

AGENDA

MEETING OF DARENTH PARISH COUNCIL Wednesday 19 March 2025, 7:30pm

Jubilee Hall, Waller Park Pavilion, Wood Lane, Darenth DA2 7LR

The Chairman will remind the Meeting of the protocol regarding the audio and visual recording of any part of the proceedings. Anyone wishing to film events are asked to declare an intention prior to commencement of the meeting.

123/03/25: TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

124/03/25: TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY OR PREJUDICIAL INTEREST

125/03/25: TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2025

RECOMMENDATION: That the minutes be approved as a true record.

126/03/25: ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

The Chairman will announce his decision as to whether any items received for consideration since agenda production, are suitably urgent to be discussed at the meeting, and indicate their position on the agenda.

127/03/25: TO RECEIVE EXTERNAL REPORTS

(a) **Borough Councillor Report**

(b) **KCC Community Warden Report**

Having previously been provided, Members are asked to retrospectively note the February Report provided by Community Warden, Joanne Appleton, as well as receive and note any Report for March 2025.

(c) **Dartford Borough & Parish Council Forum**

The Clerk attended a meeting on Tuesday 11 March 2025 where a presentation on forthcoming devolution was received. For Member information, the highlights are set out below:

Devolution

- English Devolution White Paper was published on 16 December 2024
- Devolution moves power away from Westminster to new Strategic Authorities led by locally elected Mayors
- These strategic authorities will be given a range of devolved powers – from transport to skills to economic development to public health (etc)
- The government's ultimate ambition for devolution is universal coverage across England
- The Devolution Priority Programme (DPP) provides a fast-track route – those areas currently without devolution arrangements were invited to put forward devolution proposals for their area
- Kent & Medway put in a proposal to be part of the DPP

Devolution Priority Programme

- On 5 February, the Government announced that the following six areas would join the DPP:
- Cumbria
- Cheshire & Warrington
- Greater Essex
- Hampshire & Solent
- Norfolk & Suffolk
- Sussex & Brighton
- Unfortunately, the area of Kent & Medway was not selected for the DPP
- The Government has said there will be more opportunities for devolution within this parliament

Local Government Re-organisation

- The Government still expects all two-tier areas to move forward with LGR
- Re-organisation means moving away from the current two-tier structure with councils coming together to form new unitary authorities
- The LG Minister has now formally invited us to develop proposals for LGR across Kent
- Indicative proposals are to be submitted by 21 March with final proposals by 28 November
- New unitary authorities are expected to go live April 2028
- The aim is to put local government on a more sustainable footing and create simpler structures
- New authorities should be of a size that can achieve efficiencies and withstand financial shocks – minimum population of 500k
- Proposals should be submitted that are for sensible economic geographies, ideally using existing district areas as building blocks
- Proposals should deliver public sector reform and value for money
- There should be wide engagement with local partners, stakeholders, residents and businesses

Re-organisation for Kent

- Re-organisation for Kent would mean that KCC, Medway and the Kent districts would cease to exist and would be replaced with 3 or 4 unitary authorities

Next Steps

- A Kent-wide submission will be made by the deadline of 21 March 2025
- This is likely to be a high-level submission with limited detail
- GAC will discuss the proposed submission on 17 March, followed by Cabinet who will agree that the submission can be made
- Further work will then be done to confirm precise geography/ies with detailed costings undertaken
- There will be wide engagement with local partners and stakeholders, residents, workforce and businesses
- Final proposals will then be submitted by 28 November 2025
- Once the proposal has been submitted, the Government will decide whether it will be taken forward and will consult as required by statute

- Decisions are likely to be made following consultation around May to August 2026
- Legislation will then be laid
- Shadow unitary elections May 2027
- New unitaries go live April 2028

128/03/25: TO CONSIDER AND DETERMINE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE DARENTH WOODS PARTNERSHIP WORKING GROUP

1. ROLE OF A WORKING GROUP

- 1.1.1. The role of a working group is to consider specific issues as directed by the Parish Council including:
 - 1.1.2. To examine an issue in detail, read reports and related materials, consider all options and obtain specialist advice on behalf of the Parish Council.
 - 1.1.3. To make full and detailed recommendations to the Parish Council.
 - 1.1.4. To maintain notes of all meetings and formulation of recommendations.
 - 1.1.5. To answer questions from the Parish Council in their delegated area.
- 1.2. Working Groups do not have any delegated powers to make decisions binding upon the Parish Council.

2. PARISH COUNCIL AND WORKING GROUP RELATIONSHIP

- 2.1. The Parish Council must direct the Working Group and set clear objectives, scope and outcome.
- 2.2. The role of the Parish Council is to question and challenge, where necessary, the recommendations of the Working Group, in order to openly display that all suitable considerations have been taken into account.
- 2.3. Enquiries and challenges will be made at Parish Council meetings to ensure full transparency to the electorate.

