

# POSTLING PARISH COUNCIL

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## Minutes of Postling Parish Council meeting held in Postling Village Hall on Tuesday 24 March 2026 at 6.30pm

1. Attending: Chairman Frank Hobbs, Councillors George Burgess, Helen Calderbank, Christine Hobbs, Rob Lye, John Patrick, Daniel Shaddick, Parish Clerk Clare Hamilton, District Cllr Jenny Hollingsbee, District Cllr Elaine Martin  
Apologies: County Cllr Christopher Hespe.
2. **It was resolved** unanimously to accept the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2026.
3. There were no Members' declarations of interest on Agenda items.
4. Public Participation session not required.
5. Matters arising from last meeting not included on agenda  
A parishioner brought to our attention water running down The Street adjacent to the Orchard Field paddock. At times the flow is significant and is beginning to erode the edge of the road. Source/cause is unknown. Concern is that, if left unresolved, the flow could lead to further erosion and further damage to the roadway. Reported to Highways, ref 954636.
6. Planning Applications received since last meeting, circulated to Councillors for comments, outcomes of those deliberations, and to consider any applications received since this agenda was published:
  - a. **26/0301/FH Churchfield, Pilgrims Way, Postling, Hythe, CT21 4EY**  
Lawful Development Certificate (proposed) for the installation of solar panels  
PPC Acceptable.
7. Highways
  - a. Highway Improvement Plan (HIP)
    - Consultations on the reduction of 30mph limit to 20mph  
An informal consultation document was approved by Councillors and submitted to KCC for consideration. On 19.02.26, KCC Highways forwarded 'Deposit documents for Amendment 1 a Speed Limit Order on Various Roads, Postling in the District of Folkestone & Hythe'. This formal consultation was forwarded to parishioners with a deadline for responses to KCC of 16 March. As a consultee, KCC Cllr Christopher Hespe requested a summary of key points in order to support our informal consultation.
    - Lorry Watch  
Interest in the scheme was registered on 28.01.26; waiting for details from Highways.
  - b. Advertising van on bridge over M20: Ref 892178. Van now removed.
  - c. Horses in field crossed by PROW: Ref 251242754 'Resolved, officer action'.
  - d. Pilgrims Way/Stone Street corner: Ref. 931861, displaced building hoardings obscured by hedges in Pilgrims Way and Stone Street posing potential danger to passing vehicles.  
Online status reads 'Works completed' although nothing has changed. Cllr Rob Lye to supply photos for re-reporting.
  - e. Sandling Road
    - Carriageway patching: Road closed for carriageway patching 23.02.26 for up to 5 days.
    - Water tankers: Pumping work by Southern Water in Elham/Ottinge has resulted in tankers using Sandling Road causing road blockages and further damage to the road surface and verges. KCC Highways Manager

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and Southern Water have been contacted to request the tankers use main routes only. No response has been received from Southern Water. Concerns have been raised with KCC regarding damage to the new carriageway patching. Sojan Joseph MP has also been informed.

- Water leak 10.03.26: Affinity Water responded promptly and closed the road between Cuckoo Lane and Ashford Road to carry out same day repair work.

- Give Way sign, corner of Cuckoo Lane: demolished by a large vehicle. Report ref 955662.

## 8. Finance

a. Balance of account at 24 March 2026: £3,930.44.

b. Payments and Receipts since last meeting:

### Payments

C Hamilton	Salary Dec Jan	466.96
HugoFox	Website hosting	11.99
HugoFox	Email hosting	2.99
HugoFox	Website hosting	11.99

### Receipts

HMRC VAT refund 01.03.25-28.02.26 £ 209.98

c. Expenditure due before next meeting:

Parish clerk	Salary Feb March	£ 466.96
	Expenses 2025/26	£ 98.28 <i>budget: £110 incl. travel</i>
HugoFox	Website hosting Apr May	£ 19.98 <i>vat £4.00</i>
	Email hosting Apr May	£ 5.98 <i>vat £1.00</i>

**It was resolved** to approve expenditure, proposed by Cllr Helen Calderbank, seconded by Cllr Christine Hobbs and approved unanimously.

d. End of Year accounts to be prepared after 31 March and Internal Audit arranged.

## 9. Reports from District and County Councillors - see *Appendix*

## 10. Local Government Reorganisation

Government's online consultation: deadline is just before midnight on 26 March and Councillors are encouraged to respond. F&HDC expect to hear the government's decision by 16 July this year.

## 11. Defibrillator

Hopkins AED checked power source to cabinet and carried out bi-monthly check. All in order.

## 12. Otterpool Park Working Group

Meeting postponed, nothing new to report.

## 13. KALC Area Representative

Councillor representative required to attend bi-monthly meetings.

## 14. Assertion 10 and Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2025/26

To fully meet the digital, data and information governance requirements for the 2025/26 AGAR, the following policies have been reviewed and updated: Model Publication Scheme, IT Policy, Data Protection Policy.

