

Minutes of the Meeting of Full Council held in Rickards Hall on 8 September 2025 at 7:30 pm

Present: Cllrs. Jon Aldridge (*Vice-Chairman*), Angela Baker (*Chairwoman*), Sarah Compton, Bill Cummings, Alan Layland, Margot McArthur, Stuart McGregor, Angela Read, Michael Stockdale, Jeff Streets, Bob Todd

In attendance: Town Clerk; District Councillor J Morgan; and four members of the public. There were no representatives from the press.

19:30 The meeting opened.

1 To Receive Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received, noted, and accepted, from Cllrs Gemmell Smiths, Jacques, Parker and Sumner.

2 Declaration of Interests or Predetermination

Cllrs Baker, Layland and Stockdale declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 7.1.2 as trustees of Eden Valley Museum; and Cllr McGregor as Council's representative.

3 Public Questions and Statements

19:32 *The chair closed the meeting.*

Two representatives attended from Games Club, agenda item 11.7 to consider a request to change the age eligibility. The spokesperson, a volunteer from the Club, said the Club provided a fabulous opportunity to get together and socialise, and play games. It had grown in attendance particularly in the past year, and already had at least 20 plus attendees each week. Members share a commonality, also some use walkers and wheelchairs and if became too crowded would restrict the space to move around. It was mentioned that there was a monthly Games Club held at the Eden Centre for all ages. Having discussed with members and other volunteers, where the age range was already from 55 to almost 90, they believed there was no need to change the age limit.

There was representation from Lingfield monthly farmers market raising frustration that the Council had not issued the licence despite the application form being submitted, monthly licence fee being paid, and insurance provided. She also said that the communications from the Council had been limited, and she would like a meeting to discuss the fees. A constitution had also been provided to show that the market was not-for-profit with any profit to be distributed to local schools and charities. The Town Clerk responded that there had been many communications and the community-based market recognition was in the process of being considered, and would be in touch separately as not on this agenda.

A fourth member of the public, asked if there was anything that could be done to reinstate the Astro turf facility by the Leisure Centre. As a sports professional, he knew of funding opportunities that could be available and also suggested that the area could encompass a paddle board court - a sport that was rapidly growing in popularity. He was aware that the area was owned and managed by Sevenoaks District Council (SDC), but asked the Town Council to campaign to SDC for investment in this facility. The Chair responded that she and the other district councillors had already had discussions regarding Leisure Centre improvements and the Astro turf facility, and agreed there was good social value to support such a facility. She said they would again raise with SDC, and invited the resident to email her with information and his ideas which she would take to SDC.

19:44 *The Chair reopened the meeting. Four members of the public left the meeting.*

4 To receive, adopt and sign the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 07 July 2025 (pages 2023-100/1-14)

Resolved: to adopt the minutes of the Council meeting held on 07 July, and that they be signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record, 100/1-14.

5 To receive County and District Councillors Reports

5.1 County Councillor

Apologies were received from Cllr Mayall.

5.2 District Councillors

19:46 Cllr Compton left the meeting.

Cllr Layland reported he had attended a flag raising event for the Merchant Navy. Cllr McArthur mentioned the third Regulation 18 consultation was to be considered by Development and Infrastructure Advisory Committee later in September. Cllr Morgan said the the waste management changes which would come into affect April 2026. SDC were also looking at its disposal and transfers of assets and policy, this included the Stag theatre. Cllr Baker reported that the Improvement and Innovation Advisory Committee was considering improvements for the Leisure Centre, which would be reported to the next Capital Investment Advisory meeting.

6 To adopt the following reports/minutes of meetings

19:48 Cllr Compton rejoined the meeting.

6.1 To receive and adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held 21 July (pages 2023 102/1-3), 18 August (103/1-3) and 01 September (104/1-3)

Resolved: to adopt the minutes of Planning Committee meeting held 21 July 102/1-3; 18 August 103/1-3; and 01 September 104/1-3.

6.2 To receive and adopt the minutes of the Finance Committee 14 July (2023-101/1-3)

Resolved: to adopt the minutes of Finance Committee meeting held 14 July 101/1-3.