3. WORKING GROUPS TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 3.1. A quorum for a Working Group meeting will be three Parish Councillors.
- 3.2. Working Group meetings will be arranged, as and when required.
- 3.3. Details of future meetings will be circulated to all Councillors.
- 3.4. A Lead Councillor for the group will be appointed by the Parish Council.
- 3.5. Any Councillor can attend any meetings of a Working Group.
- 3.6. Work priorities will be agreed at the direction of the Parish Council.
- 3.7. The Parish Clerk will be responsible for the administration and evaluation of the workload of the group.
- 3.8. Where possible the distribution of documents and information will be via email.
- 3.9. Recommendations will be presented by the Lead Councillor of the Working Group to the next available Parish Council meeting, taking into account the legal status of agenda compilation and

notification; where questions may be asked of the Working Group members to ensure thorough consideration of each issue before the Parish Council can pass a resolution on the subject.

RECOMMENDATION: To note the Role of a Working Group, agree Working Group Terms of Reference for the Darenth Woods Partnership Working Group as presented and adopt the terms for future Working Groups formed by the Parish Council.

129/03/25: TO NOTE VACANT POSITION FOR THE DARENTH WOODS PARTNERSHIP WORKING GROUP AND APPOINT A REPLACEMENT MEMBER

With one Councillor having informed the Clerk that they have stood down from the Group, Members are asked to consider and nominate a replacement associate to ensure membership is maintained with no more than three Parish Councillors representing the Parish Council.

RECOMMENDATION: To appoint a replacement Member to the Darenth Woods Partnership Working Group.

130/03/25: TO CONSIDER REQUEST FOR A MEMORIAL BENCH AT WALLER PARK

Following an approach to the Parish Council for the placement of a memorial bench on its land, procedures have been set out to enable a consistent and regulated decision-making process to be taken.

Proposed procedure for the installation of a memorial bench:

1. That any memorial bench proposal must be made by a resident or past resident of Darenth Parish.
2. Such benches proposed (and any commemorative plaques) must be of an approved design and standard, sanctioned by the Parish Council and, wherever possible, will replace an existing bench which has reached the end of its useful life.
3. That the cost of purchase of the bench and its installation must be borne by the proposer.
4. That a sum (£500) equal to the maintenance of a minimum 10-year period must be lodged with the Parish Council following approval of the proposal but prior to its installation.
5. The location of the proposed bench will be provided and approved by the Parish Council.
6. As part of the Grounds & Facilities Warden's surveys, any defect, other than general maintenance, will be reported separately to the proposer together with suggested rectification works.
7. The proposer may, at any time, carry out cleaning, however, where possible, this should be reported to the Parish Council in advance.
8. If flowers are left at the bench, wrappers must be taken away. Other memorial items are not permitted as these would impact on the efforts of the Grounds Warden to keep the area neat and tidy.

RECOMMENDATION: That Members approve the Procedure for the installation of a Memorial Bench as presented and adopt the details for future reference.

131/03/25: TO RECEIVE AND DISCUSS PROPOSALS FOR 2025-26 COMMUNITY EVENTS

132/03/25: FINANCE

- (a) **To note interest rate change for NatWest Business Reserve Account from 24 April 2025**

Account type and balance in account	Existing rate up to 23/04/2025 AER / Gross p.a. %	New rate from 24/04/2025 AER / Gross p.a. %
Business Reserve		
£0 to £999,999	1.26% / 1.25%	1.11% / 1.10%
£1m to £9,999,999	1.51% / 1.50%	1.51% / 1.50%
£10m+	1.71% / 1.70%	1.71% / 1.70%

(b) **To agree Monthly Bank Analysis as for 28 February 2025**

(c) **To note Monthly Budget Analysis for 28 February 2025**

RECOMMENDATION: To agree and note financial items as presented.

133/03/25: PLANNING

(a) **To consider new applications**

Planning Reference	Location	Proposals
DA/24/00910/LDC	St Fiacre Green Street Green Road Darenth Kent	APPEAL UNDER SECTION 195/26K Application for a Lawful Development Certificate (Existing) for demolition of existing boundary walls and erection of the new walls to be same height as existing
DA/25/00197/FUL	55 The Green Darenth Kent DA2 6JT	Conversion of existing integral garage to habitable room and remove garage door and replace with matching block/brickwork infill and window to match existing
DA/25/00052/TPO	84 & 85 Darenth Park Avenue Darenth Kent DA2 6LX	Application to T1 Reduce Cherry Tree in front garden to tidy and maintain car access to driveway and clearance over footpath. T2 Trim neighbour's (No 85) Plane Tree back to boundary to minimise leaf drop and sap on decking. T3 Remove selected branches from Walnut Tree that are touching or in close proximity to the shed; subject to Tree Preservation Order No 3. 1979

(b) **To note recent decisions and appeal notices made by the Planning Authority**

Planning Reference	Location	Proposal	Decision
DA/24/01449/FUL	65 Ladywood Road Darenth Kent DA2 7LW	Erection of single storey rear extension, loft conversion with rear dormer window and roof lights on front roof slope in connection with providing additional rooms in the roof space	GRANTED PERMISSION

(c) **To consider new applications/recent decisions received after agenda publication**

134/03/25: DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The proposed date for the next Meeting of the Council is Wednesday 16 April 2025.

135/03/25: EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

To consider the **exclusion** of the **press and public** for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Section 1(2).

136/03/25: TO DISCUSS PARISH OWNED LAND LOCATED OUTSIDE GREENLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL, GREEN STREET GREEN ROAD