

Minutes of General Meeting at 7pm on Wednesday 8th October 2025 at Sturry Social Centre

Present:

Cllr John Hogben, Cllr Steve Birch, Cllr. Gill Betts, Cllr Anne Dekker, Cllr Kathleen Warner, Cllr Dil Rai, Cllr Heather Taylor, Cllr Ashley Bubb, Cllr Ann Davies, Cllr George Spence and Cllr Chris Gartland
Ken Dekker Clerk and Alan Webster Caretaker.
KCC Cllr Mark Mulvihill and CCC Cllr Harry McKenzie
3 residents in attendance

196-25. Apologies for absence.

CCC Keji Moses at a Civic event. KCC Warden Roger Lithegow unable to attend due to work Rota.

Public questions.

None

197-25. To receive Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests and Voluntary Announcements of Other Interests on any agenda items and a reminder to think of any changes to the DPI register held at CCC, such as change of job or home.

Cllr Davies stated that she had an interest in item 213-25

198-25. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 10th September 2025.

Proposed by Cllr Warner and seconded by Cllr Betts all in agreement.

199-25. Matters arising from minutes of the Parish Meeting on Wednesday 10th September 2025.

No matters arising.

200-25. Chairman and Councillors reports.

Cllr Birch stated that he had been working with the payback team in Chapel Lane Broad Oak and he wanted to thank Cllr Warner for assisting him.

Cllr Betts reported the following:

I attended a meeting for Parishes regarding Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation. I didn't find there to be a lot of

new information, but it was positive to meet some other local parish councillors and begin to make some contacts.

From the meeting I took that all Parish Councils need to be aware and involved with new information and dates as they arise so that our parish does not fall behind in its understanding and readiness to take required actions when necessary.

I also signed up for and attended an online information session entitled: KCC Highways and Transportation Parish Seminar. I asked if there would be any information about Sturry, but there was nothing on the Agenda and I left early.

Cllr Davies stated that she had attended a workshop given By CCC on the new Design Coding. She will also be attending a further workshop on the Planning system.

She also mentioned that one of her lodgers has been cleaning the pathways around the village since she lost her job and would it be possible to let her have a high vis vest to wear whilst she is doing this work as she feels that she has to give something back to the community.

Cllr Dekker stated that she had attended the meeting at the Guildhall on the 23rd September along with Cllr Betts and the Clerk. It was not as well represented as the first meeting a few months ago. This meeting only came about because two local Parish Councillors requested it. Several of the participants were not Parish Councillors and had their own agenda. We are waiting for the report from this meeting from CCC and when it arrives the Clerk will circulate it.

Cllr Taylor requested that the Cllrs sent in their written reports to the Clerk so that they could be distributed to the rest of the Council before the meeting.

Cllr Hogben gave his report at item 206-25.

201-25. County and District Councillors reports

CCC Cllr H McKenzie reported the following:

Broad Oak Reservoir

Harry attended the last Advisory Stakeholder meeting held by South East Water to discuss the Broad Oak Reservoir. We have sent the slides of that meeting as an attachment alongside this report for the information of parish councillors. At that meeting, Harry raised concerns that residents in Broad Oak have raised with us about pesticides from nearby farm fields seeping into the reservoir water. We were reassured about mitigation measures for this, including working with farmers to control harmful substances on their land. He also encouraged South East Water to consult with residents by knocking on doors rather than by relying only on digital methods.

Dengrove Park

Last month, Harry and Sir Roger Gale visited Dengrove Park to meet with residents and inspect various issues (including a landslide risk, loss of parking capacity and emergency vehicle access, concerns over pitch fee increases, and more).

Harry raised this directly with the Joint Chief Executives and secured a meeting for himself and Sir Roger with the relevant officers, including the Head of Locality Services, where we argued for the residents and were assured that a compliance order was being prepared to be sent to the park owners that will address concerns of residents. This compliance order has been based on early engagement with the site owners to reduce the risk of a lengthy and expensive appeals process. Action is being taken.

Milner Court Footpath

We have been contacted by Network Rail who have asked if we have comments regarding their plans to close the Milner Court Footpath over the level crossing. As we are elected to represent you, the residents, we want to know what you think about this. Any comments we submit to Network Rail will be informed by what residents tell us.

Local Government Reorganisation.

Reminder that the deadline for Canterbury City Council's submission to the government on LGR is on 28th November. City councillors will receive a briefing on 19th November and then there will be a Full Council and Cabinet meeting on 20th November to discuss the council's submission. To represent you, we need to know your views ahead of that Full Council meeting so that we can take them into consideration when preparing for the meeting. The submission will be Full Council-led and that will be resident-led.

