



**WALMER TOWN COUNCIL**

62 The Strand, Walmer, Deal, Kent CT14 7DP

Tel: 01304 362363

Web site: [www.walmercouncil.co.uk](http://www.walmercouncil.co.uk) E-mail: [clerk@walmercouncil.co.uk](mailto:clerk@walmercouncil.co.uk)

**Minutes of the Meeting of Walmer Town Council held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025 – 7 pm at The Baptist Church Hall, Kelvedon Road, Walmer.**

**Present Councillors:** Cllr T Bond (Chairman), Cllr L Ludwig, Cllr M Eddy, Cllr R Blackwell, Cllr A Friend, Cllr J Murray, Cllr D Richardson, Cllr P Ludwig, Cllr M Simpson Cllr S Waite-Gleave, Cllr E Crockford, and Cllr P Jull.

**Officer Present:** Roland Aldred, Town Clerk

**454. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllrs Lee, Grist and Findley offered apologies that were accepted.

**455. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Bond declared a VAOI in respect of item 463 report of the Clerk as his wife had worked at Tides previously and would likely conduct business there in the future and item 468 as he uses Mr Atherton for legal advice.

**456. OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY**

The Chairman reminded all those present of the openness and transparency statement.

**457. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Cllr Bond reported:

- i. The residents of Kennedy Road raised over £1100 with their Christmas light display this year for charity.
- ii. KCC had voted to be considered for the first tranche of authorities to move over into the unitary system. Not all the Councils who apply will be selected, the decision of which authorities have been selected will be announced at the end of February. The new system will involve the County and Districts merging to form a Unitary Councils. Across Kent there will be 3 or 4 such bodies and an additional Mayor of Kent position will be created. This follows a government white paper on how Councils will be formed for the future. Little detail of how this will be achieved or what the exact responsibilities will be are known at this point. A request has been made alongside the application to suspend the County Council elections next year, to save the cost of £3 million. Were Kent to be accepted County elections would cost £3 million pounds and members would only have a short time in office

before the Unitary authority replaced them. A key point in making the decision to apply for the first tranche was the opportunities that being first tranche would give to shape how the Unitary Authorities would operate. Those in later tranches would only have limited opportunity to amend the processes.

Cllr Waite-Gleave add that she had attended the meeting as a member of the public and had concerns about where the Unitary Council would be based and that the Mayoral Position had no committee to which it was accountable.

Cllr Murray had concerns about what assets would be passed to the Town Council and the costs of managing and maintaining these assets.

Cllr Eddy was keen to learn what additional powers if any Local Councils would receive.

#### **458. MINUTES**

Members received the minutes of the Council meeting held on Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes be approved and signed.

Proposed by Cllr Friend

Seconded by Cllr Eddy

For 12

Against 0

Abstain 0

#### **459. REPORT ON ACTIONS FROM THE LAST MEETING**

The Clerk reported:

The Outdoor Gym Working Party had an initial meeting. To progress the project, advice on planning matters is required.

**RESOLVED** – To spend up to £90 to engage with Dover District Council on pre-planning advice. Ensuring we take advantage of the 50% discount for local councils if it is available.

Proposed Cllr Eddy

Seconded Cllr Waite-Gleave

For 12

Against 0

Abstain 0

#### **460. MARKE WOOD TREES**

Members received a written report from the Clerk and a presentation on the night from an officer of DDC about a request for financial support in planting trees at Marke Wood.

**RESOLVED** – To support the planting of trees at Marke Wood to the amount of £2000 to be taken from the tree planting reserve.

Proposed Cllr Blackwell

Seconded Cllr L Ludwig

For 8

Against 4

Abstain 0

#### **461. QUESTIONS AND/OR OBSERVATIONS FROM THE ELECTORATE OF WALMER**

i. No members of the public were present

ii. No members of Dover District or Kent County Council had a report to give.

#### **462. CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR REPORTS**

Cllr Crockford reported that several local public houses had joined a voluntary accreditation scheme. A vape shop in Deal had been raided and more than 1300 illegal vapes, and 12,000 illegal cigarettes had been seized. A Drink Driving campaign had led to more than 100 arrests. There is a continuing campaign on illegal e-scooters.

#### 463. COMMITTEE REPORTS AND MINUTES

i. To receive any reports and any agreed minutes as follows:

- a. Amenities + Environment - Minutes from Sept 25, 2024.
- b. Finance + General Purposes – Minutes from July 24, 2024.
- c. Walmer in Bloom Minutes from Sept 23, 2024.
- d. Events Committee – Minutes from Nov 19, 2024.
- e. Planning Committee – Minutes from November 12 and Dec 10, 2024.
- f. Climate Emergency Working Group — Minutes from Sept 19, 2024.
- g. Public Engagement Working Group – no minutes to present.

