MINUTES OF A MEETING OF RIVER PARISH COUNCIL
Held at 7pm on Tuesday 13th October 2026 at River Methodist Church

PRESENT: Cllr. Styles-Martin (in the Chair), Cllr. Atkins, Cllr. Jones, Cllr. Shariff and Cllr. Taylor
IN ATTENDANCE: Mr. A. Denyer (Parish Clerk), County Cllr. Thorp and five members of the public

98. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Cllr. Innes, Cllr. Beverton and Cllr. Lamoon

99. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
There were none.

100. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS
a) Parish Council Meeting 08.09.2026
The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 8th September had previously been circulated. Cllr. Shariff proposed that the minutes represented a true record of the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr. Jones and all agreed.
b) Events Committee Meeting 22.09.2026
Noted.

101. UPDATES FROM THE MINUTES (NOT OTHERWISE ON THE AGENDA)
Item 88a - Wall by Kearsney Station: County Cllr. Thorp has contacted
Item 88b - Additional Defibrillator for River: Cllr. Atkins will have a meeting with Defibs for Dover on Thursday. A possible location in the vicinity of the old bus terminus was discussed.
Item 89a - Highway Improvements: Clerk has received another enquiry about a road crossing on London Road, River to reach the Pilgrims Way bus stop. This will be added to discussions with Kent Highways about revision to the Highway Improvement Plan.
Item 93 - Lewisham Road Bus shelter: Dover District Council are applying for funding themselves to replace the bus shelter and do not require the Parish Council to make an application. County Cllr. Thorp has offered £1,000 from his Members Grant towards the cost of the shelter if required.

102. REPORTS
a) District and County Councillors
County Cllr. Thorp reported that KCC have awarded the Freedom of Kent to the Gurkhas for their contribution to the community.
He is investigating a proposal by Dover District Council to create a cycle path from Dover Priory Station to the town centre as this may involve loss of up to three car parking spaces.
KCC are applying to the Government for repayment for funds spent on costs related to Local Government Reorganisation.
KCC are running a 'Clean Up Kent' Campaign, covering both littering and recycling.

b) Parish Councillors
i) Cllr. Atkins has met with Festival Amusements who have suggested four dates, from April to September, when they could run small fairs in part of the Recreation Ground as well as small amusements in the first court of the tennis enclosure. They would share the profits with the Parish Council.
ii) Chairman has had a response from P.C. Ansley saying less resources have been available for issues such as ASB over the summer months due to police resources being diverted to the protests at the Port of Dover. He emphasised that incidents must be reported or resources will not be allocated.

c) Policing
CCTV footage of the criminal damage at the Recreation Ground have been sent to the police but they have been unable to identify any suspects. The police have suggested that the footage be posted online to see if any members of the public can help with identification. Concerns were expressed about the ages of the youths involved and whether publication was legal. Clerk was asked to get clarification.

103. ANY QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC
a) Complaints were received about parking on Chilton way by the pharmacy.
b) Complaints about speeding along Lewisham Road, particularly at night. Both these complaints can be raised at the next Highway Improvement Scheme meeting.
c) The steps onto the public footpath next to River Court on Lewisham Road are in a very poor condition. This has been reported to Kent County Council but with a response saying that there is no budget available. The Parish Council will report to KCC. County Cllr. Thorp asked to be copied in to any emails.
d) Complaint about a lady spreading kibble at Crabble Athletic Ground attracting seagulls. Any issues could be reported to Dover District Council Environmental Health department.

e) An outline idea of converting part of the old tennis courts to a padel court was suggested by representatives of a new local company. The area suggested would be the middle court allowing the rest of the area available for other uses. The company would develop and lease the space from the Parish Council. It was agreed that the company could investigate and present a formal proposal to the Parish Council for consideration. Cllr. Atkins will liaise with them.

f) Query about the current status of the former Meadow Dean Nursing Home. Information has been received that DDC Planning are awaiting additional information before the planning application can proceed.
All relevant authorities have been informed and are doing what is possible within the legal framework.