19:52 Cllr Morgan left the meeting.

7 To receive recommendations from Committees

7.1 Planning Committee meeting 18 August under delegated authority

7.1.1 Settlement Spatial Plans (SSP): to defer proceeding with a SSP, and review after the Local Plan Reg 18 (C) consultation; and to develop a relationship with a second planning consultant with a view for future reports and the LP Hearing

Members received the decision from the Planning Committee under delegated powers, and

Ratified: to defer proceeding with a Settlement Spatial Plans (SSP): and to review after the Local Plan Reg 18 (C/3) consultation. To look at developing a relationship with a second planning consultant with a view for future reports and the LP Hearing.

7.1.2 Eden Valley Museum new Lease: approved the execution of proposed Deed of Variation - new clause 52 and the wording

Members,

Ratified: to approve the execution of proposed Deed of Variation - new clause 52 and the wording; and Cllrs Baker (as Chair of the Council) and a second councillor sign the Deed of Variation.

The document was signed at the end of the meeting.

8 To receive reports and recommendations from the Town Clerk and Officers; Working Groups; and Delegated Reports

8.1 Clerk's Report

Members received the Town Clerk's report. Of note,

Environmental fires: Council had recently been made aware of the requirement to apply for D7 exemption for burning plant and untreated wood waste where it's produced. Applications had been made for two exemptions for burning vegetation at Mowshurst and Forge Croft allotments. This allowed up to 10 tonnes of waste in any 24-hour period to be burnt. Following a recent complaint and contact from the Environmental Health, officers were reviewing the options for grounds waste management and a new policy. This would be presented to the Open Spaces Committee at its September meeting.

Pavilion update on works: Intrinsic had prepared the specification for the new heating and hot boilers (140 pages). Following an online meeting to confirm the tender stages, the tender would be published on Contracts Finder website 15 September for six weeks. Following this there would be a selection process including a comparison of the quotes.

Water tanks and legionella controls: Intrinsic had visited in August to investigate the viability to have most of the water (if not all) fed through a wider pipe rather than via the five water tanks. They are contacting the water company to explore the options before submitting its feasibility study and option appraisal.

NJC pay award 2025-26: In July the National Joint Council for Local Government reached an agreement on rates of pay applicable from 1 April 2025 (covering the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026). The new pay rates, each increased by 3.20 percent. This was slightly lower than budgeted. Back pay was made in August pay, and letters sent out to each employee.

8.1.1 Kent Pension Fund - Pooling of Town & Parish Council - Formal Consultation: to receive an update following Council's response to consultation

Personnel Committee and Council had considered the Kent Pension Fund recent consultation on the pooling of town and parish councils contributions. KALC had responded that this was not something they were able to advise on. The Council's response following its July meeting had been submitted.

Having circulated to some other clerks, it would seem there was mixed views as all councils pay different contributions, with one paying a secondary contribution. Some will benefit from the pooling with its contributions being reduced and others will increase. One clerk explained, as they understood it, those paying a lesser amount will see an increase in contributions. Those paying more will see a reduction. Overall, an average will be worked out and we will all pay that amount.

Kent Pensions were prompt in responding to the Council's concerns - details were reported in the meeting papers. In short, they clarified that:

- This proposal is not in respect of pooling pension Funds. It is in respect of pooling certain groups of employers together in the Kent Pension Fund. Specifically, town and parish councils. We currently have two other successful pools in the Kent Pension Fund, namely Academies and Colleges. The theory is that pooling a certain category of employers, controls volatility of contributions and funding positions which is what the Fund aims to do overall.
- It is likely that employer contribution rates will change from 1 April 2026 if pooling is agreed by the Pension Fund Committee, however as advised we are currently conducting the Funds Triennial Valuation and even if the pooling arrangement does not proceed, individual employer rates are likely to change regardless, as it does every 3 years when we carry out the triennial valuation.
- Local Government Pension Scheme is a Career Average defined benefits scheme, meaning the pension amount is based on salary and the number of years in the scheme. It's a statutory scheme meaning all benefits are guaranteed. Increases or decreases on employer contributions does not impact the level of benefits the member received on retirement.

