

IWADE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Wednesday 12 March 2025

Present:

Cllr. S. Tolhurst – Chair	Cllr. P. Holowczycki	County Cllr. M. Baldock
Cllr. C. Gomez	Cllr. P. Hyde	PC Phil Clemens
Cllr. J. Hartley	Samantha Gray, Clerk	2 Residents

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received and accepted from Cllrs. K. Rivers-Simpson, D. Waters and S. Waters.

2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations – None.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Proposed by Cllr. Gomez and seconded by Cllr. Holowczycki, the minutes of the monthly Parish Council Meeting held on 12 February 2025 were agreed and signed by the Chair as a true record.

4. Visitors/Public Time

- 1. Visitors:** A resident spoke to council members about funding to improve the Iwade Village website which was created 20 years ago. Members asked the resident to complete a grant application and the council will consider this at their next meeting. **Action: Clerk**

- 2. County and Borough Councillors:** Cllr. Baldock advised Swale Borough Council (SBC) have held their budget meeting and councillors successfully overturned the proposal to cut members grants, the loneliness project and playgrounds. He fears that the budget for playgrounds will be cut if Unitary councils are formed and suggested council members should consider taking over maintenance of playgrounds in Iwade. Council members agreed to consider this and the Clerk will add this to the next agenda. **Action: Clerk**

Cllr. Baldock also advised that SBC have received several applications for housing developments since the government called in the Highstead development. The Bobbing Garden Village planning application has been submitted and he informed the council if this goes ahead the development will take ten to fifteen years to complete. The housing development is not needed to meet the local plan target and Bobbing Parish Council are planning to hold CABA (Communities Against Bobbing Expansion) meetings.

- 3. Police Constable:** Council members welcomed PC Philip Clemens. He informed the council he has received reports of poaching and some nuisance vehicles in the area. He believes the CCTV cameras in the village are having a positive affect on the amount of vehicles gathering on Sheppey Way. He has received reports of dirt bikes and quad bikes driving through Iwade and urges any sightings to be reported to him. Reports can be made to Kent Police by dialling 101 or via their website <https://www.kent.police.uk/ro/report>.

5. Village Matters

- 1. H.I.P Requests** – The Highway Improvement Plan committee will meet to discuss the H.I.P requests, the Clerk will organise a date with council members. **Action: Clerk**

- 6. Planning** – applications are viewable on Swale: <http://pa.midkent.gov.uk/online-applications>; KCC: <https://cloud2.atriumsoft.com/KCCePlanningOPS/searchPageLoad.do>

- 1. 22/503654/EIOUT: Land To The West Of Bobbing Sittingbourne Kent ME9 8QL. Outline application (all matters reserved except for access) for a mixed used development comprising up to 2,500 dwellings, a 5.21 ha commercial employment zone including doctors'**

surgery, a 4.35 ha sports hub (and sports pitches), 3FE primary school, community facilities, local retail provision, public open space, children's play areas and associated parking, servicing, utilities, footpath and cycle links, drainage, ground and other infrastructure.

Iwade Parish Council discussed the above application at their meeting held on Wednesday 12 March 2025. Council members strongly disagree with this planning proposal and stand by their comments made in December 2022.

The site covers the area from Bramblefield Lane/Wallers builders yard in the Northeast of Sittingbourne to the Sittingbourne to London railway line in the South. The eastern boundary is the Sheppey Way to the Solar farm and Cullens Farm in the West.

This is an area at least twice the geographical area of Iwade Village, which at the 2021 Census had a population of 4533. Based on that reckoning the eventual population of the proposal could be around 10,000 persons.

As a point of reference, the finished development when complete would stretch from 500 metres South of Iwade (Pop. 4533) to 1000 metres North-East of Newington (Pop 2684). It is approximately 2 Kilometres North to South and 1.5 Kilometres East to West.

The proposed development does not show any improvements for Keycol Hill (Air Quality Poor Zone) and will impact on Bobbing Hill and Newington who have exceptional high traffic volumes on the A2, a road built by the Romans, which has improved little since!

The proposed development is not a joined up central focused community. The site is split by a high voltage electricity pylon corridor passing north-south through the proposal. This is divisive to the development being one community.

