

Cllr David Donaldson (Chair)

Cllr Clive Veck (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Tom King

Cllr David Wallin

Cllr Scott

PC Steven England

Jason Gordon (Community Warden)

Ms Nabila Yakub (Town Clerk)

12 Members of Public

FC/25/166 Welcome from the Chairperson

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

FC/25/167 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Evans, Cllr Livesey, Cllr Fenning, Cllr Mulinya and Cllr Thomason.

FC/25/168 Members' Interests

Cllr Donaldson and Cllr King both declared an interest as members of Unite trade union.

FC/25/169 Minutes

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 8th October 2025 were received and approved as an accurate record, pending amendment to Minute nr. FC/25/150 as requested by Cllr King.

FC/25/170 Public Right to Speak

A resident of Palm Court addressed the Council expressing strong opposition to the proposed play area on the green opposite.

A resident requested that the Council consider allocating funds in the budget to revamp the Town Council website.

A resident expressed concerns about Councillors using social media in ways that promote negativity and division and suggested that the Council consider measures to encourage unity, kindness and positive communication within the community.

A resident invited Councillors and attendees to a late-night shopping event organised by local traders, scheduled for the 20th of the month.

FC/25/171 Skatepark Update

Cllr Veck provided an update on the skate park project: the old skate park was removed, new construction began with community support, and funds raised now total approximately £16,000—comprising £8,000 from the Town Council, £5,500 in grants from TDC and KCC, and £2,000 from GoFundMe. Additional grant applications for up to £30,000 are pending, with final project completion expected in April, weather permitting.

FC/25/172 Lymington Road Playground

Cllr Donaldson updated the Council on the Lymington Road play area, stating that a complete refurbishment was planned, with quotes received for the main works focused on reinstating the rubber surfacing. The project will commence in spring to ensure optimal installation and quality.

Cllr Scott inquired whether the reinstatement of the memorial wall, previously broken near the Lymington Road recreational park, could be considered as part of the upcoming playground refurbishment works.

FC/25/173 New Play Area

Cllr Donaldson noted the significant work done on the new play area project, with three proposed sites: Adrian Square, Ethelbert Square and Sea Road. The project budget consists of £20,000 previously put aside by the Council, as well as an additional £40,000 donation from Thanet District Council, totalling £60,000. Cllr Donaldson proposed that the Council formally vote to accept the £40,000 TDC contribution for the new play area.

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to accept the £40,000 contribution from Thanet District Council towards the new play area.

FC/25/174 Consultation Update

The Clerk reported on the play area consultation, which invited feedback on Adrian Square, Ethelbert Square and Sea Road through the Town Council's Facebook page, website, a local community group, posters, schools, and printed leaflets distributed at multiple local venues. The response was greatly in favour of Sea Road, though concerns were raised about site exposure, traffic, and proximity to retirement housing, as well as parking and noise issues at the other sites. The £40,000 TDC funding is ring-fenced, dependent on the council's £20,000, and residents also suggested refurbishing the Lymington Road playground and queried the need for a new play area.

FC/25/175 Town Councillor Vacancy

The Clerk reported that the Council co-option application window has closed, all interested candidates have been contacted, and the selection will take place after Christmas. It was confirmed that there are two candidates for co-option.

FC/25/176 Westgate-on-Sea Flag

Cllr Donaldson confirmed the decision to proceed with purchasing and flying a Westgate flag, stating that quotations are being gathered for the purchase of two flags costing approximately £350–£400 including VAT. Cllr Wallin volunteered to be responsible for raising and lowering the flag.

FC/25/177 Budget 2026-27

Cllr Donaldson asked Councillors to submit any requests they may have for inclusion in the budget. Cllr Veck noted public suggestions regarding website improvements and discussed the possibility of allocating funds for speed bumps along Sea Road.

FC/25/178 To ratify the recommendations of the HR Committee meeting on 22nd October 2025

The Council **RESOLVED**:

- To adopt amendments to Employee Contracts as advised by Peninsula HR.
- To adopt amendments to the Staff Handbook as advised by Peninsula HR.
- To accept ongoing Health & Safety advice and support from Peninsula HR.

Cllr King recommended that the Council consider becoming a union-recognised body.

FC/25/179 Harassment Policy

The Council **RESOLVED** to ratify the Harassment Policy.

FC/25/180 Councillors' Reports

Cllr Donaldson reported that he had organised the purchase of a Christmas tree for the Community Centre.

FC/25/181 County and Thanet District Ward Councillors' Reports

The Clerk read a report from Cllr Luke Evans (Kent County Council) on Local Government Reorganisation, stating that KCC does not support LGR but proposed option 1A - a single unitary authority for Kent - citing its lowest projected implementation cost (£99 million), highest immediate savings (+£75 million), and shortest payback period (3 years). Cllr Evans emphasised that, according to AI-based analysis, option 1A outperforms other options financially and operationally, and suggested political motives would explain if it is not chosen by the government.

Cllr Donaldson reported on the Local Government Reorganisation, sharing insights from a briefing that option 1A - a single unitary authority for Kent - is highly unlikely to occur, as it contradicts current government devolution policy. Instead, the expected outcome is the creation of four unitary

authorities, with East Kent to include Thanet, Dover, and Canterbury. Elections for a shadow unitary authority will take place alongside regular town and parish elections in 2027, with unitary authorities assuming full control by March 2028.

Cllr Scott echoed Cllr Donaldson's views on the Local Government Reorganisation, highlighting the complexity of the changes, uncertainty over councillor numbers and the potentially disproportionate impact on East Kent. They expressed hope for the best possible outcome for East Kent, thanked Westgate Town Council for their Remembrance Sunday service and informed colleagues their thanet.gov.uk email is now accessible for any correspondence.

Cllr King sought clarification regarding the proposed East Kent unitary authority, highlighting a significant expected reduction in councillor numbers for Thanet - from 56 to possibly 9 under option 1A - resulting in reduced representation and increased workloads, prompting questions about the case for full-time, paid councillor roles in the future.

FC/25/182 Report(s) from Steven England, Beat Officer for Westgate and Birchington, and/or Jason Gordon, Community Warden

PC Steven England reported on ongoing anti-social behavior complaints - including noise and disorderly conduct - in Cuthbert Road and noted that residential perception surveys are being undertaken. Residents were encouraged to share any evidence supporting investigations. PC England commended the turnout at Remembrance Sunday and announced an upcoming police ward surgery for residents to discuss community concerns.

Jason Gordon, KCC Community Warden), reported on supporting the Westgate well-being coffee morning and local church meals, delivering safety and scam awareness talks, assisting with traffic control at Remembrance Sunday and helping a vulnerable rough sleeper return to care. He thanked colleagues and volunteers for their teamwork during recent community events, including Halloween and Remembrance services.

FC/25/183 Clerk's Correspondence

The Clerk reported on the successful Remembrance Sunday event and expressed gratitude to staff, police, volunteers and community partners. The Clerk made reference to the temporary building scaffolding, extended an invitation for Councillors to attend the Heritage Centre talks on Saturdays and reported on the upcoming installation of the Christmas tree for the late-night shopping event, urging residents to support local businesses. The Clerk also reported networking at the SLCC autumn conference and announced that Barclays would soon be leaving the Council hall, thanking them for their contributions.

FC/25/184 Date of Next Meeting:

Wednesday 10th December 2025 at 7pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____