



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 10th September 2025 at 7.00pm

Present:

Cllr David Donaldson (Chair)
Cllr Clive Veck (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Tom King
Cllr Mike Livesey
Cllr Charlotte Thomason
Cllr David Wallin
Ms Nabila Yakub (Town Clerk)
Ms Ana Jagelo (Administration Officer)

5 Members of Public

FC/25/119 Welcome from the Chairperson

Cllr Donaldson opened the meeting

FC/25/120 Apologies for Absence

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

FC/25/121 Members' Interests

None

FC/25/122 Minutes

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 9th July 2025 were received and approved as an accurate record. Cllr Livesey noted the importance of following up on discussions raised during meetings or the Public Right to Speak.

FC/25/123 Bleed Control Kits

Inner Wheel presented a proposal for bleed control kits across Westgate. The Council unanimously resolved to donate an additional £1000 to a total of £1,500, enabling the purchase of multiple kits to install in strategic locations across the town.

FC/25/124 Co-option Update

A Councillor claimed that the draft co-option policy contained a number of inconsistencies. It was agreed to review and revise the document, with Clerk Nabila to work on corrections if necessary. The co-option process will in any case proceed as planned, with applications to be invited for a four-week period.

FC/25/125 Human Resources Update

- The 2025-26 National Joint Council Pay Awards were presented and noted.
- The Council resolved to ratify the following policies as approved by the HR Committee on 23rd July 2025:
 - Disciplinary Policy
 - Grievance Policy
 - Sickness Absence Policy.

FC/25/126 Committee Terms of Reference / Standing Orders

After detailed discussion centred on a discrepancy between the Council's Standing Orders and Committee Terms of Reference concerning the appointment of Committee Chairs, the Council resolved to allow standing committees to elect their own chairs at their first meeting following the Annual Council Meeting. The Clerk was instructed to amend the Standing Orders to reflect this.

FC/25/127 Lymington Road Allotment Gardens

Two key proposals were presented for the Lymington Road Allotment Gardens:

- Allotment water rates for year 2025-26.

Council unanimously approved the new pricing structure as follows:

- Full plot: £24 (previously £20.45)
- Half plot: £12 (previously £10.22)

- Clause 2(f) of the Tenancy Agreement. Decision required.

It was proposed to include the following clause regarding plot allocation:

“Tenants may request to be placed on a waiting list for an additional plot after holding their current plot for a minimum of 12 months”, at the following conditions:

“Tenant must demonstrate full and proper use of existing plot; Existing plot holders do not take priority over those on the waiting list without a plot; Additional plot may be located in any part of the site”.

The Council unanimously resolved to approve the proposed amendment to the Allotment Rules and Code of Conduct.

FC/25/128 Council Vehicle

During the summer, the new Council vehicle sustained damage on Westbury Road when its cage was struck by an overhanging tree branch near the railway line. An insurance claim has been initiated, with an excess payment required and a qualified garage contacted for repairs.

FC/25/129 Finance

The Clerk/RFO provided a report, which is attached.

FC/25/130 Update on Play Areas

A comprehensive 60-page professional report from the Play Inspection Company was received, providing a detailed evaluation of the Lymington Road play area, skate park, and ball court. The Council is reviewing the report, which categorises necessary interventions into high, medium, and low-risk categories. Quotes for repair have been requested, which will then be brought to Full Council to assess.

The existing skate park presents significant concerns, with children continuing to use the facility despite closure signs indicating potential safety risks. Replacement cost estimates hover around £34,000, while current funds raised total approximately £16,000. Discussions are ongoing.

The new play area development has a total budget of £60,000, comprising £20,000 from Westgate Town Council and £40,000 from Thanet District Council. The Council is collaborating closely with Dan Gooch from TDC to develop a strategic approach. The first stage of public consultation is soon to be launched.

FC/25/131 Christmas Tree and Lights

The Council approved a proposal to purchase new lights for the Christmas tree. With a £3,000 Christmas budget, the Events Committee recommended spending up to £1,300 on colourful lights.

FC/25/132 Councillors' Reports

Cllr Wallin noted public inquiries about the unused flagpole, suggesting the potential to permanently fly a Union or St. George's flag except on days when a different flag would be appropriate, referencing similar practices in Margate, Canterbury, and other local councils.

