BARMING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON

WEDNESDAY 14th October 2026 at 7.30pm

AT THE PARISH HALL, TONBRIDGE ROAD

PRESENT: Cllr Gooch in Chair, Cllr Brotherwood, Cllr Pepper, Cllr Browning, Cllr Porter, Cllr Constant, Cllr Judd, Cllr Passmore and Clerk Mrs N Attwood.

IN ATTENDANCE: None
Public: 1 member of the public was present and Ms Jessica Sturrock for her co-option interview

1 APOLOGIES – Maidstone Borough Councillor Sweetman, Kent County Councillor Bradshaw

2 NOTIFICATIONS TO BE RECEIVED FOR INTENT TO FILM, PHOTOGRAPH OR RECORD ANY ITEMS.
Cllr Porter informed members that he would be audio recording the meeting.

3 DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS
Cllr Gooch declared a pecuniary interest in item 8 (Finances)
Cllr Porter declared a pecuniary interest in item 8 (Finances)

PUBLIC SESSION
A member of the public informed BPC that last year fireworks were set off on the Taylor Wimpey land at Oaken Reach. He had reported the issue to Taylor Wimpey, but did not get any support from them as they felt they could not get involved in neighbourhood disputes. The member of the public feels that fireworks should not be let off here due to the harm to wildlife and it could cause stress to other animals within the area so wanted to seek support in BPC displaying RSPCA posters at the location. Cllr Gooch felt that BPC could not display posters here as it is private land. Cllr Porter felt that it could cause people to set off more fireworks there if signs were installed. Cllr Gooch understood that it is for a good cause to remind people of the danger that fireworks can do to animals and suggested that the resident could display his own posters. Cllr Pepper suggested that BPC could place the official RSPCA poster on the noticeboards to remind people of the dangers. Cllr Gooch will find the official poster on the RSPCA site and place on noticeboards; all members were in favour of this course of action. The member of the public then left the meeting at 7.42pm. **ACTION: Cllr Gooch**

4 MINUTES of the Full Council Meeting held on 9th September 2026
The minutes were then **Agreed** as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman

5 MATTERS OF REPORT
Cllr Gooch informed members that although Cllr Bradshaw was not able to attend the meeting, he had sent in a report to make BPC aware that a village green application had been received for the land at Abingdon Road. The deadline for comments on the application is 30th November so this item will be on the next BPC agenda. **ACTION: Clerk**

Cllr Gooch was happy to report that new bus shelters have been installed outside the Bull Public House, bottom of Beverley Road and opposite Glebe Lane.

Cllr Gooch would like BPC to consider putting the issue of electric bikes/scooters that are regularly using the Woodleas/Junction of Silverdale footpath on the HIP as an accident has already happened. Therefore, this item will be placed on the November agenda. In the meantime, residents are urged to report any electric bikes and scooters using the footpath to the police via 101. **ACTION: Clerk**

Cllr Gooch informed members that she had attended the recent police Ward Cluster meeting and PC Charlotte Upton has now joined the team. There have been warnings issued to a family connected with the off-road bikes that have been used around Barming and the vehicles have been seized. Residents must continue to report anti-social behaviour to the police via 101.

Cllr Gooch reported that the Barming News has been produced and distributed.

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Cllr Judd had received a request from residents near the parish hall asking if BPC could add a specific agenda item from now until the MBC Call for Sites outcome, inviting residents to talk about it. Cllr Porter said that everyone is welcome to attend any full council meeting and speak in the open public forum so no other agenda item is required.

Cllr Passmore had been contacted by one of the regular hirers who had been reprimanded by the Clerk regarding the state of the pavilion after his group had hired. Cllr Passmore requested that he has more information to try and resolve the situation. The Clerk and the Chairman will give all of the details to Cllr Passmore. The Clerk was a little confused as the hirer had already accepted responsibility and apologised. The hirer had said that he would be attending the full council meeting in October to convey his apologies to all members; he did not attend.

