



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 March 2026 at 7.00pm

Present:

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

Ms Nabila Yakub (Town Clerk)
Ms Ana Jagelo (Administration Officer)
Ms Christine Barton (Finance Officer/Receptionist)
Ms Aimee Jackson (Thanet District Council)
Cllr Luke Evans (Kent County Council)

15 Members of Public

FC/26/54 Welcome from the Chairperson

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

FC/26/55 Apologies for Absence

None.

FC/26/56 Members' Interests

None.

FC/26/57 Public Right to Speak

A resident, speaking in connection with the Community Planning Alliance, announced a national day of action on Saturday 18 April to highlight respect for nature, countryside and farmland. The local Action Group requested that Westgate-on-Sea Town Council support and publicise the event, including displaying a leaflet on Council noticeboards and encouraging local participation.

A resident objected to the proposed location of the new play area citing unsuitability and risk of vandalism and misuse by older teenagers. The resident proposed an alternative site further toward the Swan.

FC/26/58 Minutes

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 11th February 2026 were received and approved as an accurate record.

FC/26/59 Co-Option

Following a vote, it was **RESOLVED** that Ms Sarah Jarman be co-opted to Westgate-on-Sea Town Council, having received the majority of votes. Ms Jarman signed the Acceptance of Office at the meeting.

FC/26/60 Risk Register

Ms Aimee Jackson from Thanet District Council, gave a presentation on risk management, outlining the Council's risk cycle and 5x5 risk matrix. Ms Jackson offered templates, advice and training to

help Westgate-on-Sea Town Council strengthen and formalise its risk register and risk management practices.

FC/26/61 Local Government Reorganisation

The Council received an update on the Kent Local Government Reorganisation, including the proposed timetable (Secretary of State decision expected July 2026 and new unitary arrangements from 31 March 2028). Following discussion of the complexity and impact of the five options, it was agreed that Councillors would respond individually to the government consultation, rather than submitting a single corporate response.

FC/26/62 Assertion 10

The Town Clerk explained that the 2025/26 Annual Governance and Accountability Return will include a new Assertion 10: Digital and Data Compliance, which formalises requirements around data protection, cyber security, website accessibility and use of appropriate council email addresses and domains. They confirmed that Westgate-on-Sea Town Council is already compliant (gov.uk domain, councillor email addresses, WCAG 2.2 AA-compliant website with accessibility statement) and outlined plans to follow NALC guidance, adopt the model IT policy, use the new data protection roadmap, review relevant policies on a rolling basis, and put in place a training plan for staff and councillors to maintain ongoing compliance.

FC/26/63 The following policies and documents were reviewed and adopted:

- IT Policy;
- Data Protection Policy (with an amendment showing the Town Council as the Data Controller and the Clerk as the person who manages the data);
- Employee Privacy Notice;
- Recruitment Policy (with an amendment to page 1 showing that the "...review will be carried out by the Human Resources Committee").

FC/26/64 Allotments

Ana Jagelo (Administration Officer and Allotments Manager) explained that many applicants and some existing plot holders are struggling with the size and physical demands of the standard half-plots, often for health reasons, leading to refusals or resignations. To improve accessibility and support residents' wellbeing, she proposed offering a small number of quarter-size plots, noting that there are already people on the waiting list interested in smaller plots. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council approve the introduction of quarter-size plots on this basis.

FC/26/65 Skatepark VERT Ramp

Tay Cunningham (age 17), explained that he is training to qualify for the Olympics in skateboarding and that a 10-foot vert ramp in Westgate would be crucial for his progression and for younger skaters learning vert. He noted there is currently no vert ramp in Kent, the ramp itself has already been paid for privately, and local businesses are willing to help install and maintain it at no cost to the Council. He argued that the ramp would give local young people a safe, positive place to develop skills, complement new facilities planned in Margate and Folkestone, and help make the area a destination for skateboarding.

The Council agreed in principle to the installation of a 10-foot vert ramp as an extension to the existing skate park and approved the submission of a planning application to Thanet District Council, including meeting the associated planning fee of £679.

FC/26/66 New Play Area Working Group

The Council noted the substantial work required to deliver the new seafront play area and agreed to establish a New Play Area Working Group, comprising councillors and "qualified members of the public" to help develop the brief, liaise with contractors and oversee design and consultation. During discussion it was stressed that children, young people, families and disabled users should be actively involved as co-producers from the outset, not just consulted at the end.

