



Minutes of the Full Council meeting of Bearsted Parish Council

Madginford Hall, Egremont Road, Bearsted on Tuesday 10th March 2026 at 7.15pm

Present:

Cllr David Hall (Chair), Cllr Val Springett (Vice Chair), Cllr Richard Ash MBE, Cllr Pat Catt, Cllr Frank Jagger, Cllr Jodie Pottage, Cllr Marie Selby, Cllr Carolyn Smith, Cllr Denis Spooner and Cllr Chris Waters.

Also, in attendance was the Clerk Joanne Upton, KCC Cllr Spencer Dixon, PC Phillips and four members of the public.

Reports from members of the public

There were no reports from the public.

1. Declarations of intention to record

The Deputy Clerk declared the meeting would be recorded for minuting purposes.

2. Apologies and Absences

Apologies were received and duly noted for Cllr's Huseyin, Monday and Turner. Cllr's English and Kaushik were absent.

3. Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying

Cllr Spooner declared an interest in item 9bi as a regular volunteer for the Bearsted & Thurnham Fayre.

4. To resolved to go into closed session and to exclude the press and public at item 11 (Admissions to Meetings Act 1960) in accordance with Standing Order 10 (xi) HR Matters

Cllr Hall proposed to go into closed session at item 11, this was seconded by Cllr Catt and resolved with all in favour.

5. Signing of the minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 10th February 2026 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

6. Crime Reporting

PC Phillips introduced himself and explained about the reporting systems used by the police service. He recommends that all crimes and incidents are reported via 999, 101 or the live chat service as he has access to these straight away. Reporting online uses a different system, which can take a few days to filter through. He also wants to encourage residents to register with My Community Voice to receive updates directly from the police, which also has a reply function allowing residents to respond directly to him. The main issues facing local policing in Bearsted is off road bikes and catapults but noted that often these are youths from outside of the parish.

Cllr Ash requested a written report from PC Phillips, occasionally to update the Council on local issues. The Police are no longer taking abandoned bicycles as they ran out of storage room for them. He recommends marking the bike so these can be traced back to the owner. They are hosting a free bike marking day at Grove Green Tesco on the 8th April.

PC Phillips will be hosting a surgery on Bearsted Green from 3-4pm on 18th April for residents.

The Clerk asked for an update on school visits and Violence Against Women & Girls (on behalf of Cllr Turner). PC Phillips advised that transition talks at Primary School are managed under the Child Centred Policing Department, with full safeguarding training, so he is unable to proceed with school visits.

VAWG: an app has been launched called Walk Safe, which is a personal safety app that helps users share journeys, access safe spaces and alert trusted contacts in real time.

In the summer Walk & Talks sessions will be held in the town centre which is a community outreach to engage with women, girls and young people.

There is also two online Community Engagement Events in March, offering an opportunity for residents to hear more about the work that Kent Police and partners are undertaking to make communities safer.

7. Reports

- a) Borough Councillors: The reports were noted. Cllr Hall congratulated Cllr Spooner on becoming Deputy Mayor of Maidstone.
- b) KCC Councillor: Cllr Dixon advised that the Bearsted Road works are progressing on time. The contract with the contractor for repairing potholes is complete and repairs will now begin. A dedicated email address is being set up specifically for parish councils to raise any street work issues directly with the team that deal with this.
KCC are undertaking a short focus enquiry into the water shortage crisis last year and asked for anyone affected by this to get in touch. BPC will advertise this to residents.
Thurnham & Roseacre Schools have approached KCC for a grant towards the cost of installing secure fencing and gates, Cllr Dixon has confirmed he can contribute £4,000 towards the quote of £20,000 and asked if the Parish Council could assist. Cllr Hall advised that we are already aware and have met with the school. We will be looking to make a contribution and that Consortium Events are looking to raise money for the school through events on the Green in the summer.
- c) Community Warden: the Council noted the report.
- d) Police: PC Phillips has already updated the Council at item 5.
- e) Clerk: The Clerk advised that MBC have approved the precept for £145,000. Councillors were reminded to ensure email signatures are correct and to update the office on whether they are attending the APM.
The Clerk responded to the MBC Community Energy Consultation, confirming BPC would be interested to find out more about the Government initiative.
- f) Chairman: The Chairman reminded Councillors that there is an MBC consultation on Local Government Reorganisation and this can be accessed via our website, the deadline for responses is 26th March 2026.