## 15. For Information

- 2026 meeting dates: 26 May, 28 July, 29 September, 24 November

- Next Parish Council meeting: 26 May 2026 Annual Meetings - 6.30pm Annual Council Meeting & Ordinary Meeting, 7.30pm Annual Parish Meeting

- Meeting closed at 7.15pm.

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## Appendix Reports from District and County Councillors

### District Councillor Elaine Martin

#### New affordable homes

The first council tenants have begun to move into newly built, affordable rent homes on the Risborough Barracks development in Folkestone. A total of 44 homes are due to be completed by the Autumn and will all be allocated to applicants on the council's housing list. Six new homes are also being provided by the council in Lyminge and will also be let at affordable rents to those on the waiting list. All the new properties have an EPC rating B – keeping energy costs down for residents and supporting the council's carbon reduction ambitions.

#### Council agrees balanced budget

Folkestone & Hythe District Council's 2026/27 budget – the third in succession not to be funded from general reserves – has been approved. While it provides £20m to be spent on key services supporting residents across the district, there is also a strong focus on the future. An improved council tax reduction scheme is also being introduced to further help working age, low-income households. The budget is supported by a 2.99% increase in the district council's portion of council tax (equivalent to approximately 17p a week for a Band D property). The council is responsible for collecting council tax but 75% of the money is distributed to other services e.g. Kent Fire and Rescue.

Included in the budget was money set aside to work up a planning application for the remodelling of Everist Court to provide five properties for older tenants in the area. City Guardians are currently providing security for the building to prevent squatting and theft. City Guardians work by letting out rooms on a rolling monthly contract so the council can get the property back at very short notice. Guardians have to be over 18 years old and are vetted by City Guardians before they are registered to rent rooms from any of their properties.

#### Local Government Reorganisation

Just a reminder, central government's consultation on the five options for the future number of local authorities in Kent and Medway has begun and is open until Thursday 26 March. F&HDC councillors agreed last year to support the option known as 3a. This proposes three unitary authorities – east, west and north Kent and puts the current district together with the council areas of Dover, Thanet, Canterbury and Ashford. It also follows the area covered by the Police force, Kent Fire and Rescue and the NHS. To take part in the government's consultation, visit [Local government reorganisation in Kent and Medway - GOV.UK](#)

#### Folkestone Town of Culture bid

More than 90 people attended workshops to help in the first stage of a possible bid for Folkestone to become the UK's first Town of Culture. The workshop discussions and feedback will greatly assist the council to write an expression of interest in putting the town forward for the accolade. If successful the next stage would be the preparation of a full bid to gain the prestigious title and £3 million to fund a programme of cultural celebrations during 2028.

#### High Streets Connect and Grow Rural

Free district-wide programmes are running to help businesses adapt, attract customers and grow. Free mentoring and interactive workshops are being offered as ideal **for high street retailers, cafes, hospitality venues and visitor facing independents**. The rural programme will empower creative makers and diversification projects across Romney Marsh, the North Downs and rural communities. They are **ideal for farm enterprises, rural producers, accommodation providers, home based makers and start ups**. **More information by emailing [economy@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk](mailto:economy@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)**

#### Otterpool Park

A new planning collaboration agreement has been signed aimed at supporting and accelerating the delivery of Otterpool Park. F&HDC and Homes England – the government's housing and regeneration agency – have signed an agreement focused on securing planning permission for the current scheme. The collaboration gives the council access to the additional skills and expertise necessary to successfully complete the scheme and attract the level of investment required to deliver at this scale. The agreement is time limited until December 2026.

#### Folca building

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An important step towards bringing an iconic Folkestone building back into public use is to be made next week. Folca 2 – the Art Deco section of a former department store on Sandgate Road – will be subject to a range of improvement works ahead of its repurposing, starting Monday 9 March. Over six months, [Folkestone-based company AW Construction](#) will ensure the structure is watertight and ready for use. Specific tasks include an internal strip out, damp proofing, replacing the existing roof and some windows, and the installation of a new party wall which will separate it from Folca 1. The first visible work will be the removal of external stairs on Albion Mews Road as this is critical to the first phase major energy efficiency improvements. £1.44m from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme will be used to transform the building and reduce its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by over 100,000kg per year. Most of the work being carried out is internal, but scaffolding will be necessary on Albion Mews Road and Sandgate Road.

## **Folkestone A Brighter Future - halfway through**

The regeneration of Folkestone town centre is now more than halfway complete. The scheme has been running for ten months with work continuing at seven different sites around the town.

The new linear bus station on Middelburg Square has progressed well, with some of the permanent bus shelters now installed. Cheriton Place will be the next site of works for the rest of March and into April with improvements to the footways and paving.