Members noted the feed back from KPF.

8.1.2 Remembrance Sunday 9 November

An event application had been submitted via the SDC EventApp application on 23 July with the road closure plan and event risk assessment. The police had confirmed no concerns, but confirmation for the road closure notice was still awaited. It was noted that this year the Bonfire Society event was on the Saturday before (8 November) and were therefore not able to assist with marshals this year. Local groups had been contacted to ask if they are able to provide volunteers. All council staff had been requested to be available on 9 November. A meeting of the working group will take place a month before the event. There were no questions.

8.1.3 To reconfirm the Environmental and Health and Safety statements

Members,

Resolved: to confirm the environmental and health and safety statements, and for the Town Clerk to sign.

8.2 Communications Officer

Members received the comprehensive report from the Communications Officer, which provided an overview of communications activity carried out over the past six months, covering both day-to-day operations and key projects. Regular tasks had included managing the Council's website and social media channels, producing marketing and PR materials, maintaining our Google business presence, and preparing press releases. In addition to this core work, she had supported and helped deliver several larger or one-off initiatives: the launch of the Millennium Wood Nature Trail and Art Adventure, communications for the Council's 130th anniversary, and the development of the new website, which was scheduled to go live in September.

Members expressed that they were very pleased with the Communications Officer work, noting the superb job she did and praising her professionalism with council communications.

9 Draft Local Plan

Members noted since the last meeting of the Council (July), there had not been any further updates. The below timetable from SDC was expecting:

- Reg 18(C/3) consultation this autumn. Already been Reg 18 twice before, but none of those previous options met the new targets.
- Reg 19, summer 2026.
- Submission for examination end of 2026 to meet the December 2026 deadline.

It was noted that in July feedback has submitted to SDC proposed updates to the Town Strategy (EN1) and infrastructure needs to support the potential proposed development in the emerging Local Plan. The Four Elms Road site with the new secondary school, was awaiting decision from SDC Planning - this was expected to be heard by the Development Management Committee on 25 September.

Members noted that the site allocations to be included in the Reg 18 (C/3) would be published on 15 September with the Development Infrastructure Advisory Committee papers. It was agreed to ensure there were several consultation events for the Reg 18 (3) for residents to attend, so that they could view the proposals, and to be able to discuss with councillors.

One member asked about the new access that had appeared on Lingfield Road. A planning application had been submitted to SDC in 2021 for the construction of a new agricultural access. This application was approved, and works started in June this year. Council officers had contacted SDC Planning and Kent County Council Highways to raise concerns; both confirmed that the application had already been considered, and no breach of planning was identified.

10 Matters arising from the minutes for report and not elsewhere on the agenda

10.1 Events update: Chairman's Reception 16 July; VJ Day 15 August; Edenbridge Gardens in Bloom

Chairman's Reception 16 July: This year's theme was celebrating the work of local organisations, the power of partnerships, and the Council's 130th anniversary. Representatives from 40 local

organisations were invited, with over 60 people joining councillors to celebrate the work that so many of the local groups and volunteers do for the benefit of everyone living in Edenbridge. The event was well received, with several notes of thanks and appreciation for the gesture of being recognised.

VJ Day 15 August: To mark the 80th anniversary of VJ Day (Victory over Japan) and commemorate the end of World War Two, a flag raising ceremony took place. The Royal British Legion attended with the Standard, the Town Band provided a bugle player for the Last Post and Reveille, and Cllr Aldridge gave a reading.

Edenbridge Gardens in Bloom: For this year's presentations, a decision was taken in discussion with the Chair of the Council and Town Clerk, not to hold a presentation evening this year (noting not all those who entered were able to attend). Judging had taken place and certificates and prizes were being sent out in the post. The winners would be announced on the website.