ACTION: Cllr Gooch, Cllr Passmore & Clerk

Cllr Porter informed members of the Fant and Oakwood Newsletter that has been circulated by Cllr Harper and Cllr Coates. "Cllr Patrick Coates says with Cllr Paul Harper we will be working with Barming Councillors and Barming Parish Council in respect of the areas within their parish to object to the proposal especially in regard to Glebe Farm and the land south of Tonbridge Road" No one from BPC has been contacted by either Cllr Coates or Cllr Harper.

Cllr Pepper thought it would be a good idea to arrange the BPC members Christmas social evening and is happy to organise. She will email members with the menu, possible dates and prices.

The Clerk reported that she had received a letter of thanks for all of the support that BPC have given to the Maidstone Samaritans. Unfortunately, the Maidstone branch will now be closing and the Ashford, Medway, Sevenoaks, Canterbury and Tunbridge Wells branches will continue to serve the people in the Maidstone area.

The Clerk has contacted Castle Water and opted for monthly billing across the year so that BPC can budget more effectively. The application for the Unity Bank Savings Account has also been chased up. The delay is due to a vast increase in applications that have been received which Unity Trust are doing their best to work through as quickly as possible.

The Currys invoice for the new BPC laptop has been received and the Clerk has added it to the invoices to authorise. Once the payment has been made the Clerk will collect the equipment. Cllr Gooch suggested adding a protective case to purchase to the next agenda for the expenditure to be authorised. **ACTION: Clerk**

The Clerk reported that the stopcock lever at the pavilion had been snapped off and this will be discussed under item 15.

An email had been received by the Clerk offering a free Wildlife and Orchard bundle for parish councils. Each bundle will include 10 heritage fruit and nut trees, 120 native flowering bulbs, a hedgehog and bird box and tree guards, canes and root grow. As there are only 35 bundles up for offer and they will be allocated on a first come, first served basis members asked the Clerk to proceed with an application form. The trees will be planted on the BPC owned land along the Tonbridge Road and at the parish field. **ACTION: Clerk**

6 Mr Robert Morgan

Members formally noted the disqualification of Cllr Morgan due to the six-month non-attendance rule. This was proposed by Cllr Gooch and seconded by Cllr Pepper with all members in favour.

7 Co-Option Interview: Jessica Sturrock

The interview for Jessica Sturrock took place and members were given the opportunity to ask questions. Cllr Gooch commented that Jessica had presented a well set out application. Cllr Passmore proposed to co-opt Ms Sturrock. This was seconded by Cllr Constant with all members in favour. The Clerk will send out a welcome pack and the relevant paperwork will be completed. Cllr Sturrock then signed her acceptance of office. **ACTION: Clerk**

8. FINANCES

Cllr Pepper proposed to authorise the finances, this was seconded by Cllr Browning. Cllr Porter and Cllr Gooch abstained from voting due to them having expenses. All remaining members were in favour.

8.1Budget Monitoring

The budget monitoring and bank reconciliation was circulated to all members prior to the meeting.

8.2 Income & Expenditure

Income: **Unity Trust**

Pavilion Hiring £1429.43
Parish hall Hiring £1107.00
Hiring Deposits £250.00
Barming News £510.00
KCC Members Grant for Projector £378.48

Expenditure:

