

Minutes of a meeting of Bilsington Parish Council held at Bilsington Village Hall on Thursday 19th December 2024 at 7:00pm.

Present: Councillors; S Hudson (Chair), m Bilham and L Lawson.

In attendance: Peter Setterfield PSLCC, Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer.

Also present: P New (Neighbourhood Watch)

1122. **Apologies for absence:**

Cllr R Thompson, Cllr L Harman (ABC) and Cllr D Robey (KCC)

1123. **Declarations of interest:**

There were no declarations of interest.

1124. **Public participation:**

There were no public submissions.

1125. **Neighbourhood Watch:**

Report attached.

1126. **Kent County Councillor's Report:**

- The KCC Budget, and balancing it, is still the key issue at KCC.
- The Devolution White Paper was published on 16th December, and outlines plans for Local Government in England to become all Unitary, with County and District Councils being abolished. There will be an elected Mayor over a geographically sensible group of Unitaries. In Kent, this is likely to mean three or four unitaries, including Medway, and a Mayor of Kent. Significant extra powers would be devolved from Whitehall to the Mayor. The exact timing of this is unclear at the moment, but could mean no KCC Elections in May 2025. However, I think all of this represents a major opportunity for Kent and its residents that we should firmly grasp.

1127. **Ashford Borough Councillor's Report:**

No report submitted.

1128. **Minutes:**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 21st November 2024 were submitted, agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

1129. **Planning:**

Planning application PA/2024/2178 – Ivy Cottage, Hans Farm, Tar Pot Lane, Ruckinge – Replacement dwelling (retrospective).

Resolved: The Parish Council has no objection to the proposal.

1130. **Highways:**

The Clerk recently met with the Community Engagement Team at KCC to discuss the Highways Improvement Plan. The Team are currently looking at installing a

gateway on each of the four approaches to the village with designs being drawn up together with costings. Installation of Gateways can only be undertaken by KCC. Highways will advise when the designs and costings are available as well as what funding is available for the project.

1131. Finance:

Schedule of payments:

Staff costs November	£419.16
S Hudson (Xmas Tree)	£100.00
Poppy Appeal	£30.00

Resolved: To authorise the payment of the items in the schedule.

1132. Budget 2025 / 2026:

Report BPC/24/07 concludes the budget making process for 2025 / 2026 and makes recommendations to enable the Parish Council to set its Precept for 2025 / 2026 and to notify the tax collecting authority, Ashford Borough Council, in accordance with statutory legislation.

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note Report BPC/24/07**
- 2. To determine the Parish Council's Budget for the 2025 / 2026 financial year as set out below.**

Staff costs	£5,600.00
Clerk's expenses	£250.00
Audit	£50.00
Insurance	£500.00
Subscriptions	£450.00
Donations	£30.00
Room Hire	£150.00
Website	£150.00
Xmas tree	£100.00
Highways improvements	£1,000.00
Contingency	£1,000.00
Defibrillator	£300.00
IT Replacement fund	£200.00
Total	£9,780.00

- 3. To confirm the Precept for 2025 / 2026 in accordance with the provisions in Sections 39, 41 and 49A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.**
- 4. To authorise the Parish Clerk to sign the Precept Demand on the Borough Council.**

1133. Village Hall:

Recent events included a Christmas Crat Fair and a very successful quiz night. Plans are being drawn up for a number of events in the forthcoming year.

1134. **Items for information:**

Meeting dates for 2025:

20th February

24th April, together with Annual Parish Meeting

19th June

4th September

6th November

18th December.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:30pm.



REPORT FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH. BILSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL DEC 2024.



My alerts must be the same as last months

1. THE THEFT OF INTERNET SHOPPING PARCELS & PACKAGES FROM OFF OF HOUSEHOLD DOORSTEPS

2. COURIER FRAUD.

Courier Fraud is where a package is delivered to your property and moments later a person calls saying the delivery was made in error. Only when a bill later arrives do people realise, they have been a victim of crime.

1. The theft of a parcel from a doorstep mainly in town areas where there is foot traffic by a "Chancer and opportunists" Sometimes the thief had no intention of committing the crime but there was a parcel and then it was gone!

2 Vans now followed no property is safe.

My work will need to address this risk in the coming months as we start to move towards Christmas.

We must encourage safe delivery arrangements.



CRIME

Parcel thefts rise from doorsteps as gangs follow courier vans





1. For example, Father Christmas as we all know often stores extra Christmas presents in residents sheds.... Criminals know this!!
2. Residents store extra drink supplies in the run up to Christmas and New Year in sheds and garages Criminals know this!!
3. Christmas shopping and leaving items in cars then going off for lunch before continuing shopping. Criminals know this!
4. Packing cars to travel the night before, criminals will be aware and looking for targets. Criminals know this they will be walking around in the early hours looking for targets
5. Children playing with new Xmas gifts and leaving them outside properties and then going in for Xmas Lunch. Criminals will drive around in vans and pick up items to hand.
6. Alert when shopping at Christmas for distraction thefts especially in crowded supermarkets as you scramble for the cream and brandy butter. Handbags on shopping trollies a special risk.
7. Theft from external post boxes

These are the types of risks we will face. Stay alert and vigilant.

Other Business

I will update council on my work with **E-SCOOTER/ELECTRIC BIKE FIRE RISK**

I will raise concerns of the failure of Ashford Police to attend council meetings throughout 2024 and in fact since the June 2023 launch of the Kent Police Model and the switch from PCSOs the Beat Police Officers.

I will report on a matter I have dealt with the police at another council and their reaction.

Council may wish to consider writing to the Officer of the Crime Commissioner on the matter.

The final matter is to say thank you for all your support for my work and for me personally as we work together to keep the residents of Bilsington crime free and free for the fear of being a victim of crime. I could not do this work without you.

Into 2025 I will bring forward a plan and it will be same again please! and I will work hard to ensure the 2025 crime trends do not strike in Bilsington and that we do not take our eye off the ball of the old trends that will still be with us.

We must prepare for an onslaught of SCAMS through all devices.

REMEMBER IT IS VITAL TO REPORT ALL CRIMES/FAILED CRIMES/ATTEMPTED CRIMES.



Contacting Kent Police

-  Report a non-urgent crime or incident online at www.kent.police/report or click the **Live Chat** button
-  In an emergency, if crime is in progress or life is in danger, call **999**
-  If you are hearing or speech impaired, use the textphone service **18000** or download the **BT Relay app**
-  Sign up to www.MyCommunityVoiceKent.co.uk to receive and respond to community alerts from your local officers
-  Email your local policing team go www.kent.police.uk/yourarea
-  Find us on Facebook.com/kentpolice
-  Follow us on Twitter [@kent_police](https://twitter.com/kent_police) or find your local account at www.kent.police.uk/yourarea
-  Follow us on Instagram [@kentpoliceuk](https://www.instagram.com/kentpoliceuk)
-  For non-urgent issues, if you are unable to get online, call **101**

 **Kent Police** www.kent.police.uk

Thank you again all as always for your solid backing and support. I really appreciate that.
Stay safe, secure, alert and vigilant

Peter New (peternew1@aol.com) KENT POLICE VOLUNTEER & COMMUNITY NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

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