**RESOLVED:** Members agreed to note the minutes of all the above committees.

Proposed Cllr Friend

Seconded Cllr Eddy

For 12

Against 0

Abstain 0

ii. To receive any comments about the draft minutes of meetings taken place since the last council meeting.

- a. Amenities + Environment from the meeting held Dec 4, 2024.
- b. Finance + General Purposes from the meeting held Nov 27.
- c. Walmer in Bloom from the meeting held Nov 5, 2024.
- d. Events Committee from the meeting held Dec 3, 2024
- e. Planning Committee – from the meeting held Jan 8, 2025.
- f. Climate Emergency Working Group — from the meeting held Nov 14, 2024

**RESOLVED** – To note

Proposed Cllr Friend

Seconded Cllr Eddy

For 12

Against 0

Abstain 0

iii. Cllr Richardson put forward a proposal to disband the Public Engagement Working group for now as the ethos of the project of talking to the public was in place and members are discussing issues with the public without the need for events.

**RESOLVED** – To disband the Public Engagement Working Group

Proposed – Cllr Richardson

Seconded – Cllr Jull

For 12

Against 0

Abstain 0

#### 464. REPORT OF THE CLERK

The Clerk reported:

- i. That Dover District Council have finalised the decision on the replacement for the Leisure Centre at Tides. A decision has been made to close all the facilities at Tides from the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, where previously the sports hall and tennis centre had been indicated to remain open. Clerk has received correspondence from one resident on this matter and there are some complaints on social media about this situation. Members to advise Clerk if they would like an item added to the next agenda to discuss this.
- ii. The KCC LNRS consultation launches on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025.
- iii. Volunteers from Hawkshill took part in a brush cutting course funded by the UK Prosperity fund over the weekend of the 11-12 January 2025. Walmer Town Council also organised for volunteers from Gazen Salts and the Captains Garden to attend to fill the course.

#### 465. FINANCIAL REPORT

- i. Bank Balances

Members received the bank balances

Bank Balances as at 31/12/24

Charity Bank	£100,000.00
Redwood bank	£100,000.00
Unity Trust current	£25,138.59
Unity Trust Deposit	£133,600.14
<b>Total</b>	<b>£358,738.73</b>

ii. Monthly Finance report

Members received the November and December 2024 monthly financial report.

Financial update for month of November 2024						
Balance at start of month	£	399,122.54				
Payments			Receipts			
Who	For	Amount	Who	For	Amount	
Dover District Council	Business Rates	£8,986.14	Mr Price	Donation to Walmer In Bloom	£100.00	
Apex Clean	Office Cleaning	£160.00	KCC	EV Charge Point Share	£511.07	
Staff	Salaries	£5,081.43				
KCC LPGS	Staff Pensions	£2,034.90				
E-On Next	Utilities- No 8	£83.58				
Mr D Halpin	Window Cleaning	£12.00				
SWCAA	Insurance-Allotment Plot	£5.00				
Red Dog Garden Services	Ivy Clearance From Allotments	£1,000.00				
Mitec	Telephone Bill	£150.84				
Public Works Loan Board	Loan Repayment	£7,563.40				
Amazon	Sealant Paint	£18.25				
Pitman Training	Exam	£138.00				
Walmer Baptist Church	Hire of Church Hall	£30.00				
Dover District Council	Refund for Walmer Green hire	-£280.00				
EDF	Utility Bill	£43.21				
HMRC	Staff Tax and National Insurance	£1,345.53				
Hardmans solicitors	Refund	-£1,043.73				
Lloyds Bank	Bank Charges	£3.00				
Edge IT	Annual Fees	£1,437.98				
HFE Signs	Christmas Concert Banners	£179.76				
Kent Copier Services	Photocopier Charge	£506.62				
Boston Seeds	Bluebell Bulbs for Hawkshill	£103.99				
Unity Bank	Bank Charges	£10.65				
Total		£27,570.55	Total		£611.07	
Balance at end of month		£372,163.06				
This month spend		-£26,959.48	Last year		-£26,318.37	
% of yrs precept for month		10.82%	% of precept for month		10.69%	
Total net spend YTD		-£124,713.31	Total spent LYTD		-£120,985.03	
% of precept YTD		50.05%	% of precept LYTD		49.16%	
Financial update for month of December 2024						
Balance at start of month	£	372,163.06				
Payments			Receipts			
Who	For	Amount	Who	For	Amount	
Apex Clean	Office Cleaning	£280.00	Openreach	Wayleave Payment	£80.11	
Business Stream	Utilities Bill	£312.29	Barclay's Bank	BCP Payment	£4.02	
KCC LGPS	Pensions	£2,034.90	Unity Bank	Credit Interest	£1,027.02	
Staff	Salaries	£5,081.63				
Mitec	Telecoms Bill	£147.94				
DDC	Business Rates	£291.97				
Eagle Security	Office Security	£96.00				
Mr D Halpin	Window Cleaning	£12.00				
Trainline	Train Tickets	£56.26				
Amazon	Cable Ties	£17.98				
Pitman Training	Exam	£138.00				
DDC	Christmas Concert	£366.00				
Land Registry	Request for information	£6.00				
Walmer Parish Churches	Hire of Meeting room	£33.75				
DTW Tools	Purchase of Brushcutter	£871.50				
Viking	Stationary	£69.44				
Clir P Ludwig	Key Cutting	£36.00				
HMRC	Staff Tax and National Insurance	£1,345.33				
Dallas Events Service	Hire of Marquee and Stage	£1,800.00				
Mark 1 Music	Hire of Sound system	£1,089.00				
Black Key and White Notes	Performance at Christmas Concert	£200.00				
PRS	Licence for 12 Months	£149.40				
EDF	Utilities Bill	£52.28				
British Gas	Utilities Bill	£34.61				
Unity Bank	Bank Charges	£10.20				
Lloyds Bank	Bank Charges	£3.00				
Total		£14,535.48	Total		£1,111.15	
Balance at end of month		£358,738.73				
This month spend		-£13,424.33	Last year		-£18,037.44	
% of yrs precept for month		5.39%	% of precept for month		7.33%	
Total net spend YTD		-£138,137.64	Total spent LYTD		-£139,022.47	
% of precept YTD		55.43%	% of precept LYTD		56.49%	