Cllr King reported ongoing issues with speeding on Westgate Bay Avenue, Westbrook Avenue and Sea Road, following complaints received from residents. Cllr King referenced the online meeting held in the office with other Councillors to discuss potential traffic calming measures with Paul Valek of Kent County Council.

Cllr King has been working with a local resident whose family is experiencing severe housing conditions, engaging with Thanet District Council's housing department to improve their priority status.

Cllr King raised concerns about the limited operating hours of the West Bay kiosk, which is now open only eight hours per week. While acknowledging this as a business decision, Cllr King pointed it out in relation to the Council finding new income streams subsequent to the loss of Barclays.

FC/25/133 County and Thanet District Ward Councillors' Reports

Cllr Donaldson provided a brief update on the ongoing Local Government Reorganisation, with two potential East Kent configuration options being evaluated. A final proposal is expected by 28 November.

FC/25/134 Report(s) from Steven England, Beat Officer for Westgate and Birchington, and/or Jason Gordon, Community Warden

None.

FC/25/135 Public Right to Speak

A resident recommended consulting PC England to determine optimal locations for bleed control kits based on crime data, suggesting potential sites near the station and in key community areas. Regarding the skate park, they proposed putting a push on the crowdfunding and completely removing the existing structure rather than repairing it. The resident also suggested liaising with traders regarding the purchase of coloured lights for the Christmas tree, in that white lights might be preferred. Lastly, the resident requested that the Clerk's Finance Report be attached to the minutes of the meeting.

A resident agreed that the skatepark should be removed and the crowdfunded money put towards a new skatepark. The resident asked whether the old Christmas lights would be reused. The resident enquired whether the continued absence of KCC Councillors was minuted and recommended doing so in the future. The resident said that the idea of the flag being flown at this particular moment would be inflammatory and a poor idea.

Cllr Donaldson responded that the Council should not be associated with any kind of right wing movement, which has an anti-immigration stance.

A resident informed the Council that they would be attending a workshop held by TDC on the new design code. The resident referred to prior discussion to reiterate that 10 electors were required in order to call an election, not 2 as the Councillor claimed.

A resident proposed enhancing public participation by using council surgeries to promote and assist with consultations. The suggestion aimed to help residents, especially older individuals, navigate online consultation processes by providing computer assistance, advertising upcoming consultations and creating a supportive environment for community input.

FC/25/136 Clerk's Correspondence

The Clerk reported that the Council is preparing a targeted dog fouling awareness campaign, addressing a strongly felt community issue raised by residents and traders along Station Road. The campaign aims to remind dog owners of their responsibility to clean up after their pets. Additionally, a Councillor Surgery is scheduled for Saturday from 10:45am to 12pm, with Cllr Donaldson volunteering. A ward surgery will be held on the 18th with Community Warden Jason Gordon and PC Stephen England in attendance.

FC/25/137 Date of Next Meeting:

Wednesday 8th October 2025 at 7pm.

FC/25/138 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, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted:

- (i) Staffing matters

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Attached: Financial Report as of 31.07.2025



WESTGATE ON SEA TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCIAL REPORT TO 31.07.2025

Firstly, as you may know, we are currently recruiting for a replacement Finance Officer – applications close on the 19th of September and interviews will commence shortly after. During this time, we are focused on keeping the financial records up to date, as well as making sure that payments are made on time and invoices sent out regularly. Once the new recruit takes on post, they will be tasked with management accounting and reporting as part of their role.

In the meantime, I can report that:

Accounting records have been entered and bank reconciliations completed to 31.07.2025.

The bank reconciliation to 31.07.2025 is ready to be approved.

This shows bank balances and cash in hand amounting to £170,294.25 as at the end of July 2025.

VAT for the first quarter of 2025/26 amounting to £3,931.74 is in the process of being recovered from HMRC.

The total budget for 2025/2026 is £417,036.64 – this comprises of precept of £388,556.64 plus sundry income amounting to £28,480.00. It should be noted that Barclays have given notice and will no longer rent the office space after the 14th of November this year, which will result in a reduction of sundry income of approximately £13,000.

As at 31.07.2025 the total YTD expenditure is £103,113.09 which represents just under 25% of the total budget (at 33% of the year).

The AGAR for 2024/2025 is currently with MAZARS our external auditors. MAZARS has requested clarification on one of our boxes, which we are currently working on (I have just returned from Annual Leave), after which we count on receiving notice of completion of audit which, of course, we will notify you of.

Signed,

Nabila Yakub

Town Clerk/RFO