



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 11th February 2026 at 7.00pm

Present:

Cllr David Donaldson (Chair)
Cllr Clive Veck (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Donna Carr
Cllr Tom King
Cllr Mike Livesey
Cllr Stephen Fenning
Cllr David Wallin

Ms Nabila Yakub (Town Clerk)
Ms Ana Jagelo (Administration Officer)

9 Members of Public

FC/26/35 Welcome from the Chairperson

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

FC/26/36 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Scott, Cllr Mulinya and Cllr Evans.

FC/26/37 Members' Interests

None.

FC/26/38 Minutes

The minutes of the Extraordinary Full Council meeting held on 4th February 2026 were received and approved as an accurate record.

FC/26/39 Public Right to Speak

A resident, representative of Palm Court, spoke to oppose the construction of a play area on the green and presented a petition.

A resident of Palm Court notes that a leaflet could have been placed in Palm Court.

A resident reminded Council of its commitment to conduct thorough consultation.

FC/26/40 Welcome to Cllr Donna Carr

The Chair welcomed new Cllr Donna Carr and confirmed her declarations of interest are completed and filed with the Monitoring Officer.

FC/26/41 The following policies and documents were reviewed and adopted:

- Vexatious Complaints Policy;
- Smoking Policy;
- Equality and Diversity Policy, with the addition of a mention of the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998;
- Small Grants Guidance;
- Small Grants Policy.

FC/26/42 Quadrennial Review of Town and Parish Council Members' Allowances

The Council noted the Quadrennial Review of Town and Parish Council Members' Allowances and agreed to make no changes at this time, continuing without members' allowances (beyond the existing Chair's allowance provision) and retaining the current expenses policy.

FC/26/43 Events Committee Update

The Chair confirmed that, following the resignation of Cllr Charlotte Thomason, the Events Committee had elected Cllr Mike Livesey as Chair and Cllr Alice Mulinya as Vice-Chair.

FC/26/44 Blooming Westgate

Cllr Livesey reported that a strong Blooming Westgate working group of around ten people (including volunteers and local experts, Mike Wiseman, Anna, Emma, Cllr Mulinya and the speaker) has met three times, walked the town to identify high-impact sites, and - within a tight budget - plans to focus on the town centre, St Mildreds and Station roads, reusing existing planters (including at St Saviour's Church, the station, the war memorial and the sea shelter) in liaison with the original planter group. The project will also involve local businesses by encouraging hanging baskets (especially along the canopy), and, though starting late and with a limited 2026 budget, is intended as a long-term scheme that will grow gradually and seek additional funding from 2027 onwards. Cllr King emphasised the importance of including Lymington Road in the initiative.

FC/26/45 Pancake Races

The Administration Officer reported that this year's Pancake Races will take place on Tuesday 17 February with part of Station Road closed from 9:00-12:30 (races from 10:00). Around 90 participants aged 1-75 had already registered. Members of the Events & Tourism Committee volunteered to assist during the event and all Councillors and the public were invited to attend or take part, with hopes for good weather.

FC/26/46 Skatepark

Cllr Veck provided an update, saying that Phase One of the skate park is now complete, with the final concrete pour done and positive feedback received on the design. A re-arranged meeting will be scheduled to finalise Phase Two, which is hoped to start around April.

FC/26/47 Play Area Consultation

After discussion it was **RESOLVED** that, following Stage One of the play area consultation and advice from TDC play-area experts, Stages Two (build materials) and Three (equipment) be merged into a single phase, and that the Council proceed on this basis, including holding open events for residents to view and comment on design options.

FC/26/48 Councillors' Reports

Cllr Donaldson reported that local government reorganisation is ongoing, with a decision on the East Kent unitary authority expected in July 2026, elections next year for both the Town Council and the shadow unitary authority, and full implementation by 28 March 2028. Cllr Donaldson also outlined continuing meetings with Thanet District Council officers, including Matt Elmer and Steve Albon, to improve recycling and reduce waste, acknowledging input from Sarah at the Galleria.

Cllr Carr reported that swimmers have raised concerns about the condition of the slope into the sea in front of the Swan, which is currently unpleasant due to accumulated seaweed, and asked who is responsible for cleaning it; it was confirmed that this is a Thanet District Council responsibility and that issues should be reported via TDC's online reporting portal so they can be actioned.

Cllr Wallin relayed positive feedback from a new resident who has recently moved to Westgate and "absolutely loves" the town, with her only minor comment being that she would prefer to see a Union Flag flying.

Cllr King raised the long-standing problem of rubbish disposal for residents in flats above shops on Station Road, where many lack bin access and therefore leave bags on the street, creating an environmental hazard. Cllr King recalled earlier work about 4-5 years ago to explore large shared "dumpster"-style containers serving groups of flats, each tenant having a key to prevent misuse, but noted the difficulty of finding suitable sites. Cllr King stressed that a solution is an absolute necessity, not a privilege, and urged that this issue be treated as a priority, with the Town Council putting maximum pressure on Thanet District Council to resolve it.

FC/26/49 County and Thanet District Councillors' Reports

None.

FC/26/50 Reports from Steven England, Beat Officer for Westgate and Birchington, and/or Jason Gordon, Community Warden

None.

FC/26/51 Clerk's Correspondence

The Clerk reported that PC Stephen England will hold a ward surgery at the Council offices on Friday at 11:00, and a Councillor Surgery will take place on Saturday 10:30-11:45; a new Finance Officer has started on a few hours per week and is warmly welcomed, as is Cllr Carr; there is a co-option vacancy with applications open until the 20th of this month; and the Clerk will attend the Parish Forum at TDC on Tuesday 17th (after the Pancake Races).

FC/26/52 Date of Next Meeting:

Wednesday 11th March 2026 at 7pm.

FC/26/53 Exclusion of the Public and Press

The Council was requested to pass a resolution to exclude Press and Public from the remainder of the meeting pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meeting Act) 1960. Because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and the press may be asked to leave the meeting during consideration of the following items:

- To consider confidential staffing matters.
 - The Council received an update from the Clerk on an ongoing staffing matter and agreed to continue following HR advice and formal procedures regarding staff conduct, absence and welfare.
 - The Council reviewed current workload within the office and agreed in principle to flexible arrangements around staff leave, time off in lieu and home working to help manage pressures.

Signed: _____

Date: _____