**Contact:** [Elaine.Martin@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk](mailto:Elaine.Martin@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)

## **District Councillor Jenny Hollingsbee**

**Budget** – the FHDC budget was set at the full Council Meeting held on 25 February. My group voted against the budget as we felt borrowing £6m to improve the Hythe Swimming Pool was not a sensible decision. Whilst the Conservative group is fully supportive of providing a pool in Hythe, it questions the wisdom of spending this large amount of money on an ailing pool which has already cost residents substantial sums annually simply to patch it and keep it open with no income stream fully supporting it. We feel this funding, together with S106 monies from the Nickolls Quarry development, should be put towards a new facility that could create additional income to help with running costs and for future sustainability. However, this could all be changed under Local Government re-organisation when Folkestone & Hythe become part of a large Unitary Administration. We should know the government's decision on who we will merge with some time during the summer. I will be attending a Working Group on 24 March to find out and discuss issues facing the District Council.

**Otterpool Park** – As I understand it Homes England have contributed £2m to the project under the current collaboration agreement. I have gathered from the Budget that the District Council will match this amount. I continue to ask questions on this project and I am looking forward to hearing the outcome of this collaboration agreement.

**My account** – My account is a good way of reporting issues to the Council. There is a long list of issues that can be reported in this way, for example fly tipping, missed bin, anti-social behaviour, noise nuisance, dangerous dog etc If you have not registered go to [www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk](http://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk) and click on My account at the top right hand corner

**Independent Custody Visitors** - The ICV Scheme is a statutory, volunteer-led programme that helps ensure people held in police custody are treated fairly, with dignity, and informed of their rights. Volunteers make unannounced visits to custody suites and play a vital role in safeguarding some of the most vulnerable people in our communities. Applications are welcomed from people of all backgrounds, identities, and lived experiences. If you'd like to give back, support your community, and help promote transparency in policing, this could be the role for you. Applicants must be at least 18 years old to apply. Find out more and to apply, please visit [kent-pcc.gov.uk/icv](http://kent-pcc.gov.uk/icv)

**Sandgate Road Car Park** – the pilot scheme of using the ANPR system of parking will be discontinued as from 31 March 2026. The scheme caused long queues after shows in the Leas Cliff Hall and also attracted vandalism and antisocial behaviour. As from 1 April 2026, it will go back to being a 'pay and display' car park.

**Ward Grants** – the 2025/26 scheme is now closed and will re-open for 26/27 at the end of May.  
[jennyhollingsbee@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk](mailto:jennyhollingsbee@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk) Mobile 07887918458

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## County Councillor Christopher Hespe

### Local Government Reorganisation

The government's public consultation ends on 26 March 2026 and it is anticipated that the shape of local government in Kent will be announced in early July. KCC strongly believes that 'Option 1A' is the best for the County, involving a single Unitary authority with three Area Assemblies. This would provide the strategic capability; avoid costly and disruptive disaggregation of 'people-based' services such as Adult Social Care and SEND; provide local level services, and be significantly less expensive than all the other options. Option 1A is £459 million less expensive than one of the other options being put forward by district councils, and currently there is no indication that central government would meet those costs. KCC is concerned that the costs of local government reorganisation would fall on the local Council Taxpayers. You will find all options from Kent detailed on the Kent Leaders' website and on the KCC website. Please make your views known.

### School Places

96% of Kent pupils have been offered one of their preferred secondary schools for September 2026; that is 17,941 pupils – an increase of 304 children from the past year.

### Trading Standards Alert

Please be aware that Trading Standards has received reports of doorstep criminals in East Kent, intimidating residents into paying for gutter clearance and online investments.

### Kent Film Office

The Kent Film Office has just celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of supporting film and TV in Kent. Over this period, £85 million of increased investment has been generated; it has supported hundreds of placements into the industry and strengthened Kent's growing creative sector. Its work continues to bring jobs, skills and fresh opportunities to local people, whilst promoting Kent's heritage, coast and countryside on screen.

### Playground Festival

KCC is organising a programme of creative activities for babies and young people between 22 and 31 May 2026, involving 150 events at 20 venues, primarily libraries and community hubs. For more information, visit [www.playgroundkent.co.uk](http://www.playgroundkent.co.uk)

### Infrastructure Funding Statement

KCC continues to secure significant Section 106 contributions from developers to support education, highways, adult social care and community services. This funding helps KCC to deliver new school places, invest into local roads, improve public rights of way and strengthen community facilities. The annual KCC Infrastructure Funding Statement is online on the KCC website, and contains a breakdown by district for 2024/25.

### Kent and Medway Business Fund

The Fund, which helps local businesses to grow, innovate and create jobs, is open for applications. Since November 2025, 17 new loans with a total value of £2 million have been issued. Details can be found on the Web.

### Kent and Medway Growth Hub

The Hub provides support to businesses as they grow, adapt and plan for the future. In the first three quarters of 2025/26, the Hub supported 1,106 businesses and gave targeted support to 770 of them. Businesses are given practical tools to help them succeed. Recent workshops organised have been on digital marketing, artificial intelligence in business and starting a business.

### Visit Kent and Invest Kent (formerly Locate in Kent)

Invest Kent provides guidance on property, talent, supply chains and local networks. Visit Kent has resumed its active marketing to encourage visitor footfall across the County. Spring will see the launch of free access to business and marketing support for tourism bodies (see VisitKent website for details).

Chris Hespe, Kent County Councillor for Elham Valley, 10 March 2026

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