8. Committee Meeting and Working Group Reports

- a) Planning Committee: Cllr Ash advised since May 2025, BPC have agreed with MBC on 95% of planning applications. At the last meeting the Committee recommended approval for all 7 applications.
- b) Environment Committee: Cllr Pottage proposed to accept the cost of £474 +VAT for Warings to cut the hedge at the Church Lane car park. This was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.
Cllr Pottage proposed to accept the cost of £1200 +VAT from Landscape Services for the annual tree survey. This was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.
Cllr Pottage proposed to accept Warings costs for the Grounds Maintenance contract for 2026-27 as per the 3 year contract. This was seconded by Cllr Springett and resolved with all in favour.
Cllr Pottage proposed to accept the cost of £410 +VAT from Medway Valley Countryside Partnership for planting additional hedging around the pond. This was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.
- c) Finance Working Group: Cllr Hall advised the valuation report for the land at Madginford Hall had been received from the surveyor this morning and has been sent to the Leases and Finance working groups to consider. A proposal will be brought to the next Full Council meeting.
Cllr Hall proposed to accept the quote for £1435 from Jonco-IT for a data mapping service, in order to comply with assertion 10 of the Audit requirements. This was seconded by Cllr Jagger and resolved with all in favour.
- d) Reports from member of the Council for outside bodies: There were no reports.

9. Finance (Account and Audit Regulation 2011/817)

- a) Resolution to approve/ratify quotations or payments: The office has applied for a variation to the Premises Licence for the Green and must legally advertise the notice within 10 days. The quote from the KM is £313.86 +VAT. Cllr Hall proposed to ratify the payment, this was seconded by Cllr Jagger and resolved with all in favour.
- b) Grants and Donations:

- i. Bearsted & Thurnham Fayre: £2000 towards a new shed. Cllr Hall proposed not to agree the grant request, as this is a capital investment, but to support the Fayre Committee with a grant towards operational costs and continuing to rent the Green at no charge. This was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved with 9 in favour and 1 no vote.
- ii. Bearsted CAN: £400 to set up a Community Energy Group. Cllr Springett declared she would not vote as has been involved in discussions with Bearsted CAN and the Madginford Hall possibly being included. Cllr Hall proposed not to agree the grant request as this stage, the Council would need to see confirmation from organisation of involvement and further information on how the Group would be ran, as BPC is unable to provide grants to companies. This was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with 9 in favour and 1 no vote.
- iii. Madginford School: Bikes and helmets. Cllr Hall proposed BPC contributes £500 toward the cost, providing the school can demonstrate they are able to source the additional funding. This was seconded by Cllr Catt and resolved with 9 in favour and 1 against.
- c) Authorise March Payments: Cllr Hall proposed to approve the payments, this was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved with all in favour.
- d) Finance Reports: Cllr Hall proposed to approve the reports, this was seconded by Cllr Jagger and resolved with all in favour.
- e) Balance of Bank Accounts: Cllr Hall proposed to approve the balances, this was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved with all in favour.

10. Policies

- a) Biodiversity Statement: Cllr Hall proposed to adopt the policy, this was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.
- b) Procurement Process Policy: Cllr Hall proposed to adopt the policy, this was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.
- c) Publicity Policy: Cllr Hall proposed to adopt the policy, this was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.

11. Closed Session

HR Matters.

12. Future Agenda Items

Office lease and rent, policies and standing items.

13. Date of next meeting, 14th April 2026

There being no further business to transact, the meeting ended at 20:39 hrs.

Signed..... Date.....