

ORLESTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Orlestone Parish Council's Meeting held on Monday 2nd February 2026 at 7pm in Hamstreet Sports Pavilion, Pound Lees, Hamstreet.

Present: Parish Councillors: Andy Othen (Chairman), Dave Farrell, Sid Gittens, Mags Wellsted-Boorman, David White and the Parish Clerk (Sue Stiffell).

Also Present: Borough Councillor Aline Hicks, Kent County Councillor Bill Barrett and 9 members of the public

1. Apologies: Apologies were received from Mike Wady (prior engagement) Sadi Michell (recovering from operation), Steve Newton (prior engagement), Basil Smith (Working) Those present agreed these apologies be accepted. Apologies were also received from Borough Councillor David Ledger.

2. Declarations of Interest:

Declarations of Pecuniary Interest (relating to items on this agenda made in order to comply with the Kent Code of Conduct): None were made at this point from Councillors present.

Declarations of Significant Interest (relating to items on this agenda made in order to comply with the Kent Code of Conduct): Mags Wellsted-Boorman: member/Trustee of the HDSL A

Public Comments & Observations: *It was noted that members of the public were in attendance to hear the Parish Council's views on planning application no 2026/0081 concerning proposed development on land at Mountain Farm.*

It was explained that this was the Council's first meeting since December and the application had not been discussed. The Chairman reiterated the Parish Council's long standing position that they did not support further large scale development in the village. He acknowledged, however, the pressure placed on local authorities by central government to address national housing shortages. As a result, some development in Hamstreet was expected and the Parish Council had to consider what forms of development would be acceptable. The Chairman emphasised that all the parish councillors lived in Hamstreet and were committed to securing the best outcomes for the village.

During discussion, the Chairman noted that the Mountain Farm site had been viewed more favourably by members than other sites proposed in the Draft Local Plan 2042 for Hamstreet, as it included potential employment opportunities alongside smaller, more affordable housing units.

The Chairman encouraged all residents present to submit their own responses to the planning application. Six members of the public left the meeting following this discussion.

3. Minutes From OPC's Meeting Held On 8th December 2025: To Be Authorised as Being A Correct Record: Dave Farrell proposed that the minutes from the meeting held on 8th December 2025 be accepted as a correct record of the meeting and signed/authorised by the chairman. Sid Gittens seconded this proposal which was agreed by those present.

4. Matters Arising From Minutes of The Meeting Held on 8th December 2025: No items were brought forward at this point of the meeting

5. Reports/Updates From Representatives of the Community Including Kent County Councillor Bill Barrett, & Borough Councillors Aline Hicks and David Ledger

NB: Ashford Borough Council is involved in Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), which aims to merge councils across Kent into larger unitary councils. This change will create councils that deliver all local services in one area, simplifying the structure and improving efficiency. Ashford Borough Council is part of this initiative, which is expected to start delivering services from April 2028. The council is currently working on its own proposals and is encouraged to collaborate with other councils in the area to develop a cohesive unitary plan.

Borough Councillor Aline Hicks: highlighted that Ashford Borough Council were not putting any funds into the new unitary programme. The Draft Local Plan 2042 had been delayed due to several

factors including waiting for the Government's rollout of the new planning system, changes introduced through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023) which meant the plan could not progress in line with the existing LDS timetable. Work would continue and in the summer, there should be a series of informal engagement events and in the Autumn the next version of the Draft Local Plan 2042 would be subject to wider public consultation.

Kent County Councillor Bill Barrett: reported significant uncertainty at KCC arising from the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), with public consultation expected in the new financial year.

He explained that KCC's budget process was heavily reliant on reserves and earmarked reserves, and that substantial cuts were being made to achieve required savings. As a result, many groups had seen their funding reduced or withdrawn. He noted that the future of libraries and household waste recycling centres appeared secure for the next twelve months.