McGlynn Final Payment for fencing & ground work as per contract £5,391.25
McGlynn gate installation as per contract £2,360.00
KALC training Cllr Constant £60.00
KALC training Clerk £60.00
KCS Consumables (hand towels, toilet rolls, bin bags etc) £31.19
Langcorn electrical replaced damaged socket at parish hall £58.07
Donation to St Margarets Church for Remembrance service sheets £50.00
BPC PO Box annual charge £499.80 (inc vat)
BPC Hallmaster booking system annual charge £279.00 (inc vat)
KALC Planning Conference Cllr Gooch £84.00
Shires Heating new stopcock isolation valve and operation switch £414.00
Cllr Gooch expenses £19.37
Hadlums Barming News Print £485.00
Cllr Porter expenses £23.51
Mrs N Attwood expenses £168.85 includes purchase of wreath & donation
Mr P Gooch Handyman Invoice £1,062.99
Jake Ralph Arbour Tree Surgery £350.00 Banky Meadow Footpath clearance
Currys Business Ltd Clerks Laptop £1,098.00
Direct Debits:
BT wifi parish hall £37.99
BPC O2 Mobile Contract £22.67
Castle Water Allotments £187.52
Clear it away - £43.30
Pavilion wifi £10.80
Business Stream Pavilion water & waste £88.42
Hugo Fox website and gov. £53.98
Castle Water Parish Hall £24.21
Unity Trust Service £11.07
Staff Costings: £3,258.49 + HMRC Employer payment £3,889.45
Natwest Income: £62.28
Natwest Expenditure: 0.00

8.3 Mazars External Audit Report
Cllr Gooch proposed to formally note the receipt of the external audit completion certificate with no comments/actions. This was seconded by Cllr Constant with all members in favour.
Cllr Gooch proposed for members to formally congratulate the Clerk on the audit outcome and thanked the Clerk for working so hard. This was seconded by Cllr Passmore with all members in favour.

8.4 Draft Budget 2027-2028
Members discussed the budget income and expenditure line by line which the Clerk had produced along with recommendations.
Cllr Brotherwood proposed to increase North Pole Allotment plot rental charge to a full plot £55.00, ½ plot to £27.50 and ¼ plot to £13.75. This was seconded by Cllr Constant with all members in favour.
Cllr Passmore proposed to increase the expenditure line for the ground maintenance to £4,500. This was seconded by Cllr Constant with all members in favour.
Cllr Passmore proposed to increase the pavilion regular hiring charge to £11.10 per hour. This was seconded by Cllr Brotherwood with all members in favour. The regular hiring charge at the parish hall will increase to £10.00 per hour and the one-off hiring will remain at £20.00 per hour for the parish hall and £23.00 per hour for the pavilion.
The Barming News advertising will increase to a full-page advert £85.00, ½ page £47.00 and ¼ page 31.50.
Cllr Gooch thanked the Clerk for her hard work on the budget and it was an extremely helpful way that she had set it out for members consideration. Cllr Gooch proposed to accept the other lines of the draft budget and to accept the final version at the November meeting. This was seconded by Cllr Passmore with all members in favour.

9. PLANNING
26/503515/FULL 39 North Street ME16 9HE – Cllr Gooch proposed no objection, but as there was no seconder, this motion was not carried. Cllr Judd proposed to object to the application on poor design and with the comments that BPC wish to see all materials and design language to be the same as the host house due to the street scene. This was seconded by Cllr Constant with 2 abstentions and all remaining members in favour. The Clerk will submit the comments. **ACTION: Clerk**

10. Neighbourhood Plan Working Group
Cllr Gooch proposed Alison Eardley as BPC consultant to hold our hands through the process of a NHP and to keep Rebecca Driver on file for her surveying and data processing skills. Cllr Judd added that BPC is investing in professional people for professional tasks. This was seconded by Cllr Constant with all members in favour. As Cllr Pepper has been the main contact for the consultants, she will inform them of the decision.

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Cllr Gooch asked Cllr Porter if he could advertise the upcoming public meeting on the 4th November on his Facebook page, Cllr Constant will advertise on the Medway Valley page and the Clerk has placed a post on the BPC Facebook page and on the website. **ACTION: Cllr Pepper, Cllr Porter, Cllr Constant**

11. North Pole Allotments: Water Project

Cllr Brotherwood proposed to accept the quotation of £300.00 (ex-vat) from Shires Heating and Plumbing. This was seconded by Cllr Gooch with all members in favour. The Clerk will inform all of the companies who submitted quotations of the decision. **ACTION: Clerk**

12. North Pole Allotments: Tree and Hedge Maintenance

Cllr Brotherwood proposed to accept the quotation of £900.00 from Country First. This was seconded by Cllr Porter with all members in favour. The Clerk will inform all of the companies who submitted quotations of the decision.

