

ASH-CUM-RIDLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 19 March 2026 at Hodsoll Street & Ridley Village Hall, Hodsoll Street, TN15 7LE commencing at 7.45pm.

Present: Cllr M Aspinall
Cllr R Brammer
Cllr C Clark
Cllr J Clucas
Cllr S Glover
Cllr C Gorton
Cllr S Hobbs
Cllr I MacLeod
Cllr M Manley
Cllr V Ngwenya
Cllr J Scott

In Attendance: Alison de Jager – Parish Clerk
Karen Law – Deputy Clerk/Finance Officer
Megan Johnson – Assistant Clerk
Cllr M Fothergill – Kent County Council
Cllr Penny Cole – Sevenoaks District Council
1 Members of the Public

Michael Brown 1937 - 2026

The Chairman invited those present to observe a minute's silence in memory of Michael Brown, a long-serving Parish Councillor and Chairman, in recognition of his dedicated service and significant contribution to the Council and wider community.

9077/26 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr S Fishenden (prior engagement) Cllr A Jauch and Cllr P Kirtley (holiday) and Cllr F Cottee (ill). Cllr M Aspinall PROPOSED that the apologies and reasons for absence were accepted. SECONDED: Cllr R Brammer and AGREED.

District Councillors Perry Cole, M Lindop, S Manamperi and L Manston also sent their apologies.

9078/26 Declarations of Members Interests and Dispensations

None

9079/26 Minutes

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 19 February 2026 be signed and approved with the correction of the spelling of Cllr C Clark's surname.

PROPOSED: Cllr M Aspinall SECONDED: Cllr J Clucas and AGREED.

9080/26 Public Session and External Reports

County Councillor – Cllr M Fothergill reported that whilst District and Borough Councils have put funds aside for the Local Government Reorganisation, Kent County Council has not set a budget in this regard. The Consultation on Local Government Reorganisation runs until 26 March 2026.

Kent County Council (Reform UK) set a motion for consideration regarding illegal immigration. Cllr Fothergill advise immigration is dealt with at a national level and does not fall within the remit of the County Council. She along with all opposition Councillors left the chambers in protest.

Cllr Fothergill was asked if there was a policy for the repairs of potholes, for example are main roads repaired ahead of rural roads. Pothole repairs are based on risk. Cllr Fothergill will try to get some temporary repairs carried out.

District Councillors – Cllr Penny Cole advised that it is difficult to report potholes on rural roads as often there is not a relevant landmark to use. Local rural roads are in a particularly state of bad repair with approximately 30 potholes on one road. Cllr Penny Cole reported that Cllr Perry Cole had attended a Joint Transportation Board meeting at Sevenoaks District Council where it was reported that drainage works to alleviate the flooding at Pease Hill had been completed, however, he advised that there was still surface flooding evident in February. The site will be revisited.

9081/26 Clerk's Report

- a. The Clerk's Report was RECEIVED and NOTED

9082/26 Council Administration

- a. **Meeting Venue** - It was NOTED that the April 2026 Parish Council meeting will be held at the Milestone Academy TRAC Centre to allow the newly established youth provision to run without disruption.

9083/26 Finance and Governance

- a. **Current Financial Position:** The Finance Officer reported that we are currently holding £187,311, with a surplus of £40,655 and General Reserves of £79,794 which is roughly 3.7 times monthly running costs. Members were taken through the reports and advised of variances in budget and actual expenditure. Final invoices for year end are awaited. Cllr R Brammer requested that thank you is minuted to the Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Assistant Clerk for continuing the Lunch Club when the Cook is unavailable.
- b. **Approval of Payments:** Cllr M Aspinall PROPOSED that the payments made since the last meeting up to 12 March 2026 are APPROVED. SECONDED: Cllr V Ngwenya and AGREED.
- c. **Grant/Donation Applications:**
 - Compaid - Cllr J Clucas PROPOSED that £1,170 is awarded to Compaid to be used at the Tuesday Community Hub in New Ash Green. SECONDED: Cllr C Gorton and UNANIMOUSLY AGREED.
 - HiKent – Cllr M Aspinall PROPOSED that £480 is awarded to HiKent to be used at the Tuesday Community Hub in New Ash Green. SECONDED: Cllr M Manley and UNANIMOUSLY AGREED.

Beneficiaries of the grants will be asked to advertise that the above projects have been sponsored by Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council.

d. Policies

1. **Health & Safety Policy** – The Health & Safety Policy was reviewed without amendment. PROPOSED: Cllr C Clark SECONDED: Cllr M Manley and AGREED.

9084/26 Planning

a. Applications:

26/00190: 64 Colt Stead, New Ash Green, DA3 8LN - Single storey rear extension.

