

Aylesford Parish Council

Environmental Services Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held in the Aylesford Parish Council Offices, on Tuesday 2 September 2025

Present: Councillor Sullivan (Chair) and Councillors, Miss Anderson, Balcombe, Mrs Birkbeck, Mrs Eves, Mrs Gadd, Gledhill, Rillie, Sharp, Shelley and Smith.
Melanie Randall (Clerk of the Council)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence from Councillors Fuller, Ludlow and Ms Oyewusi 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. To Agree the Minutes of the last meeting held on 5 August 2025

It was **Resolved** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 August 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed, subject to Mrs Birkbeck being added to the apologies.

4. Any Matters Arising from the last minutes

There were no matters arising.

5. To consider renewing the Play Equipment at The Hollow, Aylesford

The Clerk advised that the proposed Hollow play equipment renewal cannot be funded using Section 106 monies, as the funding pot that she was considering is restricted to outdoor sport-type equipment. There is play equipment that falls into this category, and the Clerk will speak with the contractor to look at some alternatives so S106 can be utilised.

It was agreed that the FCC Communities Foundation would be considered to seek funding from to cover the difference. Members also noted that FCC funding could potentially be explored for the Tunbury play equipment renewal project.

The Clerk will make some enquiries and report back.

Ongoing

6. TMBC Anit-Social Behaviour Team

The report for July 2025 was noted.

The Clerk reminded the Committee that this project commenced on 21 May 2025. Since the last meeting of this committee the team has not visited the Parish Office, still only having visited on two occasions - 3rd and 24th July.

The Clerk had asked TMBC why Eccles, Blue Bell Hill and Walderslade are not on the report – the answer was they didn't realise Eccles fell under Aylesford Parish but will add it in. As for Blue Bell Hill and Walderslade the team hadn't had chance to visit them.

Members requested clarification regarding the figures presented in the report, particularly the total number of hours spent in the Borough and a breakdown of how this total was calculated. They also asked for further detail on visits to the Parish, with specific reference to the category of 'Public Engagement.' Members wished to understand what this term covers. A request was made for each public engagement to be listed on the report for clarity.

It was agreed the Clerk will pass these comments and questions to TMBC and report back. She will also ensure that Borough Councillor Des Keers is copied in on the email to TMBC.

Noted

7. Podkin Meadow Rewilding Project

The Council agreed at the last meeting to allocate a small area for the project and the volunteer group to be responsible for its ongoing maintenance, including mowing and the removal of cuttings etc.

The group wished to know if the Parish Council has any spare funds to support the purchase of items such as seed. After discussion it was agreed that the Council does not have any budgeted funds to financially support this project. Councillor Shelley will investigate potential grants, as he believes funding may be available to assist with the purchase of seed. He will report his findings to the Clerk.

Ongoing

8. Aylesford and Eccles Allotments

The Clerk reported that she still has not received a response from Trenport regarding a site meeting to inspect the plots requiring clearance and she will chase again this week.

As this is the first year of the increased fees, once all plots have either been paid for or surrendered, the office will have a clearer picture of how many remain vacant. At that stage, the clearance costs can be reviewed so if Trenport refuse to carry out the work the Council knows what the likely cost will be. The Clerk reminded members that the Parish Council should not be expected to bear any clearance costs arising from the Bushey Wood development, as without this development the vacant plots would have been re-let. It was suggested that the Clerk also contact one of the Borough Councillors for Eccles to seek any updates on Bushey Wood and to ask whether they can advise on who to approach at Trenport for support with the allotment clearance.

Ongoing

9. To consider the preferred choice of material for the replacement of items such as benches

The Clerk reminded members that the Council had previously agreed to use recycled plastic for such items and sought confirmation that this remains the Council's practice
The options were wood, recycled plastic or metal.

It was **Resolved** to continue with recycled plastic. **Closed**

10. To review the Regulations and Conditions of Hire of Sports Pitches

It was **Resolved** to accept the regulations as submitted by the Clerk **Closed**

11. To review the Policy of Public Open Spaces Hire

It was **Resolved** to accept the regulations as submitted by the Clerk **Closed**

12. To discuss storing the Christmas Market huts on site

The Clerk reported that Gallagher had contacted her to ask whether the Aylesford Christmas Market huts could be stored at Forstal Recreation Ground.

The discussions and site walk concluded that a 40ft x 8ft container (the size needed) could be accommodated the other side of the tennis courts, just before the first container of Aylesford Football Club.

Gallagher's have offered to buy it which will be brand new and the colour of the Council's choice. The suggested location does not interfere with residents' enjoyment of the recreation ground, and it will be away from the fence of the tennis courts to allow for maintenance.

It was **Resolved** to permit the placement of the container. **Closed**

The Clerk also sought agreement to place a much smaller container (max 20ft x 8ft) in the far end of the car park where there was one for many years to house the Christmas Market equipment if needed, such as decorations, Christmas trees and signage.

It was **Resolved** to permit the placement of the smaller container if needed. **Closed**

13. Any Other Correspondence

There was no Other Correspondence

14. Duration of Meeting

7:51pm to 8:40pm