This is a large development site and has implications far beyond the footprint of the application. It has to be considered with its relationship to the existing neighbourhoods as it has the potential to increase Sittingbourne's population by 20% (current population 52906).

Swale Borough Councils adopted Local Plan has a period of 2014-31 and is under review to cover the period 2032-38, which will become the end date of the Local Plan 2021 Review (currently ongoing). As the Local Plan is currently under review it is confusing to know which document should be quoted. However, the planning application is:

Outside any existing built-up area boundary.

Within undeveloped open countryside

On agricultural land

Not a previously developed site

Not within an allocated residential site

Would infill local countryside gaps between villages Unsustainable

Has no infrastructure improvements

Some housing will be located within the middle and outer zones of the Motney Hill/Key Street PRS pipeline

Therefore, the application is not complying with Swale Borough Council policies (2021 Review), although there are equivalent policies in the adopted Local Plan 2014-31.

ST1 Swale Borough Council Needs

ST2 Swale Borough Council Settlement Strategy

ST3 Sustainability

ST7 Health/Wellbeing

ST8 Infrastructure

ST10 Environment/Heritage

DM10 Transport demand and impact

DM12 Rural Lanes

DM27 Local countryside gaps

DM30 Agricultural land
DM33 Air quality

Also, paragraph 78 of NPPF reads To promote sustainable development in a rural area housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.

The latest information we have regarding housing delivery is that Swale Borough Council has an identifiable 4.6 year supply of housing land. To conclude:

The proposed application is in an area where the local hospital cannot cope with the population as at present and there are no known plans to extend or build a new hospital. It is a known area which is unable to attract Doctors to fulfill current local surgery requirements.

Local schools are already oversubscribed. The Parish Council is aware that new Secondary and Primary Schools are proposed in the Bramblefield/Quinton Road development, but as is well know these rarely come to fruition.

The current transport infrastructure is not coping with current demands, with bus routes being cut. The upgrades to Junction 5/Stockbury Roundabout, Key Street Roundabout and Grovehurst Road Roundabout are only short-term solutions, already it is being muted that by 2026 the highway improvements will reach full capacity.

The demand on water services is already causing problems in the area.

The site covers 203 hectares, it is recognized by Kent Local Authority that residential development should be 30 dwellings per hectare. This transpires to over 6000 homes at 2 persons per property, that is 12000 people; larger than some Kent towns, e.g. Sheerness which has a population of 11138, Tenterden 7118 and Edenbridge 8172.

There is a lot of concern about agricultural land being used for homes, it is felt that the importance of this farm land for food is being ignored. Once the land is lost is cannot be regained.

7. Correspondence

- 1. Idea: Iwade Cultural Club** – A resident has asked the Parish Council for their support to start a group for the community, something that would be beneficial to the lonely and those struggling financially. Cllr. Tolhurst offered to meet with the resident to discuss this.

Action: Clerk/Cllr.Tolhurst

- 2. Resident Parking Concern, Ferry Road** – The council have received a report of vehicles blocking access to a driveway. This issue was discussed at a H.I.P meeting with Kent County Council (KCC) in December 2023. KCC advised there is no crash data to support a safety issue and it was not considered a priority to install double yellow lines in this area. Members asked the Clerk to respond.

Action: Clerk

8. Parish Council Matters

- 1. Memorial Plaque application** – Members agreed to accept the application for a memorial plaque to be installed on tree number RW4.

Action: Clerk

- 2. Date for May annual meeting** – Members agreed to hold the May meeting on Wednesday 7 May 2025, instead of 14 May.

Action: Clerk

- 3. Planning Application for Village Hall land – G.H. Deane** – Proposed by Cllr. P. Hyde and seconded by Cllr. Gomez, members agreed to complete the planning application for the Village Hall land on behalf of G.H. Deane.

Action: Clerk

- 4. Vice-Chair Acceptance of Office** – Bring back to the next meeting.

Action: Clerk

5. **Social Media** – Cllr. Hartley proposed to film Parish Council events to share on social media. Members asked the Clerk to check the GDPR policy and report back to council members.

Action: Clerk

9. **Finance**

1. **Bank Sinatories** – Bring back to the next meeting.