10.2 Land outside Old Police Station: To note the completion of the Transfer of part of registered title and Deed of Covenant to the Town Council

Findley Design and Developments who had converted the Old Police station, had gifted a section of land at the front of the site on the High Street and where the Council's flagpole sits, to the Council. The land transfer was completed on 14 July. The Council planned to create a community area. Last year £5,000 was moved to earmarked reserves (EMR) towards this project which will be overseen by the Open Spaces Committee.

10.3 Church House damp works interventions: to confirm the contractor to carry out the works to the wall where the shop room is

Council had already approved (December 2024) the expenditure of £5,885 for Church House to address the damp issues in the Museum's main room/shop as detailed in the survey report November 2024. It was agreed to address the issues with preventative damp recommendations, and other recommendations for future proofing to include in the maintenance plans. Quotes were being obtained for the work, and members,

Resolved: delegated authority for the Buildings Manager and Open Spaces Officer to confirm the appointment of a contractor for the works as previously agreed.

10.4 Food Bank: To reconsider and ratify approval for a small shed to be sited at the rear of Doggetts Barn

July Council received a request from the Foodbank to consider permission to erect a temporary small garden shed in the space next to the current foodbank storage shed. This was because its current secondary storage, which was in a container housed at St Laurence's Church, had become no longer viable and they were now looking for a suitable location for a smaller second shed to be used as an overflow of donated items which happens at times such as Easter, Harvest, and Christmas. Ideally this would be sited next to the larger shed (behind Doggetts Barn), would be a temporary structure of approximately 4 metres by 3 metres, and 2 metres high. They also requested if permission would be given to extend a cable from the existing shed to allow for lighting (if not they would look into other lighting options). The Food Bank would pay all costs. The Town Clerk had since spoken to the electrician who installed the lighting in the larger shed, he had confirmed this could be done hard wired or on an extension lead.

Members unanimously,

Ratified: to support the support a small shed to be sited at the rear of Doggetts Barn, close to the Food Bank's existing shed.

10.5 To ratify the additional hours for the Communications Officer to complete the new website ready for early autumn

The design and updating all the content for the new website was a significant project. Whilst most had been managed during normal contracted hours, now that we are getting close to launching the site, there was still quite a significant amount of work. It had previously been agreed to support a

budget of up to £500 (30 hours), however, this could be slightly more. Members were asked to review the budget and increase to £650. Members unanimously,

Resolved: to increase the initial budget for additional hours for the Communications Officers from £500 to £650.

10.6 To ratify the children's fun fair return to Stangrove Park – 8 August two weeks

Members,

Ratified: the children's fun fair return to Stangrove Park that took place 8 August two weeks.

10.7 To ratify selling a postcard (provided by a local artist free of charge) with all the proceeds to the Museum

Members,

Ratified: the selling a postcard (provided by a local artist free of charge) with all the proceeds to the Museum from the Council office.

11 OTHER BUSINESS including items referred from Committees for decision

11.1 GDPR and Privacy Policy audit: To ratify the expenditure of £595 to Breakthrough Communications for 12 month access to the Local Council Data Protection Compliance Toolkit

The Town Clerk had attended a recent webinar which covered how to achieve and maintain data protection compliance. It covered:

- New AGAR Assertion 10 requirements mean parish and town councils will need to demonstrate compliance with the Data Protection Act and the UK GDPR with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
- Six stages councils should take to achieve compliance.

Breakthrough Communications is NALC's partner for data protection and therefore was knowledgeable of effective policies and practices that need to be in place. Having attended the webinar, there was an opportunity for the first 15 councils to sign up to the 12 month toolkit to receive a £100 saving, but more importantly to be able to follow an already established audit procedure and access to templates suitable for councils. The Clerk was confident that Council did have good GDPR procedures. With the new council website, and with the introduction of the likes of AI applications, it would be good practice and timely for Council to review its policies and procedures, and privacy statement. The Clerk had signed up for access to the toolkit to aid with an audit of Council procedures and review current policies and create new ones as needed.

Members unanimously,

Ratified: the expenditure of £595 to Breakthrough Communications for a 12 month access to the Local Council Data Protection Compliance Toolkit.