FC/26/67 Lymington Road Play Area

The Clerk reported that quotes received for repairs to the Lymington Road play area were higher than expected and above the threshold, triggering the need for a formal tender process. Existing suppliers will be asked to re-quote, and the opportunity will be advertised on Contract Finder to invite bids from additional national suppliers before a contract is awarded.

FC/26/68 Bank Signatories

The Council noted the appointment of the new Finance Officer Christine Barton and, in order to facilitate her duties and ensure adequate access to banking, **RESOLVED** to add her as an authorised bank signatory on the Council's accounts.

FC/26/69 Councillors' Reports

Cllr Donaldson reported that Thanet District Council has received "Pride in Place Impact Fund" capital funding from central government, including £100,000 ring-fenced for town and parish councils (£20,000 per council). As the fund is capital only, initiatives such as Blooming Westgate are not eligible, but Councillors were invited to suggest suitable capital projects for Westgate so bids can be discussed with the responsible Cabinet Member.

Cllr Livesey welcomed Cllr Sarah Jarman to the Council and noted the strength of both candidates standing for co-option. He then reiterated his view that the Council should proceed with enabling the co-option of public (non-councillor) members onto committees, particularly the Events Committee, arguing that their direct involvement would improve effectiveness compared with relying solely on the public right to speak; he requested that this be progressed via a formal report/decision (noting it is already scheduled for a future agenda).

Cllr Wallin advised that he had received residents' concerns (via Sir Roger Gale MP) about the new seafront play area. He also highlighted residents' worries about planned changes to waste collections, saying that moving some black bin collections from weekly to fortnightly and combining recycling into a single bin represents a major service reduction and may increase excess rubbish and fly-tipping.

Cllr King reiterated residents' concerns about waste collections, noting inconsistency between areas (some black bins weekly, others fortnightly) and suggesting recent changes appear driven by staff cuts rather than service improvement. He also reported that the alleyway between Harold Avenue and Westbury Road is in a poor, littered state and may be an environmental hazard encouraging fly-tipping, and raised complaints about speeding on Sea Road, requesting that these highways issues be put on the agenda for the next Local Transport Committee meeting.

Cllr Veck reported that Phase One of the skate park refurbishment is now complete and open, with a meeting planned to progress Phase Two, and gave an update on the stalled library asset transfer, noting that KCC's Head of Libraries has now agreed to a roundtable Teams meeting to move the matter forward, to which interested councillors and the KCC member will be invited.

FC/26/70 County and Thanet District Councillors' Reports

Cllr Evans (KCC) reported that the new KCC administration has reduced the council tax rise to 3.9%, cut debt (saving around £84,000 per day in interest), and brought adult social care back within budget by renegotiating contracts that had been on average 88% higher than neighbouring authorities. He also highlighted the under-used "Plan Bee" funding for pollinator-friendly projects and invited suggestions for sites in Westgate. In relation to the library asset transfer, he confirmed that both he and the KCC Cabinet Member support keeping the building as a community asset, are challenging officer resistance based on redevelopment land values, and will attend the planned roundtable meeting to help secure a positive decision.

FC/26/71 Reports from Steven England, Beat Officer for Westgate and Birchington, and/or Jason Gordon, Community Warden

None.

FC/26/72 Clerk's Correspondence

The Clerk welcomed the new Councillor and reminded members of the forthcoming Annual Council Meeting (May 6th and Annual Town Meeting (May 13th)). The Clerk reported strong recent social media reach (including a new Instagram account) driven by the Pancake Races, Blooming Westgate and skate park updates. She also reported on Councillors' attendance at an Iftar meal at the Westgate mosque and invited members to the premiere of the Sunshine Project film at the Carlton Cinema, asking them to confirm attendance by Friday.

FC/26/73 Date of Next Meeting:

Wednesday 8th April 2026 at 7pm.

FC/26/74 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 Clerk provided an update on a long-term sickness case and related HR proceedings; members noted the position and the next steps to be taken in line with external HR advice.

The Clerk reported that a Council operative has formally tendered their resignation with extended notice; members noted the resignation and asked the Clerk to review operational cover and bring forward proposals as required.

Signed: David Donaldson

Date: 16th April 2026