Draft Local Plan Reg 18

Consultation on new proposals for the draft local plan closes on the *21st October*. Please respond to the consultation, if you have not already. There are no new proposals in Sturry or Broad Oak, but there is one in Hersden. Regardless, your views are welcome and encouraged. Harry is attending the Overview Committee tomorrow to discuss the Regulation 18 consultation, if you have anything you want him to raise, let us know.

Popes Lane

Reminder to councillors that now outline planning permission has been granted for Popes Lane, it is only a matter of time before the reserved

matters stage comes. We can engage with the planning department and developers early to impose conditions to lessen the impact of this development and make it more tolerable. But we need to know what residents want and need from this development in that case. It would be good to arrange a meeting with parish councillors where we can discuss Popes Lane and what conditions you would like to see in the reserved matters stage.

KCC & CCC Councillor Meeting.

This morning, we met with Cllr Mark Mulvihill to discuss cross-party working, and we can best collaborate to serve the residents. Among the things we discussed were:

- The Sturry Level Crossing
- Foliage maintenance on Sturry Hill
- Traffic safety outside Sturry Church of England Primary School
- Regulations and enforcement on overly large vehicles in Broad Oak

We will have regular meetings now, where we put politics aside, to discuss shared issues in the ward that we can work on together to help local residents.

KCC Cllr Mulvihill reported that he has been involved in several local matters in the ward, the Milner Court Footpath will come under KCC and the highways act.

He stated that the drains are to be emptied and that there is going to be a pot hole blitz in Broad Oak and then on Sturry Hill unfortunately there are no dates as yet.

202-25. Community Warden report.

I have conducted extensive Visible Presence across my two wards over the last month.

Highlights:

1. Deputy Team Leader duties including attending staff meetings, along with Team Leader for Canterbury and Thanet team.
2. Acting Team Leader duties - including answering warden team enquires.
3. Dealing with parish council requests to review overgrown hedgerow and overhanging tree branches - across Sturry and Westbere
4. Local enquires regarding an abandoned vehicle in Sturry - enquires with Kent Police to see if stolen.
5. Overgrown Hedgerow issues along Island Rd, Sturry; Westbere Lane and Church Lane, Westbere - visits to seek resolution.
6. I booked a meeting with local KCC Councillor - discussed Community Ward role and collaborative working on resolving community issues.
7. Scam Awareness Talk held at St Nicholas' Church, Sturry where Kent Trading Standards and I talked about scams. I instigated the event, and

invited Kent Trading Standards and local PC, PC and PSCO attended and contributed.

8. Hersden - a resident advised me of a neighbourhood issue, which has been reported to Kent Police. The notification was for my awareness only, as police are dealing. 101/999 advice given.
9. Hope Coffee Morning, Sturry - I happened to come across the organisers of the event, who were discussing the event. I joined the conversation about whether event could be developed.
10. Reported a large amount of dog poo near opposite the shops in Hoadeswood Road, Sturry - CCC Reference DOG000966 refers.
11. Sturry Library Coffee Morning - chatted to attendees. One person wanted to discuss E-Scooters. I explained they are only permitted on private land with owners' consent, anywhere else is illegal.

203-25. Village Caretaker's report.

Caretakers report 8th October 2025

Here is my report for this month, I have prepared it as bullet points for ease.

From 10/09/2025 to present.

- Minibus run to the supermarket.
- Litter picking the footpaths.
- Clean and open the public toilets.
- Fit new security bars to the mortuary windows.
- Removed the bollard at the church entrance as requested.
- Cleaned Parkview playpark.
- Fitted new key safe to the inside of the mortuary as required by the door installer.
- Cut my head whilst working in the mortuary, reported to the office and completed an accident report.
- Topped up several graves.
- Marked out several graves with K Bullock.
- Attended the funeral of R Stannard.
- New padlock fitted to the double gates at the playpark.
- Made good walls in the mortuary after fitting the window bars.
- Posted the agendas.
- Took minibus in to have two new tyres fitted as one was showing wear and the other had a damaged wall.
- Litter picked the playpark.
- No problems elsewhere in the village.

204-25. Cemetery Superintendent's Report.

Admin Work:

Signed: Date: 12th November 2025

In the absence of our Clerk, I have kept an eye on all emails and enquiries and dealt with those that I was able to.

Cemetery Database:

I continue to identify missing or incorrect information in the database. I have identified all deeds issued. This along with all burials, now gives me a better view as to just how much space is left in the cemetery. I am where required updating the records as I go.

Cemetery Burials:

Since my last report, we have had one full burial, and no burials of cremated remains.

I currently have no other burials progressing.

I have completed four transfers of Exclusive Right of Burial, two via probate and two via deed of authority. I have two further transfers progressing.

Cemetery Repairs:

I have answered further questions from the loss adjuster regarding the cemetery damage. I require the Council to agree the loss adjuster's evaluation of all cemetery assets (Agenda Item).