11.2 Fire Risk Assessments for Council buildings: To approve the expenditure for two yearly external Fire RAs and the expenditure of £1,698 plus VAT for seven Council buildings

Last year's Worknest health and safety audit visit advised that the external fire risk assessments for its buildings now needed to be done every two years, and not five-yearly. They were last done February 2023. Buildings for Fire Risk Assessments:

- Rickards Hall
- Doggetts barn
- Church House (Museum)
- Depot
- Tractor depot
- Pavilion
- Public Toilets and mess room

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and Building Safety Act 2022, places a duty on all

those with legal responsibility for safety within a building, and to hold written records of the assessment, and to have a competent person to carry out the assessments. Members unanimously,

Resolved: the expenditure of £1,698 plus VAT for seven council sites to have full Fire Risk Assessments. (It was noted this would be unbudgeted expenditure.)

11.3 Intruder and Fire Security Alarm System Upgrade for Doggetts and Church House (Rickards Hall): To note the phasing out of BT analogue phone network and to approve the expenditure of £478.18 plus VAT to upgrade to a mobile network-based monitoring

BT Openreach was phasing out the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN), with a complete switch-off scheduled for January 2027. Once this change takes effect, the existing alarm monitoring system for Church House, Doggetts Barn and Rickards Hall will be impacted. To ensure continued reliability, a mobile network-based monitoring solution was proposed, similar to the current Depot system. Members unanimously,

Resolved: to confirm the expenditure of £478.18 to transfer over to a mobile network-based monitoring solution, GradeShift Pro 2 DP2 – Radio/Radio unit including 2 extension aerials, switching over from the BT Openreach Public Switched Telephone Network PSTN.

11.4 Commercial Waste Collections: To note SDC is ending its commercial waste collections effective 30 September; and to confirm a new commercial waste contractor

In June Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) issued a formal letter confirming that their Commercial Waste Collection service will cease operations effective 30 September 2025, with a three-month notice period. (SDC Cabinet 12 June, item 12.). In addition, from 2027, food waste bins are being introduced to commercial businesses which will be a further cost.

The Council office and Rickards Hall waste currently had one general waste bin, with paper waste collected via waste paper bags purchased from SDC at £1.52 each. Based of a four-weekly cycle, current costs:

- General waste bin - £57
- Paper recycling bags - £3.04 (max)

Market Waste: The cost of market cardboard recycling waste bins were currently paid for by the Council, with reimbursement from the a market trader who generates significant waste.

Members were asked to consider four quotes from waste services contractors. One charged for an annual Duty of Care Waste Transfer Note, the others provided free of charge. SDC charged £152 for Council, and £192.30 for MYCP bins. Overall, regardless of which new contractor was appointed, from the new costs provided, Council should be making some savings, estimated minimum saving £221. Members noted that two of the quotes were very similar, and three were less than currently paid. Members suggested the cancellation clause be checked, but concluded unanimously,

Resolved: to appoint the cheaper, contractor B - Omni Group - as its its new waste collections contractor, and the estimated annual expenditure of £520.00.

11.5 Windows 10 End of Support – Council Device Replacement Plan: To approve the expenditure of £2,258.25 for three Dell replace desktop devices; and to confirm a replacement plan for seven laptops and three desktop PCs in budget 2026-27

In July, the Council's IT company got in touch re Windows 10 end of support. Microsoft had confirmed that Windows 10 would officially reach end of support on 14th October 2025. After this date, devices running Windows 10 would no longer receive security updates, leaving them vulnerable to cyber threats and potentially causing issues with software compatibility and compliance.

Council had seven office desktop computers; and seven laptops, of which eleven were suitable for Windows 11 upgrade (7 laptops, 4 office) - cost included in PS Tech service contract. Three desktop computers identified as incompatible with Windows 11 and therefore must be replaced

immediately to maintain business continuity and compliance. Cost £2,258.25 plus VAT (and includes DELL pro support (£222,33) and set up). Members unanimously.

Resolved: the expenditure of £2,258.25 plus VAT for the replacement of three office desktop computers.

