Aylesford Parish Council

Environmental Services Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 6th October 2026, in the Aylesford Parish Council Offices, Aylesford

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

Melanie Randall (Clerk of the Council)

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1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence from Councillors Balcombe, Chapman, Fuller, Ludlow, Ms Oyewusi, Shelley and Williams were received and the reason 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 1 September 2026

It was **Resolved** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 September 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed.

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 reported that there will be no update until after the Board have met in early December and have made their decision. The Parish Council will be notified shortly after.

Ongoing

6. Renewal of the Play Equipment at Tunbury Recreation Ground

There was no update as it depends on what the decision is regarding The Hollow.

Ongoing

7. Tunbury Car Park – Installation of ANPR Camera

The Clerk informed the committee that due to the amount of legislation the installation of an Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) camera in the Council-owned public car park requires she is now questioning if this is the appropriate thing to do.

Following further consideration, it was **Resolved** that the Council will now not proceed with the installation due to the significant legislative, regulatory and administrative requirements associated with operating such a system in a public space. The Clerk explained there would be concerns regarding the data protection implications, including the need to establish a clear and lawful purpose for collecting vehicle registration data, where and how the data would be stored, who would have access to it, how long it would be retained, and the arrangements for its secure deletion.

The Council considered that the associated compliance requirements and ongoing responsibilities would be disproportionate and therefore agreed not to pursue the installation.

The public should be advised to report any situations to the Police so it can be flagged as an area needing to be added to Police Patrols.

Members asked the Clerk to email Matthew Scott, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent explaining the issues and asking Tunbury Hall car park to be added to routine police patrols.

The Council reiterated again that it will not agree to close the gate. **Closed**

9. To consider replacing the Christmas Lights in the Parish

The Clerk presented two quotes, one for refurbished lights (although you cannot get refurbished string lights), the other for all new.
The cost for refurbished column lights and new string lights is currently £38,425.00
For all new lights, the cost is currently £46,625.00. Both quotes include an extra 5 lights for Eccles which would be subject to KCC agreeing they can be put on the columns the Council would like.

Based on this year's precept (2026/27) this would be an increase of around 11% for the most expensive option on top of the 2.4% already applied for the annual increase. The Clerk clarified that the increase next financial year could potentially be more as the cost of the lights will increase. Members agreed the financial burden on residents through such a large increase for one project would not be right and therefore declined to proceed at this time.
The Clerk reminded members the cost of putting up, taking down and testing the lights currently costs £5,000 – £6,000 per year, plus any call out charges are on top of this for lights not working and for their repair.

It was **Agreed** to continue to put the existing lights up albeit they are not as bright as they were and as they come to the end of their life to consider stop using them.
It was also **Agreed** the Clerk will look at potential funding opportunities there may be with local businesses or the County/Borough Council.

If the Council is minded in the future to renew the lights, then this could be saved up for over two or three years but may still ultimately have to be funded fully through the precept.

This item will be brought back to committee when the Clerk has had opportunity to review any grant funding streams there may be. **Closed**

10. Any Other Correspondence

S106 funding for MUGA enhancement on Forstal Recreation Ground
The Clerk reported that the MUGA fencing is broken in multiple places and is currently being held together with cable ties. Some of it is bowed at the bottom which has created trip hazards where the kerb edges are. The new enhanced version will be more suitable for people of all ages and abilities and will be a noise reducing design to help mitigate the constant metal on metal noise as the ball is kicked against it as this creates complaints from residents nearby.

She has been seeking S106 funding for a number of months from TMBC, who have repeatedly refused stating that in their opinion all it needs are repairs which they will consider funding. The 'repair' they refer to is the replacement of the structure for an enhanced version as it cannot be repaired due to the type of damage it has suffered. The Clerk will keep the pressure on and has copied in James Bailey, Head of Planning who has the final decision over the allocation, Matt Boughton, Damian Roberts and Borough Councillors Colin Williams, Dave Davis and Roger Dalton. The Clerk will report back as things progress.

St. Peter and St Paul's Church Aylesford
The Clerk informed the committee that the church office had informed her one of the floodlights that lights up the church had been smashed and enquired as to whether it is the responsibility of the Parish Council to repair. The Clerk has checked the paperwork in the office and cannot see anything referring to these particular lights.
She did however find a 50-year unsigned lease, dating back to September 1967, which was around the time the churchyard closed, so if it is in existence, it would have long expired. The church office also cannot seem to locate a signed lease.
The Clerk will make some enquiries to clarify if there is/was a lease and report back to committee for further consideration.
In the meantime, the Clerk was asked to find out how much it is to repair the floodlight and if she considers it an insignificant amount she is authorised to proceed with the repair as a gesture of goodwill, not accepting responsibility for the floodlights, unless the church office can supply any minutes or such like proving the Parish Council is responsible for them.

11. Duration of Meeting
8:41pm to 9:13pm