104. PLANNING MATTERS

a) Planning applications with expiry dates before the next meeting

i. DOV/26/00720 | Installation of LED floodlights with associated electrical infrastructure and ancillary works | Crabble Athletic Ground, Crabble Road, River CT17 0QE – No comments.
ii. DOV/26/00828 | Erection of two storey side extension with integrated garage, single storey rear extension, solar panels to roof, landscaping, extension to vehicular access and driveway (existing garage and single storey extension to be demolished) – No comments.
iii. DOV/26/00867 | Construction of a concrete access ramp | 15 Sanctuary Close, River, CT17 0ER – No comments.

b) Any decisions made by Dover District Council

i. DOV/26/00653 | Change of use to extend camp site and the erection of three holiday let pods | Holmstone Wood, Crabble Lane, River – permission granted
ii. DOV/26/00719 | Demolition of existing garage/enderground store and the replacement with a new storage shed. The new drive will be raised to create a better drainage run off | 13 Chisnall Road, River, CT17 0RH – permission granted
iii. DOV/26/00709 | Certificate of Lawfulness (proposed) for the erection of a rear dormer window, 2 front rooflights to facilitate a loft conversion, and a side window | 111 Lewisham Road, River, CT17 0PA – Certificate Proposed Granted
iv. DOV/26/00567 | Erection of a detached garage (existing garage to be demolished) (part retrospective) | 92 London Road, River, Dover, Kent CT16 3AB – permission granted

c) Planning for the Recreation Ground Shipping Containers

Dover District Council Planning Enforcement, having looked at the specification of the containers in the Recreation Ground, have decided that they are within permitted development rights and no planning permission is required.

105. FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) Financial Report

The financial report was circulated and presented at the meeting. Full copy including bank statements will be emailed to Parish Councillors.

b) Completion of Audit

Clerk has received notification of Completion of Audit. Some small administrative issues to rectify. Notification has been published as required.

c) Quotations for repairs following the August Play Area Inspection

Receipt of quote for play area repairs from Safeplay totalling £1,205. Alternative quotes for securing one picnic bench and re-concreting fence posts will be sought.

Aerial runway is also in need of maintenance. It was agreed that Safeplay carry out the repairs as they will be visiting to do the other jobs.

It was noted that a full financial policy is needed including the limit at which spending could be approved by Chairman or Clerk without bringing to the Parish Council.

106. RECREATION GROUND MATTERS

a) Correspondence from insurers regarding liability over possible incidents

Clarification has been received from the insurers regarding the Parish Council's liability in the event of an accident particularly involving e-bikes. Advice is that the Parish Council will not automatically be liable unless negligence can be proven which directly leads to an accident occurring. There is already a bye-law in place. It was accepted that enforcement is a problem. Clear signage, regular inspections, recording of incidents and consideration if any risk control measures need to be implemented all demonstrate that the Parish Council has taken reasonable care. It was agreed to review and update the signage particularly at the three entrances.

107. UPDATE ON LOCAL VANDALISM AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

After discussion of recent incidents, it was noted that any locking of the Recreation Ground would involve cost and that no individual could be put at risk by being asked to eject a potentially large group of people on their own before locking and that a security company may need to be involved. This could come at significant cost.

Access to Crabble Court and the public car park will also have to be considered. It was agreed to investigate the cost of professional locking of the grounds at the weekends and any options that are available.

108. DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL/PARISH COUNCIL CHARTER

The final draft of the Dover District Council/Parish Council charter had previously been circulated and was approved.

109. EVENTS COMMITTEE

It was agreed that the Recreation Ground Christmas Tree can be sourced from the same local supplier. To be delivered in the week beginning 23rd November.

Additional lighting for the path down from the Lewisham Road pedestrian gate will be needed.

Arrangements for the Christmas Light Switch-On plus the Elf World Record Attempt were discussed.

Agreed that the Summer Fete will be on 11th July 2027.

Cllr. Atkins will circulate date for the next Events Committee Meeting.

110. GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence.

111. To resolve that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

It was agreed that the following item be discussed in closed session.

112. To discuss correspondence relating to the lease of the first floor of Flint House and receive any professional advice

Parish Councillors have received and understood all correspondence received from Sapphire International to date.

No further response has been received from Frederic Hall. The solicitor has been asked to confirm whether the Parish Council is required to reply to all points raised by Sapphire International. No engagement will take place with the company until further advice has been received. Further engagement should take place via a solicitor.

It was agreed that the position of the Parish Council remains the same. The first floor of Flint House should not have been leased as commercial office space as planning permission does not exist and it has not been possible to achieve planning permission due to the objection from Sport England. Therefore, the first floor cannot be leased as commercial office space.

The Parish Council are willing to agree a reasonable period for Sapphire International to find new premises.

113. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Remembrance Sunday 8th November 2026

Meeting closed at 9.10pm