He had attended the site visit in Hamstreet on Friday 30 January to review flooding issues along Ashford Road, from Pound Leas Car Park to just before the garden centre. He would be seeking to obtain sandbags for residents at *Rosedale*. He suggested that a further site meeting be arranged in the spring. *Borough Councillor Aline Hicks left the meeting*

6. Pound Leas Recreation Ground: Update

Agreements: An agreement between OPC and HDSL A for Pound Leas Recreation Ground (lower field) had been received from the Parish Council's solicitor. It was agreed that this be viewed and discussed at the next meeting.

7. Highways:

Flooding: There had been issues with flooding during recent rainfall with *Rosedale* and *Romney Road* being particularly affected. A site meeting had been held on Friday 30th January with two representatives from Highways attending. A note of the meeting and action taken had been circulated to members. *Attached to minutes*

Potholes/Drainage: Various potholes in and around the crossroads in the village centre had been reported, these had been marked up to be repaired. Sid further highlighted that these crossroads were permanently flooded during and after rainfall. The Clerk is to request that the drains and gullies be cleared with a request that an investigation be undertaken as to why this was occurring so frequently. *(reported after meeting enquiry no 935459)*

A blocked drain/gully opposite *Stumble Tree Cottages* in *Ashford Road* had been reported to KCC Highways *(enquiry no 935460)*.

David White highlighted the problem of loose drain covers in *Lancaster Close*. He is to notify the Clerk of their locations so that she can report them.

Parking: There was a continuing problem of a large HGV regularly parking opposite *Pound Leas Car Park*. This was causing a dangerous obstruction and although had been reported to the police and the local beat officer the problem continued. It was agreed that the Clerk request the installation of a sign indicating HGV parking was prohibited.

8. Reports/Updates Received From Parish Councillors:

Daid White: highlighted that the track running alongside the allotment plots to *Southern Water's Pumping Station* had deep ruts caused by *Southern Water's* vehicles visiting the pumping station. A request had been made to *Southern Water* for them to rectify the damage caused by their vehicles.

Sid Gittens: highlighted that the *Street Light* was not working by *war memorial*; Mags is to make enquiries as to why this had occurred. He reported that the *Greensand Way* information sign continued to be a work in progress.

Dave Farrell: reported that he and *Mike Wady* worked as the village *Flood Wardens* however attending online meetings had proved timely and unprofitable. They would both be standing down from this official position but would continue to monitor problems and report them to the necessary authority with the parish clerk's help.

Mags Wellsted-Boorman: highlighted that the *Hamstreet Victory Hall Committee* had refused the provision of a clothes donation unit for their car park due to the space one would take up and the issues with mess around it. It was noted that the one on *Pound Leas car park* was well used but did

The Chairman proposed that agenda item no 9. Planning Applications Received & Update continue. Those present agreed this proposal.

9. Planning Applications Received & Updates: continued

No: 2026/0081 Land at Mountain Farm, Marsh Road

Proposal: Hybrid planning application comprising Outline planning permission (all matters reserved except for access) for demolition of existing commercial floorspace and single dwelling and construction of up to 75 dwellings with incidental open space, associated works and infrastructure and a Full application for the construction of replacement commercial building with access, car and cycle parking, associated works and infrastructure.

Comments: Three objections could currently be viewed on ABC's website relating to:

- Lack of infrastructure to cope with development; GP and School not large enough.
- Loss of privacy as homes nearby would be overlooked.
- Flooding: flood risk to homes nearby due to increase water from proposed development.
- The entrance to the development would be via a road with a speed limit of 60mph.
- No existing public footpath to the village or garden centre.
- Harmful to existing wildlife.

During discussion it was agreed that concerns regarding the lack of a public footpath and the speed limit of the road outside the proposed development, be raised. An independent flood risk assessment would be requested and concerns regarding Southern Water's pumping station in Warehorne Road be noted. A vote taken on whether the parish council would object or comment on the application resulted in it being agreed that this application would be objected to due to the concerns raised

13. Date & Time of Next Meeting: Monday 2nd March 2026 at 7pm

Meeting Concluded at 9.10pm

Chairman's Signature:

During the meeting the 3 remaining members of the public left.