ACTION: Clerk

13. Highway Improvement Plan

Cllr Gooch informed members that the School Street Scheme for Barming Primary School had been unsuccessful due to lack of capacity/resources and the borough council can only take action on double yellow lines. Therefore, Cllr Gooch proposed that BPC add double yellow lines around the cul-de-sac area of Belmont Close to the Highways Improvement Plan. Cllr Porter wants to investigate the School Street Scheme further as he has seen another school in Snodland successfully adopt the scheme. Cllr Browning proposed that rather than double yellow lines, which would affect the residents even outside of school drop off/collection times, members may wish to consider single yellow lines with time restrictions e.g. no parking between 8am to 9am and 3pm to 4pm. This was seconded by Cllr Gooch with all members in favour. Cllr Pepper also suggested some form of permit for the residents as if they are out at work, moving other vehicles away from the close for the restricted times may cause an issue. Cllr Gooch will check all of the suggestions with the KCC Highways and Transportation department and if this is something that can be achieved, the next step will be the public consultation. **ACTION: Cllr Gooch**

Cllr Gooch proposed an extension to the meeting until 10pm. This was seconded by Cllr Pepper with all members in favour.

14. Footpath off Banky Meadow: To agree budget for adverse possession

Cllr Gooch proposed a budget of £5,000 for the adverse possession. This was seconded by Cllr Browning with all members in favour.

15. Pavilion: Replacement Stopcock/Isolation Valve to Switch System

The Clerk had placed this item on the agenda for members to consider changing over to the new system as installed at the parish hall. Unfortunately, an email was then later received informing the Clerk that a hirer had broken off the lever of the stopcock. To stop any further issues and to prevent any flood, the Clerk instructed Shires Heating and Plumbing to proceed with the work immediately. Cllr Gooch proposed to formally note this course of action. This was seconded by Cllr Pepper with all members in favour.

16. Adoption of Policies

Casual Vacancy by Co-Option Policy: Cllr Gooch proposed that the disqualifications list is also added to the document. This was seconded by Cllr Passmore with all members in favour.

Cllr Porter wished to make a recommendation for concerns or queries to be discussed prior to the full council meeting and provided amended wording for the document. This was seconded by Cllr Gooch with all members in favour. The Clerk will place this policy on the November agenda for members to view the amended document and adopt.

ACTION: Clerk

Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy: Cllr Gooch proposed to adopt this policy. This was seconded by Cllr Judd with all members in favour.

Vexatious Complainants Policy: Cllr Gooch proposed to adopt this policy. This was seconded by Cllr Judd with all members in favour.

Small Grants Policy: Cllr Gooch proposed to adopt this policy. This was seconded by Cllr Pepper with all members in favour.

17. Parish Clerk Pay Grade Increase

Cllr Gooch proposed to proceed with the grade increase. This was seconded by Cllr Porter with all members in favour.

At 9.35pm Cllr Gooch proposed to move to a closed session. To move that the public be excluded for the items set out in Part 2 of the agenda because of the likely disclosure of exempt information (Information relating to an individual)

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having applied the Public Interest Test (paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 refer) This was seconded by Cllr Porter with all members in favour.

18. Meeting Close

The meeting was closed at 9.35pm. The next Full Council Meeting held on Wednesday 11th November 2026 in the Parish Hall, Tonbridge Road.
The public meeting for the Neighbourhood Plan will be held on Wednesday 4th November 2026 at 7pm in the Village Hall on Heath Road.

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