



If you have any questions etc that you wish to ask regarding this meeting please contact the Clerk on 01622 832305 or email clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk.

Parish Office, Goudhurst Road, Marden
01622 832305 / 07376 287981
clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk / www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

BRIEFING NOTE – FULL COUNCIL MEETING 10TH JUNE 2025

017/25 PRESENT

018/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence to be received.
Cllrs to inform the Clerk by 5.00pm on the day of the meeting if they will not be attending the meeting.

019/25 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Item deferred from May Annual Parish Council Meeting.

020/25 COUNCILLOR INFORMATION

Declaration of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests
Changes to Register of Interest
Granting of Dispensation

021/25 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

To receive and accept as a true record the Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 13th May 2025.
[Full Council Minutes & Agendas - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](#)

022/25 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

Members of the public to make themselves known to the meeting as to whether they wish to raise any issue under this item.

The meeting to be adjourned for the following items:

PUBLIC FORUM

Members of the public will be given the opportunity to raise any issue under this item.

EXTERNAL VERBAL REPORTS (if in attendance)

County Councillor Report
Borough Councillors Report
Police

The meeting to be reconvened to discuss item 023/25 onwards.

023/25 CLERK'S REPORT

To receive and note the Clerk's report.
[Report in meeting pack.](#)

024/25 PARISH MATTERS

Reports from MBC and KCC

[Reports in meeting pack.](#)

Police Update/Report from Police Forum

Crime Figures

Crime Figures can be found at: [Marden and Yalding | Your area | Kent Police | Kent Police](#)

Other Police Matters

[Details to be provided at the meeting.](#)

New Marden PCSO

Police Community Sports Day at Marden Sports Club on 16th August.

Communication

Newsletter

[Update to be provided by Cllr Boswell](#)

Marden Flooding

[Southern Water had been written to – response will be reported to the meeting if received by 10th June.](#)

Infrastructure Spend Plan

Cllrs to receive the updated Infrastructure Spend Plan

[Document had been reviewed/updated following the consultation. Copy will be available on website following the meeting.](#)

Marden Resilience Plan

Cllrs to receive the new draft Marden Resilience Plan and agree next steps.

[Draft document circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting.](#)

Changing Rooms Refurbishment

Cllrs to note that the planning application has been approved by Maidstone Borough Council. Cllrs to consider emails from architect and next steps.

[Details of MBC Decision and correspondence from architect had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting.](#)

CCTV Licence

Cllrs to receive and consider the draft licence agreement from Golding Homes for the connection of CCTV into their property.

[Circulated to the Cllrs prior to the meeting.](#)

Marden PC Open Spaces Byelaws

Cllrs to agree to submit the application to amend the Open Spaces Byelaws to the Secretary of State.

[No comments had been received following the consultation – document to be put before Cllrs at meeting.](#)

Chairmen's Board

Cllrs to receive information on updating the Parish Council Chairmen's Board in the Parish Office.

[Costings received for updating the Chairmen's Board with Parish Council Chairman from 2016.](#)

Parish Council Code of Conduct

Cllrs to receive and consider the draft Parish Council Code of Conduct sent by KALC Maidstone Area Committee.

[Document circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting.](#)

025/25 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Amenities Committee

To note the draft Minutes of Amenities Committee meeting held on 27th May 2025 which had been previously circulated and available on the Parish Council website.

[Amenities Committee Minutes & Agendas - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge](#)

Planning Committee

To note the draft Minutes of Planning Committee meeting held on 20th May and 3rd June 2025 which had been previously circulated and available on the Parish Council website.

[Planning Committee Minutes & Agendas - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge](#)

Finance Committee

No Finance Committee meeting held in May.