Cllr C Gorton PROPOSED that the Parish Council does not object to this application as long as it does not conflict with local planning policy. SECONDED: Cllr J Clucas and AGREED

26/00356: Leaders, Hodsoil Street, TN15 7LH – Replacement like for like of three timber framed windows to south elevation. Cllr M Manley PROPOSED that the Parish Council has no objection to this application as long as it complies with current planning policies. We defer to the opinion of the Conservation Officer, particularly on the possibility of a double glazed replacement. SECONDED: Cllr J Scott and AGREED

- b. The notes of the Planning Applications Working Group meeting of 03 March 2026 were NOTED.

9085/26 Ash Green Sports Centre

- a. **Current Financial Position** – the current balance of the Sports Centre stands at £19,472 without any of the grant from the Parish Council, with a surplus of £9,114 which is 2.5 times monthly running costs. Members were taken through the reports.
- b. **Approval of Payments** - Cllr A Jauch PROPOSED that the payments made since the last meeting to 12 February 2026 are APPROVED. SECONDED: Cllr C Gorton and AGREED.
- c. **Management of Ash Green Sports Centre** – Cllr M Manley PROPOSED that a working group is established to review the management and performance of the Sports Centre. SECONDED: Cllr R Brammer and AGREED. The Clerk will send an invitation to all members to advise if they would like to join the working group.

9086/26 Community and Environment

- a. **Focus Group** – The notes of the Focus Group meeting held on 12 January 2026 were NOTED.
- b. **Easter Tea** – To be considered in spring following discussion with Hartley Parish Council.
- c. **Easter Egg Trail** – The Assistant Clerk gave an update on the Easter Egg Trail and Colouring Competition. Cllr J Clucas volunteered to judge the colouring competition.

9087/26 Items for Information

- Cllr R Brammer advised that Edna Nicolson has volunteered to act as one of the Parish Council's trustees for the Lances Almshouse Trust. This brings the Parish Council's representation to completion, however, there is still a Church vacancy which will be filled when a new rector is appointed.
- Cllr R Brammer requested that once the funeral arrangements for Michael Brown (previous chairman) have been confirmed, that flowers and/or a donation is made.
- Cllr J Clucas reported that the Village Association is working with the Trustees of the Youth Centre to clear and make safe the area at the rear of the Youth & Community Centre.
- Cllr J Scott noted that the Church End planning application for between 1 – 9 houses has been refused due to the location of the gas pipe line.

9088/26 Progress Tracker

The Progress Tracker was NOTED.

CLOSED SESSION

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that due to the confidential nature of the next item, the public and press will be asked to leave the meeting

9089/26 CHILDREN'S CENTRE

- a. Following consideration in closed session, Cllr S Glover PROPOSED that the Parish Council agrees to increase the offer for the purchase of the Children's Centre to £360,000 SECONDED: Cllr C Gorton FOR: 10 AGAINST: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 1
- b. Cllr J Clucas PROPOSED that the Parish Council agrees to increase the amount to be applied for through the Public Works Loan Board from £440,000 to £470,000 SECONDED: Cllr M Manley. FOR: 10 AGAINST: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 1

The meeting closed at 9.29pm

Signed:
Chairman

Date:

ASH-CUM-RIDLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Agenda Item: **5 – Full Council 19 March 2026**

Report Title: **Clerk's Report**

24/03422/FUL: Proposed development of a photovoltaic solar array farm with associated ancillary infrastructure, cable route and grid connection and new access track, alongside localised land re-grading works. A letter has been sent to Kent Highways requesting that they re-examine the Traffic Management Plan with specific regard to the impact that construction traffic will have on local roads, businesses and the wider community. A response is expected by 2 April 2026

COFFEE WITH A COP – Coffee with a Cop was held on 17 February 2026.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION CONSULTATION.

The consultation response has been completed by Cllrs R Brammer, C Clark and J Clucas.

SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL LIST

The village of New Ash Green and listed buildings cannot be added to the local list. The Orchard, Northfield and the Sports Fields at the Pavilion have been submitted to Sevenoaks District Council.

SPEED INDICATOR DEVICE – a meeting will be arranged with the Clerk and Chairman of Hartley Parish Council regarding the movement and data collection for the SID.

SPEEDWATCH – Alan Watson, Kent Police held roadside training on Saturday 07 March 2026. Additional training will be arranged for volunteers unable to attend this session.

SPORTS CENTRE – We welcome Adam Doherty Winch to the Sports Centre staff.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES - Bookings open on 24 March for the activities at Ash Green Sports Centre from Monday 13 April 2026 to Thursday 16 April 2026. The £1 Easter racket offer is available from 03 to 19 April 2026.

YOUTH PROVISION – The start date of 01 April 2026 has been agreed with Young Lives Foundation and the Trustees of the Youth & Community Centre are also in agreement, pending receipt of a programme and one of the Trustees attending an existing provision.