

## Notes on Kent Association of Local Councils Meeting January 15th 2026

Sarah Barker in chair. 21 attendees.

Inspector ZaraMcAiney. Kent Police. All levels of anti social behaviour are coming down across all areas except Snodland.

Serious crime remains low. There was one instance of a family feud in Aylesford.

Sacha Taylor from Kent Resilience. Community resilience plans. Stresses are increasing because of climate change: More extreme weather events are expected: hotter, wetter, windier, so more wild fires, more floods and more storms.

The Kent Resilience Forum (<https://kentprepared.org.uk> is ) encouraging parish councils to produce resilience plans. Nine have so far been received, including the plan from Aylesford.

Borough Green is becoming a town council on April 1st.

Local Government Reorganisation. There is hoped to be more information for the PPP on February 5th. The minister now has the council submissions.

Local plan. Mike Taylor. 600 sites were called forward. 100 are in the draft local plan.

On climate change, I mentioned that since we now have a new Climate Change Officer, Louise Stewart, and the Climate Change Forum is back in business. Next meeting February 9th. The forum now includes the issues of plastics and plastic waste. Sarah said she had been asked what could be done with plastic film.

Harry Rayner said the current KCC council has been having trouble finding councillors willing to join committees during the working day. Draft budget is a 3.9% increase. Reserves are being hit for £16million. Government working on 4.9% increase. Danger is that government will reduce their grant. Adult services consume 48% of the budget. There is no planned increase for care homes.

David Gaunt complained that the 20mph limit in his parish is not adhered to. It was proposed to bring the issue of 20mph limits up generally at the next PPP.

Harry Rayner said that there is very little money about for 'peripheral' issues such as Kent Highways.

He suggested lobbying the candidates for the forthcoming new authority shadow elections.

Sarah suggested the TMKALC AGM should be in the first half of July.

A request for strategic items had been circulated at very short notice re the next Kent Highways meeting which has since been postponed. The form and what I put on the form on the Parish's behalf follows. My responses are in italics:

# January 2026

## KALC STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT SURVEY FOR KCC HIGHWAYS MEETINGS

What are the main highways-related themes or challenges being raised by your council (Highlight all that apply)

Road Safety and Speeding

Parking and Traffic Management

*Charging for car parking in Aylesford village where most village houses have nowhere to park cars. Also increased pressure on road parking because of the success of Aylesford Football club*

Maintenance and Repair (eg. potholes, drainage, verge cutting)

*Potholes are a total pain. I have given up using my little car after losing a tyre and now feel obliged to drive a 4x4*

Communication and Responsiveness from KCC Highways

*I have an accident black spot at the junction at the end of my street but we learn that an insufficient number have been killed there to Warrant doing anything about it*

Impact of new developments on local highways

*Hermitage Lane*

Active travel and sustainable transport (walking, cycling, public transport)

*Negligible buses to villages and new settlements on the East Bank of the Medway*

Flooding and drainage infrastructure

Are there any recurring issues affecting your parish or town that should be raised strategically with KCC Highways?

(Please describe briefly, including any relevant examples or patterns.)

Has your council experienced particular challenges with communication or engagement from KCC Highways?

(e.g. difficulty contacting officers, lack of updates, slow responses, etc.)

Have there been any positive examples of effective collaboration or communication between your council and KCC Highways that could be shared as best practice?

(Please include details if possible.)

Are there any new or emerging highways or transport issues in your parish that may have wider implications across Kent?

(e.g. increased traffic from new developments, speeding hotspots, drainage concerns, etc.)

Do you have any supporting information (e.g. data, local surveys, feedback) that could help illustrate the issues raised above?

(Optional: please summarise or indicate if available upon request.)

Do you have any suggestions for how KALC and KCC Highways could strengthen their partnership or improve the way strategic issues are discussed and addressed?

Any other comments.

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If anybody wants to add anything, I suggest they contact Sarah Barker who sent the original message with the request for an immediate reply.

Tom Shelley January 16th 2026