**RESOLVED** – Members agreed to note the bank balances and monthly finance update.

Proposed Cllr Eddy

Seconded Cllr Friend

For 12

Against 0

Abstain 0

#### **466. BUDGET**

Members received the recommendations of the Finance and General Purposes Committee for the budget, precept and reserves for 2025/26.

**RESOLVED** – To accept the recommendations of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and set a budget of £283,780 and demand a precept of £261,312.20 with the difference coming out of unallocated reserves.

Proposed – Cllr Jull

Seconded – Cllr P Ludwig

For 7

Against 0

Abstain 5

#### **467. CONFIDENTIAL TO BE HELD UNDER THE PUBLIC BODIES (admission to meetings) ACT 1960**

To move into a private session to discuss matters of contractual legal or of a confidential nature.

**RESOLVED** – To move to a private session.

Proposed – Cllr Friend

Seconded – Cllr Jull

For 12

Against 0

Abstain 0

#### **468. HR MATTERS**

Members received a written recommendation from the Human Resources Committee on annual wage increases.

**RESOLVED** – To increase the pay in line with the NJC SCP scales.

Proposed – Cllr Jull

Seconded – Cllr Eddy

For 9

Against 0

Abstain 3

**RESOLVED** – To request the Clerk provide a report detailing the current and training dependant pay scales for all members of staff.

Proposed – Cllr Bond

Seconded – Cllr Eddy

For 11

Against 1

Abstain 0

#### **469. LEGAL ADVICE**

Members received a written report about an item for consideration of whether legal advice is required.

**RESOLVED** – To seek advice on the issue.

Proposed – Cllr Eddy

Seconded – Cllr P Ludwig

For 10

Against 2

Abstain 0

**RESOLVED** – To speak to Mr R Atherton in the first place to seek if this is within his area of expertise as a solicitor and seek a price Members have authorised an initial amount of £1000 for this advice.

Proposed – Cllr Friend

Seconded – Cllr Eddy

#### **470. MARKE WOOD PLAYPARK**

Members received a written report from the Clerk and prior to the public meeting a presentation from Dover District Council about financially contributing to the refurbishment of Marke Wood play park. Member received further a verbal report from Cllrs Blackwell and Richardson who had been appointed to work with Dover District Council on reviewing the project. Members felt that the additions brought about by the £25,000 contribution previously agreed subject to sign off when designs were completed showed value for money

**RESOLVED** – To approve the spend of £25,000 to be used in partnership with Dover District Council in revitalising Marke Wood playground.

Proposed – Cllr Richardson

Seconded – Cllr Blackwell

For 12

Against 0

Abstain 0

#### **471. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

5<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

The meeting closed at 20.45 pm.

Signed: ..... Date: .....