Cemetery Other:

Payback have continued to tidy up at the cemetery, including cutting the grass near the entrance. My thanks to councillor Birch for all his help. I have ordered 15 plants for the hedge to replace those that have died. Fortunately, the vast majority have done well.

Other:

I have applied to KCC for the road closure for the Christmas fayre and lights switch on. I have emailed all last year's stall holders with this year's application form. I have completed the necessary documentation and applied to CCC for a temporary events notice.

205-25. Clerks Report.

General enquiries dealt with from residents.

I attended the meeting given by CCC at the Guildhall on 23rd September 2025.

This was to be an update on how far the Local Government Reorganisation was going. I am afraid I have very little to report on this as I did not

get much from the meeting.

I have been busy catching up with my administration duties after returning from holiday.

I have received the AGAR report back from the external auditors, this will be explained later in the agenda.

I have also circulated a letter from a resident to you all regarding the Gurkha Store and the way that they are parking. I have reported this on several occasions to CCC and I have now contacted the Gurkha and Nepalese Community in Canterbury regarding this issue. They are going to visit the store and inform the owner that the parking is illegal.

206-25. Outside Bodies members reports.

Cllr Hogben reported that he had attended the KALK Area Committee meeting on Tuesday 30th September. The documents that he was given at this meeting will be circulated to all Cllrs by the Clerk.

207-25. Finance.

- a) Payments for approval.** Proposed by Cllr Taylor and Seconded by Cllr Bubb and all in agreement.

£2027.12	Bourne to Garden	Grounds Maintenance
£35.77	Amazon	Office equipment.
£57.02	Mustang Washrooms	Toilet refreshers x 2 mths.
£261.42	Westleyhire	Toilet hire and clean x 2 mths.
£15	P W Needham	Window cleaners
£195.	I Secure	Reposition door unlocking screen

- b) Accounts for approval and signature.** Signed by two Cllrs

- c) AGAR report.**

The AGAR has been returned by the external Auditors with no minor scope for improvement. The Internal Auditors report should for best practice be published with the AGAR. The Financial Risk Register should be formally reviewed by the Council and minuted as such. Both of these will be done before the next Audit.

- d) Finance Committee Report.**

Meeting cancelled so no report.

208-25. To discuss if the Council would take over ownership of the pond at Broad Oak if the owners are willing to transfer the deeds.

There was a discussion on this by the Councillors and it was agreed that

Cllr Birch was to continue dialogue with the owners and have the help of the Clerk and to bring the findings back to Council.

209-25. To Discuss and agree setting up a calendar of events for the coming year.

The Cllrs agreed that this would be a good idea and that the Clerk and one Councilor would look into gathering the information needed. It was also suggested by Cllr Spence to use a QR code as well.

210-25. To Discuss and agree quotes for Air Conditioning for the office.

The Clerk stated that he had tried to get the third supplier to give his quote to no avail, it was decided that two quotes were enough to go forward with. The Cllrs discussed which quote was the best and decided on the quote from AK Air Conditioning. Unit No 1 on the quote was proposed by Cllr Hogben and seconded by Cllr Davies, Cllr Bubb voted for the other supplier, Cllr Dekker abstained, Cllr Taylor voted against both quotes and the rest agreed.

211-25. To Discuss the possibility of employing a trainee Clerk.

Cllr Taylor stated this was on the agenda because she does not wish the Council to end up in the same situation it was in two years ago and thinks it a good idea to have a trainee to be trained in the procedures of the Clerk and the Cemetery Superintendent so that they could step in if anything happens to either of them or they decide to end their employment as they are both of retirement age.

It was discussed that the Clerk and Superintendent be approached by the Staffing Committee to ask if they would be willing to do the training.

212-25. To Discuss areas of responsibility for Councillors.

Cllr Betts elaborated what this item entailed.

213-25. To Discuss and agree allocation of funds for Sturry Social Centre (Earmarked Reserves)

Cllr Davies suggested that there be an amount Earmarked for repairs to the Social Centre in the next budget.

The discussion came around to the ownership of the Centre, the Parish Council on paper are the owners but have nothing to do with the maintenance of the building that is the responsibility of the Centres management committee.

It was decided that due to this fact the Committee would have to apply to the Council for a grant for any work that needed to be done.

This was proposed by Cllr Betts and seconded by Cllr Dekker all in Agreement.

214-25. To Discuss and agree Council Christmas Dinner.

This was brought back to this meeting for a decision as to whether the Cllrs will like last year meeting for Christmas dinner at a place and cost of their own choosing.

Eight out of the eleven present said this was a good idea.

Exclusion of the Press & Public, pursuant of section 1 of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) act 1960

215-25. Matters arising from minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Meeting on Wednesday 6th August 2025.

There was an indepth discussion on the matters that arose from this meeting which were explained in great detail.

Date for next meeting. 12th November 2025

Meeting closed at 21:00 hrs.