

Minutes of General Meeting at 7pm on Wednesday 14th January 2026 at Sturry Social Centre

Present:

Cllr John Hogben, Cllr Steve Birch, Cllr Gill Betts who chaired the meeting, Cllr Kathleen Warner, Cllr Dil Rai, Cllr Anne Dekker and Cllr Ann Davies.
CCC Cllr Harry McKenzie.
Ken Dekker Clerk and Ken Bullock Cemetery Superintendent.
2 residents in attendance

1-26. Apologies for absence

KCC Cllr M Mulvihill, CCC Cllr Moses, Cllr Gartland, Cllr Taylor and Cllr Bubb

Public questions.

None.

2-26. 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 16-26

3-26. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 10th November 2025.

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

4-26. Matters arising from minutes of the Parish Meeting on Wednesday 10th November 2025.

None.

5-26. Chairman and Councillors reports.

Cllr Birch stated that payback are now on site two days a week now Sunday and Monday.
He also stated that he would try and get the agility equipment done in the dog walking area this Sunday weather permitting.
The rubbish that has been collected will be moved to the edge of Centenary Woodlands next to Sturry Hill ready for a skip.

Cllr Warner stated that the Christmas dinner at Café Hope had been a great success.

She had also reported blocked drains along Shallock Road to KCC Cllr Mulvihill and he has reported that they should be cleared by mid January.

Cllr Davies reminded the Council that CCC's Cabinet meeting is on the 19th Jan where they will be discussing the LGA yet again.

Cllr Betts stated that all the Councillors should take a look at the video link sent out by CCC on LGA.

6-26. County and District Councillors reports.

KCC Cllr Mulvihill

I will start with South East Water which I am aware has affected residents within the ward and how the company has handled the situation throughout Kent has been diabolical.

Yesterday 13th January the leader of KCC Linden Kemkaran wrote to Chris Train OBE, chairman of SE Water to formally call upon the board to take immediate action to ensure the leadership of SE Water is capable of restoring public confidence and for David Hinton (CEO) to step down. The recent incidents clearly show the lack of investment SE Water have put into pumping stations and piping etc.

Canterbury Street Lights:

Despite a lot of media attention, KCC has not been ripping out all the lamp posts, and the ones that have been reported within Canterbury in the media are not even Victorian. Only the unsafe cast iron columns have been replaced using steel columns, most people have not noticed the difference and KCC has received no complaints.

Aspendos Junction:

Following an enquiry regarding traffic lights or a roundabout by a resident as traffic coming from Fordwich has difficulty joining the A28, this has been responded to with my views, given the design of the junction I don't believe either would work. I agree with the resident that an issue exists at the junction, but with the existing pedestrian crossing, and the yellow box junction along with the issues caused by the length of time the train crossing barriers are down I do not believe either traffic lights or a roundabout would solve any issue.

That said, hopefully once the new Sturry Link road has been built, this will divert a large amount of traffic away from this area, and I believe that SE

Railways continue to be lobbied for investment at Sturry station to lengthen the platforms to ensure the barriers are down for a reduced period of time.

A28 – Sturry Link Road,

The Sturry link road has also been in the media recently, having spoken to Highways with regards to the funding shortfall this is the response I have received.

“The business case for the Homes England grant is in its final stages of review, and we expect a decision by the end of the month.

'Sturry Link Road is a critical project for reducing congestion and improving connectivity for residents and businesses in the area. We remain absolutely committed to delivering it and are continuing to progress the scheme in line with our plans.

'Should the grant not be approved, our immediate priority will be to start work on the A28 roundabout to make some much-needed improvements to traffic flow for residents. This is a key part of the overall solution to ease traffic pressures and improve safety, and we will explore every available option if needed to keep the wider project moving forward”

Cllr McKenzie reported

2025 Wrapped

- **177 casework issues solved** – including getting a Compliance Notice sent to the owners of Dengrove Park and illegally parked rollers on Popes Lane removed.
- **42 local meetings and events attended** - including the 80th anniversary of VE Day in Sturry and the BESS engagement meeting we arranged in Broad Oak.
- **34 council meetings participated in** – including the Planning Committee meeting where we sided with residents by opposing the Popes Lane plans.

New Year Priorities

We hope you all had a lovely Christmas and wish you a very Happy New Year. As we enter 2026, we have been thinking about our priorities (aside from routine casework and committee meetings) to be working on. Tell us what you think our priorities should include. Currently, three of our three priorities for 2026 are to tackle the dangerous and illegal parking occurring outside the Sturry Church of England Primary School, oppose the closure of the Milner Court Crossing and campaign to restore the number 7 bus.

Illegal parking meeting with Sturry Church of England Primary School

On 5th December, Harry arranged a meeting at the school with the Head

Teacher, PSA, local Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Enforcement, and Cllr Gill Betts from SPC. We inspected the issues with parking outside the school gates firsthand and had a discussion about potential actions from improved signage to supporting a walking bus. Work is ongoing on this matter, and we will update as soon as some progress is made.

Lord Mayor Gift Fund

Thanks to the generosity of local people and businesses donating to the Lord Mayor's Gift Fund, we were able to distribute 5 vouchers to people in need in Sturry and Broad Oak with assistance from the Sturry Church of England Primary School.

Community Orchard Funding

Canterbury City Council, among other local organisations, provided funding to the Sturry and District United Church for a new community orchard on the Milner Ground.

Relevant consultations

- The deadline to submit proposals for the Annual Parking Review closed and formal proposals have now been written up ready to go out for consultation in the coming weeks. We will keep you updated on this process.
- The budget consultation has closed, and officers are writing a report for councillors to review ahead of the budget setting meeting on 23rd February.