It was noted that 10 of the 11 being upgraded, would soon be without hardware support from Dell. For this reason, if there was any hardware issues then Dell would charge to fix, or would need replacing at full cost. PS Tech recommended that Council consider a phased replacement plan for the other 11 devices approaching end-of-life over the next 18 months and to ensure all systems remain compliant, secure, and fully supported. Estimated cost £800-900 per laptop (£6,300) plus £600 per desktop (£1,800).

Members discussed, including if the current supply of equipment was still required, for example these days many offices operated with the laptop also as the desktop computer. Members wanted to understand the current needs better and requested a review of hardware before considering a future replacement replacement and budget programme. Members **agreed to bring this back to Council.**

11.6 Depot shutter: To approve the expenditure for new replacement motor for the shutter, £1,914.30 plus VAT

In March 2022 the depot had a break-in which resulted in damage to the shutter door and the mess area door. The latter was replaced, but the engineer was able to make a fix to the shutter which seemed to be okay still. However, the motor had become faulty and following a recent service the engineer recommended the motor be replaced - its old and suffering wear and tear. Quote to: Remove and dispose of existing motor, supply and fit replacement motor, and fit safety safety brake, replace damage deadlocks and re-align curtain - £1,914.30 plus VAT.

In 2023-24 £5,700 was moved to buildings earmarked reserves for Depot maintenance and shutter door. Budget 2026-27 buildings maintenance budget was already considering costs for the potential shutter door replacement. Member unanimously,

Resolved: to confirm the replacement motor to the Depot shutter door and the expenditure of £1,914.30, from buildings reserves budget.

11.7 Games Club: to receive a request to consider changing the age eligibility

Following a request arising from councillor surgeries, members were asked to consider the age eligibility for the Games Club, now that it was no longer under the umbrella of Involve Kent criteria.

The Games Club was originally established through Involve Kent funding to help reintegrate people into the community following the pandemic, particularly older and vulnerable residents. Over the past three years, the club had grown from around six attendees to approximately 20 regular participants each week.

Current Situation:

- The age criteria has been maintained at 55 years and above.
- Feedback from volunteers running the club (on behalf of the Council), and from officers engaging with attendees, suggests this remains appropriate.
- The group had developed a strong sense of community: members share experiences, support one another, and form friendships. Some socialise outside the club, and one former resident who has moved into care values being able to attend and chat with others of similar age.
- Volunteers had expressed concern that opening the club to younger participants could significantly alter the dynamic, to the detriment of the current group.

Members discussed noting the representation made by a volunteer from the Club during public questions. It was concluded, to

Resolved: to retain the current age eligibility of 55 years and above for the Games Club, in recognition of the group's origins, its established membership base, and the feedback received from volunteers and attendees.

11.8 **Nomads Football Club**

11.8.1 **Annual Lease meeting feedback**

A summary from last month's annual lease meeting with Nomads and the Town Clerk and Open Spaces Officer was received:

- Committee structure had changed - now have two main contacts.
- Football activity had increased: 2 x junior teams (under 7s and 8s); 1 x men's seniors starting up again this season.
- Football Pavilion works: Had removed the canopy from the rear which was put up during the pandemic; the Hatch Room had been redecorated and new kitchen area fitted; plans for new drainage.
- Looking at installing CCTV.
- Requested additional dog fouling signage.
- New container funding to replace garage (as approved by Open Spaces Committee in June).
- Would like to request the third pitch be reinstated as a half pitch size for junior football (this will be presented to Open Spaces Committee to consider).
- Request Council reinstate its signage for Mowshurst and Nomads (has been removed/taken).
- Parking issues with growth of football and request Council to consider expanding the parking area.

11.8.2 **Request for approval to install an underground drain from the Hatch Room with the pipe leading into the main drain**

The Club had made improvements to its Hatch Room including upgrading the kitchen units. They would like to have a sink with a soakaway that leads to the existing drain. Pipework would run down the wall, then underground to the main drain. Cost covered by the Club as owners of the Pavilion. Members,

Resolved: to approve the addition of a sink in the Hatch Room with a new water waste pipe.