Action: Clerk

2. **Accounts and Cheques raised at this meeting** – Proposed by Cllr. Tolhurst and seconded by Cllr. Hartley, members noted the budget figures and the accounts to 28 February. The following payments were agreed, Cllrs. Holowczycki and Tolhurst to log in and authorise payments.

Action: Cllrs. Holowczycki/ Tolhurst

EXPENDITURE				
Pay Date	Pay Method	Payable to	Reason	Amount
12.03.25	BACs	L. Ives	Expenses – Telephone, home as office – February	£18.00p
12.03.25	BACs	S. Grey	Expenses – Telephone, home as office – February	£44.00p
12.03.25	BACs	H.M.R.C.	Tax February	£179.28p
12.03.25	BACs	Restore Datashred	Shredding of Confidential Documents	£86.40p
12.03.25	BACs	K.A.L.C.	Chairmanship Conference – Cllr. Tolhurst	£84.00p
01.03.25	SO	Staff Salaries	February 2025	£1518.69p
01.03.25	DD	NEST	Pension contributions February	£70.09p
01.03.25	DD	HugoFox	Website monthly fee	£35.99p
26.03.25	DD	Npower	Electricity Supply February 2025	£175.85p
30.03.25	DD	Countrystyle	Supply of Waste Wheelie Bin	£40.63p
INCOME				
Pay Date	Pay Method	Received from	Reason	Amount

10. **Projects – Updates on Current and New**

1. **VE Day 8th May 2025** – Members will hold a committee meeting to discuss the event plans.

Action: Clerk

2. **Future public events** – Cllrs. Rivers-Simpson, Gomez and Hartley will arrange a working group meeting and will report back to a full council meeting.

Action: Rivers-Simpson/Gomez/Hartley

3. **Litter Pick** – The Clerk advised that SBC will deliver the litter picking equipment for the event which is being held on Sunday 4 May and the equipment needs to be returned to Swale House after the litter pick. Members discussed refreshments for the event, Cllr. Tolhurst will speak to The Mews Brewhouse. Members agreed the meeting place for the litter pick will be the Village Hall and Cllr. Hyde hopes to be available to be the First Aid volunteer.

Action: Clerk/Cllr.Tolhurst

4. **Tracker** – Cllr. Tolhurst updated the Parish Council tracking document and circulated to all members. Members discussed the Ferry Road water leak. Southern Water have not advised the result of the independent water test. Members agreed to organise an independent water test directly with a laboratory and authorized the Clerk to proceed with payment of the test in consultation with council members. The Clerk will also write to Southern Water.

Action: Clerk/RFO

Members also asked the Clerk to write to Omnicroft regarding litter collections and the damaged wall in the Village Centre.

Action: Clerk

11. **Reports from Representatives**

1. **Village Hall Committee** – The Chair of the village hall reported community bookings are picking up. Members discussed the salt bins which need to be located and filled with salt. The locations will be confirmed and members will meet to carry out the work.

2. **KALC Area Representative** – Larissa Reed attended the meeting and gave a presentation on Devolution.
3. **Western Area Committee** – Larissa Reed also attended this meeting and gave a presentation on Devolution. The minutes are available on the Western Area Committee website. The next meeting will be held in June.

12. **Items for the Next Agenda**

- Mud on the Highway, coming from the Floplast site.
- Land at Mansfield Drive.
- Planting flowers in the Village.
- Tree guards – add to a later agenda.

Action: Clerk

13. **Next Meeting(s)**

Full Council meeting, Wednesday 9 April 2025, 7.30 p.m., in The Barn, All Saints Close.

Finance Committee Meeting, Wednesday 9 April 2025, 8.30 p.m., The Barn, All Saints Close.

14. **Closed Session**

1. **Staff Salary Reviews** - Proposed by Cllr. Tolhurst and seconded by Cllr. Gomez, members agreed to increase the RFO's salary to Scale Point (SCP) 26 for 20 hours to be worked per month, with effect from 1 April 2025. Agreed to increase the Clerk's salary to SCP 23 for 18 hours to be worked per week, with effect from 1 April 2025. The Members also agreed to amend the RFO's and Clerk's contract, to change the maximum salary scale to 32.

The meeting closed at 09.25 p.m.