

Aylesford Parish Council

Policy & Resources Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 4th August 2026 in the Aylesford Parish Council Offices, Aylesford

Present: Councillors Mrs Eves (Chair), Miss Anderson, Balcombe, Mrs Birkbeck, Davies, Fuller, Mrs Gadd, Gledhill, Netzel, Sharp, Smith and Sullivan.

Melanie Randall (Clerk of the Council)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence from Councillors Chapman, Ludlow, Rillie, Mrs Waters and Williams were received, and the reasons for absence agreed.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest additional to those contained in the Register of Members Interests.

3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 7 July 2026

It was **Resolved** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed.

4. Any Matters Arising from the last Minutes

There were no matters arising.

5. Accounts for Payment

The Council considered the Payment Schedule attached to the Agenda and Councillor Balcombe proposed and Councillor Miss Anderson seconded and it was **Resolved** that 25 payments totalling £15,004.90 be made.

6. Finance Advisory Sub Committee

It was **Agreed** to note the minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2026.

7. KALC and TMBC Parish Partnership Panel Meetings

Nothing to report as no meetings held since the last meeting of this committee.

The next Parish Partnership meeting is 27th August 2026.

Noted

8. Council Vacancies

The are currently no vacancies.

Noted

9. To consider a Professionally Monitored Security System for the Parish Office

There was no update as the Clerk is still waiting for the cost to upgrade the Burglar and Fire Alarms.

Ongoing

10. Value for the Baroness LM281 ride on mower

The Chair reported that the current value of the Baroness LM281 ride-on mower is still currently £10,000.

The supplier has offered two options: a buyout of the existing machine or a straight swap for a Kubota GR2120s, which would be a suitable size for maintaining the cemetery should this work be brought back in-house. The Kubota GR2120s has a retail value of £12,979 plus VAT.

The Chair reiterated that the Baroness mower is no longer in use and will not be required even if a new member of staff is appointed. The Council is also continuing to pay for the service plan at a cost of £228.09 per quarter (£76.03 per month).

As per the minutes of the last meeting, the Clerk had arranged a demonstration of the Kubota, that took place that morning. The Chair along with the Clerk, Maintenance Supervisor and Councillor Sharp attended the demonstration. The Chair reported that the machine is quite a versatile piece of equipment, it is a 4-wheel drive whereas the Baroness is a 2-wheel drive. It has very good manoeuvrability and can comfortably negotiate going round the headstones. There are a number of optional accessories available for the machine, including a mulching kit and LED work lights to improve visibility. The supplier has confirmed that the LED lights would be provided free of charge.

It was resolved to sell the Baroness LM281 and ask the supplier if they can hold the offer of a straight swap for 3-6 months, to enable the Council to decide what to do regarding whether to employ an additional member of staff or not.

Ongoing

11. Staffing Committee Minutes

The minutes of the Staffing Committee held on 16th June 2026 were agreed.

12. Forstal Recreation Ground Height Barriers

The Clerk advised the Committee that the height barrier at the entrance to the office car park has sustained repeated impacts and is now bent. As a result, it has to be lifted on and off its bracket each time it is opened or closed, creating a health and safety concern for staff and others who operate it.

The Committee was also informed that the height barrier at the entrance to Forstal Recreation Ground is in an even poorer condition. It must be manually supported while being opened and closed, presenting a further health and safety risk. It was noted that both barriers require attention to ensure they can be operated safely.

In preparation of the meeting the Clerk had obtained a quote for each of them for full replacement with the locking mechanism being lower down within easy reach. The height barriers will have a locking box to protect unwanted access to the padlock.

The cost for the height barrier at the entrance to the car park is £3,211.00 + vat and for the one at Forstal Recreation Ground it is £3,356.47 + vat, with the higher cost reflecting the wider span.

The Clerk sought authorisation to proceed with both replacements and to fund them from the Contingency fund.

It was **Resolved** to proceed.

Closed

13. To discuss the possibility of extending the number of Christmas Lights in Bull Lane

Councillor Gledhill informed the committee that residents have enquired why the Christmas Lights do not go all the way up to Greenfield Close and they would like them to be extended. He sought agreement in principle to the suggestion subject to the costs involved. The Clerk informed the committee that all the lights will soon need replacing, they were second hand when they were purchased and are now quite dull, some of the plastic housing has a slight yellow tinge to them. She is planning on getting a quote to replace them all in the next one to two years, this can however be brought forwards.

Therefore, as the lights will need replacing in the not-too-distant future it is not advisable to add any at the moment.

As this project would need to be funded entirely through the Precept the timing of obtaining the quote is important as the Clerk is about to start preparing the budgets for 2027/28.

It was **Resolved** the Clerk will obtain a quote so that if members wish to proceed the funds needed can be included in the Precept calculations for 2027/28.

Ongoing

Any Other Correspondence

There was no Other Correspondence

14. Duration of Meeting

7:46pm to 8:45pm