11.8.3 **To reconfirm Nomads supporting youth football with Chipstead using its pitches junior football**

Council had previously supported Nomads hiring its pitches to Chipstead Football Club, mainly for its youth teams, and were asked if they would continue to allow. Members unanimously,

Resolved: to confirm the continuation of this arrangement, hiring its pitches to Chipstead Football Club.

11.9 **First Aid at Work Training: To approve the expenditure in the training budget 2026-27 of £1,650 for up to 12 learners**

In 2026, the officers First Aid at Work training would need renewing. Some would require two days refresher, and a couple the full three days. However, the three days would be beneficial to all as training was last July 2023. The quote from the same company as previous was £1,650 which remained market competitive and they were very good. Members discussed, it was suggested if only two days was needed this would take up less staff time, but unanimously,

Resolved: to approved the First Aid at Work, 3-days training for up to 12 learners, expenditure of £1,650 for 2025-26 budget.

11.10 **To consider the Council hosting a Macmillan Coffee Morning on Friday 26 September**

Members discussed hosting a Macmillan Coffee Morning which happens annually on the last Friday of September; it is based on the simple premise that guests gather over coffee and donate the cost of their drink with all proceeds from the event going to Macmillan Cancer Trust. It was noted that Rickards Hall had already been booked by a resident for this year, 25 September for a Macmillan Coffee morning. Members confirmed that they as councillors would like to consider hosting a similar event, and

Resolved: to provisionally book Rickards Hall for September 2026 for a Macmillan coffee morning run by councillors, and to bring to Council in July to consider further and confirm the details.

11.11 Council and Committee meetings: To consider the frequency of meetings and potential additional committees

Members had requested to consider the frequency and the lengthily agendas. The Town Clerk suggested that a new committee be formed to oversee all the buildings and lease matters. There was already a Lease Negotiating Group and this could be combined with a committee which focused on all buildings matters. It was noted that over the past couple of years there had been some complex buildings issues, and that a specific committee could utilise expertise and allow some councillors to develop a more focused understanding.

It was noted that the meeting calendar was already busy and it wasn't clear were additional meetings could be added, unless there were two meetings on same date, or at other times for example Personnel Committee meets in the day time, and/or to bring meeting times forward. Increasing frequency would increase the work for preparing agendas, meeting papers and minutes. The Town Clerk was asked how long in admin time did a Council meeting take up. In preparing papers and writing the minutes she responded it can be three to five days. Some meetings are much less, such as planning unless there was a complex application.

Following much discussion, members concluded, and

Resolved: to create a new committee specifically for Buildings and Leases and for the Town Clerk to bring back to Council to consider its terms of reference, including committee membership, delegated powers, frequency, and meeting times of meetings.

It was noted that the annual meeting calendar of council and committee members would be considered at the October meeting.

12 Devolution and local government reorganisation

Nothing new to report at the moment. It was noted due to other work, the listing of community assets was yet to be done.

13 Consultations

13.1 Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS): How KFRS supports and protects rural communities - closes 01 October 2025

Noted.

14 Civic Medallions

In view of the confidential nature of agenda item 14 to be discussed, the Chairman moved that press and public be excluded from the chamber. Public Bodies (admissions to meetings) Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1972 s100 and 102.

There were no members of the public present.

The last Civic Medallions were awarded in 2021 to Julie Barry and John Scholey. They are awarded by the Town Council to members of the community who have made an outstanding contribution. Nominees require all 15 councillors to support nominations. In March, Council agreed part of the 130-years celebrations members would like to consider making awards. Under the procedures, councillors are asked to make a written representation of the person(s) they would like to nominate to the Town Clerk, confidentially. These are then circulated to members for considering with the next meeting papers, when they will be considered and voted (in confidence). Members unanimously,

Resolved: they would like to make nominations, and would provide these to the Town Clerk before the October meeting.

15 Date of next meeting - 27 October 2025

Noted.

21:02 The meeting closed.