No report from KCC Councillor

7-26. Community Warden report.

No report

8-26. Village Caretaker's report.

Things have been quite busy this month as I have had lots of different jobs to be done.

- Put up Christmas lights in the high Street.
- Checked bus shelter on A28 (This needs attention).
- Marked out graves for funerals.
- Topped up graves where required.
- Updated notice boards as necessary.
- Set up Christmas tree and lights.

- Assisted with the set-up of the Christmas fayre and was present to solve any issues.
- Reset timers for lights and tree decorations.
- Clear and move plant needed to allow Fayre to operate.
- Dry out all gazebos used at Fayre before packing them away.
- Supermarket run in minibus.
- Café Hope run in minibus.
- Planted new Rowen tree to replace hedging removed to allow access of funeral cars.
- Run minibus over the Christmas period on request of residents.

9-26. Cemetery Superintendent's Report.

With 2 weeks of annual leave this month, my report is somewhat shorter.

Admin Work:

I have continued to support the resolution of general enquiries.

Cemetery Database:

I continue to identify missing or incorrect information in the database. I have been entering the details of the clergy carrying out the service, where this is available and missing from the database. So far, I have added 637 names of clergy. We have 131 Service providers (Ministers, Clergy etc.) in the database. The most prolific of which is Reverend Peter Gausden, who performed in excess of 230 services in the Cemetery.

Cemetery Burials:

Since my last report, we have had one burial and one burial of cremated remains.

I currently have one burial of cremated remains scheduled.

I also have a request to scatter ashes.

I have reviewed Cemetery fees, last updated in Jan 2024 and will present my proposal to the Council (agenda item).

Cemetery Repairs:

NTR.

Cemetery Other:

I am currently reviewing the Cemetery regulations, which has led to further amendments. I will bring to the Council for approval in February.

10-26. Clerks Report.

My report this month is rather short due to the Christmas Holidays.

General enquiries dealt with from residents.

Attended the Christmas Fayre, helping with the setup of the gazebos with several of the Councillors and staff.

Attended the Full Council.

As the budget was set at the last meeting I have requested from CCC our precept for the coming year 2026/27.

Usual administration duties.

End of third quarter finance paperwork prepared for the meeting.

I have been working on the events calendar on our website which required updating.

We have finally had the Biodiversity Grant from CCC for the Bird, Bat and Owl boxes.

Proceeding with updating Policies and procedures.

11-26. Events Committee report.

No Report

12-26. Finance.

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

£2027.12	Bourne to Garden	Grounds Maintenance
£45.98	Amazon	LED Fluorescent tubes
£31.49	Amazon	Heavy Duty Padlock for Cemetery Gate
£74.87	Amazon	Water weight Bags
£102	Heron Workwear	High Vis Vests x 10
£120	Kent County Groundworks	Christmas Fayre Road Closure
£265.70	Westley Hire	Cemetery Toilet hire and cleaning x 2

- b) **Accounts for approval and signature.** Signed by two Cllr's.

13-26. To Discuss and agree review of Cemetery Fees.

The Cemetery Superintendent gave an explanation on how the figures had been worked out and proposed to increase the costs by 20%.

Cllr Davies asked when the last increase had been implemented and he

said two years ago.

The proposal was to implement the increase on 1st Feb 2026 and review again in two years time.

Proposed by Cllr Birch and Seconded by Cllr Hogben, Cllr Dekker voted against the proposal and the rest of the Councillors all in agreement.

14-26. A presentation on updated overview of community facilities in the Parish.

Cllr Hogben stated that he had been in communication with KCC with regards to the library and ask if any of the Councillos would like to attend a meeting with the representative from KCC on Friday 15th Jan to find out what is going to happen with it.

He also stated that he has had a conversation with the representative for the developer of the land at Greenfields, no further information is forth coming at the moment regarding this matter.

Councillors asked that Cllr Hogben pass on to them all the information he has so that they can be kept up to date with what is happening.

Cllr Davies gave an in depth report on all of the community facilities from buildings to the lack of allotments in the parish.

It was suggested that all Councillors should try and come up with ideas to put forward to the developers of the several sites that have yet to begin in the area, for sports facilities, community spaces, play areas for all ages and possibly a new community building.

15-26. To Discuss and agree appointment of a Planning Committee.

It was decided to bring this back the meeting next month when we would hope to have a full compliment of Councillors.

16-26. To Discuss and agree Management Agreement between Sturry Parish Council and Sturry Social Centre.

Cllr Davies stated that she had sent the document to all Cllrs and would take questions from them.

Cllr Betts asked if the Constitution could be sent out to all the Cllrs as well so that both documents could be checked.

Cllr Dekker asked if the work has all been signed off for full usage of the Centre, Cllr Davies stated that there was small item of work that was still required to be done and then it can be signed off.

There were several questions on parts of the document and Cllr Davies stated that she would have to rewrite some of the parts due to formatting faults and represent it to the Council.

17-26. To Discuss and agree date for the APM 2026 (Possible April).

It was decided that a date would be set once we have confirmed the use of the School Hall for the week commencing April 20th

18-26. Planning Application.

CA/25/02361

**Outline application for up to 127 dwellings,
landscaping, open spaces, SuDS and associated works with access
from Herne bay Road.**

Cllrs with any comments on this planning application to forward them to the Clerk so that they can be sent in before the closing date of 6th February.

Date for next meeting. 11th February 2026

The meeting was closed at 20:17

DRAFT