



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 December 2024 at 7.00pm

Present:

Cllr David Wallin (Chairman)

Cllr Clive Veck (Vice Chair)

Cllr David Donaldson

Cllr Matthew Scott

Cllr Tom King

Cllr Alice Mulinya

Cllr John Worrow

Nabila Yakub (Interim Town Clerk)

Emma Dublin – Appointed Social Media Adviser

PC Steven England - Beat Officer for Westgate and Birchington

Jason Gordon - Westgate and Birchington Community Warden

3 Members of the Public

FC/24/72 Welcome from the Chairman

The Chair welcomed everyone and requested introductions from the councillors present.

FC/24/73 Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Fenning and Cllr Derek Crow-Brown.

FC/24/74 Members' Interests

None.

FC/24/75 Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 13th November 2024, 20th November 2024 and 27th November 2024 were received and approved as an accurate record.

FC/24/76 Pancake Races update

None.

FC/24/77 Council Vehicles

The Chairman provided an update regarding the purchase of a new Maxus vehicle.

The new vehicle will run on diesel and will include a tool pod instead of back seats, as well as a cage for transporting items.

The Chairman informed that the current Council vehicle would be undergoing its MOT the next day.

FC/24/78 Skate Park

Cllr Veck provided an update on the Lymington Road skate park project, with funding secured so far from various sources, including TDC and KCC through their Lottery Funding, KCC through Cllr Linda Wright and through Cllr Fenning.

Additional funding is being pursued, and the Council has agreed to increase their matching contribution up to £8,000 if needed.

Work is scheduled for April to June 2025, and the council is checking on planning permission requirements through the consultant Alison Eardley.

FC/24/79 Housing

The Council expressed support for Birchington Parish Council's challenge to TDC's approval of development proposals.

Cllr Veck discussed the negative media coverage and public reaction to the TDC planning committee's approval of a new estate development in Birchington.

The council was advised to brace for potential criticism when similar developments are proposed for Westgate and Garlinge, as the local TDC councillors are likely to face backlash.

It was reported that Birchington Parish Council is challenging TDC's approval, stating they did not comply with obligations. Cllr Worrow requested to go on record that he supports Birchington Parish Council's challenge.

FC/24/80 Budget

Preparations for the 2025/26 financial year budget are underway.

Councillors were invited to submit proposals for initiatives requiring funding. Suggestions included allocating additional funds to the poverty alleviation plan and increasing financial reserves.

FC/24/81 Hearing Aid Clinic

The council unanimously approved the renewal of the £480 annual grant for the Hi Kent hearing aid clinic held monthly in the Council Hall, which supports residents with hearing loss.

FC/24/82 County and Thanet District Ward Councillors' Reports

Updates were provided on:

Cllr Donaldson reported that he, Cllr Veck and Cllr Wallin had attended the KALC AGM.

Cllr Scott highlighted ongoing parking concerns and the importance of maintaining Westgate's one-hour free parking policy, as metered parking is unsuitable for the area. He urged residents to park considerately to prevent stricter enforcement measures. Residents were reminded to contact him or the other District Councillors, Cllrs Donaldson and Worrow, with any concerns. Cllr Worrow discussed the positive collaboration within the Town Council since his election in March 2024. He also noted his involvement in TDC casework in Westgate alongside Cllr Braidwood, a district councillor for Westgate. Much of this work remains confidential. Cllr Worrow reflected on the legacy of Burt McCastry, Thanet District Council's first person of colour, who recently passed away.

FC/24/83 Chairman and Councillors' Reports

The Chairman mentioned the good results achieved with the Remembrance Sunday and the Christmas Lights Switch On.

Cllr King updated regarding the play area to the north of Canterbury Road, saying that two more expressions of interest were soon to be received, including one for children with disabilities.

FC/24/84 Reports from Steven England. Beat Officer for Westgate and Birchington, and/or Jason Gordon Community Warden

PC England provided an update on the crime statistics for November, reporting a total of 34 offenses in Westgate. He noted a seasonal decline in crime but emphasized the typical increase during summer months. He shared advice on crime prevention, particularly regarding keyless car thefts. Credit card skimming was also discussed. He also announced a ward surgery scheduled for 13th January at 2 PM at the Town Council Offices as an opportunity for residents to raise concerns.

Community Warden Jason Gordon provided a brief update on his activities, despite recent emergency leave. He supported the Remembrance Sunday event, resolved a nuisance rough sleeper issue in collaboration with Kent Police, and participated in a multi-agency initiative with Trading Standards addressing rogue traders. Jason also assisted with fortnightly lunches and alternate coffee mornings at a local church, supported the Westgate Christmas lights event, delivered a scam awareness session for a vulnerable group, and contributed to the Changing Minds Kent well-being program. He thanked all involved for their support.

FC/24/84 Public Right to Speak

Bronwyn, the Secretary of the Westgate-on-Sea Community Centre, asked to confirm the date of the Annual Town meeting as the 28th of May 2025.

FC/24/85 Town Clerk's Correspondence

The Chairman addressed a Facebook post claiming agendas were not properly posted, suggesting they were put up on Sunday. The Chairman confirmed that the agendas were correctly posted and displayed on Friday. It was emphasized that the blame does not lie with the Town Clerk, as everything was handled properly.

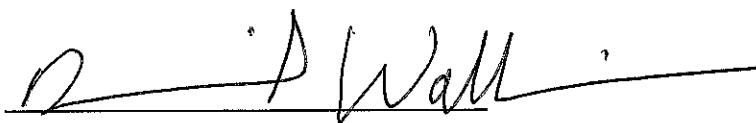
The Clerk thanked Emma Dublin for organizing the coat swap initiative held in October and all the residents who contributed. The remaining coats were donated to Thanet Family Hubs as part of their own coat swap program. The Clerk also extended congratulations to the Christmas Lights Committee for organizing the Christmas Fair, mentioning the Council's contribution of the Christmas tree and new lights. She also mentioned the late-night shopping event, which was highly successful. The Clerk highlighted the importance of supporting our local businesses and fostering a vibrant community atmosphere.

FC/24/86 Next Meeting

Wednesday, 15th January 2025, at 7.00 pm.

FC/24/87 Exclusion of the Public and Press

A resolution was passed 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.

Signed: 

Date: 15/1/25