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars attended

Those in attendance to update the meeting on the following:

Resilience Planning Meeting with Staplehurst Emergency Team: 15th May

KALC Area Committee Meeting: 19th May

AI Webinar: 21st May

Communications Sub-Group Meeting: 5th June

Web/Email Compliance Webinar: 5th June

HR Sub-Committee Meeting: 5th June

Marden Neighbourhood Plan Meeting: 7th June

Environmental Sub-Group Meeting: 10th June

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars/Events forthcoming

Asset Transfer Webinar: 16th June

AI Webinar: 18th June

KALC EFCM (Reorganisation/Devolvement): 19th June

Highways Improvement Plan Meeting: 24th June

KALC Clerks Forum Webinar: 15th July

Assets of Community Value Meeting: 19th July

KALC Chairmans Forum Webinar: 22nd July

MPC Meetings to be arranged:

Resilience Planning

026/25 CORRESPONDENCE

Marden Parish Church Magazine

KALC Newsletter

027/25 FINANCE

(A) Bank Statements:

The Clerk to provide details at the meeting.

(B) Accounts 2024/2025:

(B)(i) Statement of Internal Control

Cllrs to receive and agree statement previously circulated to Cllrs. Document to be signed by the Chairman and RFO.

(B)(ii) Internal Auditor Report

Cllrs to receive and note the end of year Final Report received from the Internal Auditor.

(B)(iii) Bank Reconciliation/Balance Sheet 31st March 2025

Cllrs to receive and accept the end of year bank reconciliation at 31st March 2025

Cllrs to receive and agree the end of year Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2025 - to be signed at the meeting.

(B)(iv) Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024/2025

(B)(iv)(a) Section 1 – Annual Government Statement 2024/2025

The Clerk to read out the following statements to Cllrs:

(1) We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements;

- (2) We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness;
- (3) We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances;
- (4) We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations;
- (5) We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required;
- (6) We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems;
- (7) We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audits;
- (8) We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements:
- (9) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole management trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit. *Not appropriate to Marden PC as not a sole managing trustee of a local trust(s).*
- The Chairman and Clerk (RFO) to sign and record minute number.

(B)(iv)(b) Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/2025

The Clerk had completed Section 2 with figures from 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 accounts and circulated to Cllrs (also discussed at Finance Committee meeting). Cllrs to confirm statements and the Chairman and Clerk (RFO) to sign and record minute number.

(C) Other Papers for External Auditor

Internal Auditor certificate

To receive and note the Internal Auditor's year-end AGAR certificate.

AGAR documentation:

To receive and note the additional documents to be sent to the External Auditor.

[The following papers are in the meeting pack.](#)

- i. Bank Reconciliation as at 31st March 2025
- ii. Statement of Variances – Year ending 31st March 2025
- iii. Explanation of differences between Box 7 and Box 8 on Annual Return
- iv. Explanation of Earmarked Reserves
- v. Contact Details of Parish Council Clerk and Chairman
- vi. Declaration and Notice of Appointment of Exercise of Public Rights
- vii. Assertions for Intermediate Audit

(D) Marden Sports Coaching

Cllr Rabot to provide a report on possible sports coaching in the summer and request for funding.

[Report will be forwarded to Cllrs prior to the meeting.](#)

(E) Payments for Approval

Invoices for Payment

Invoices due to payment to be submitted to the meeting.

028/25 HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Highways

Highways Improvement Plan

Meeting to be held on 24th June to view responses from consultation and to consider new priorities.

Fingerposts

Cllrs to be provided with update from County Cllr Black if received in time of the meeting.

Speedwatch

Cllrs to be given an update from the Speedwatch team who attended the Motor Show on 24th May.

Other Highways Issues

Public Transport



**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 13TH MAY 2025 AT THE
ALLENS, ALBION ROAD, MARDEN COMMENCING AT
7.30PM**

Cllr Gibson, as Vice-Chairman, opened the meeting for the first item on the agenda.

001/25 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Cllr Tippen nominated and Cllr Goda seconded for Cllr Rabot to be Chairman for the forthcoming Council year. All in attendance agreed.

Cllr Rabot signed the Declaration of Office of Chairman and this was witnessed by the Proper Officer.

Cllr Rabot took the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

002/25 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Due to two Cllrs putting themselves forward for Vice-Chairman, one of which had given apologies for tonight's meeting, Cllrs agreed to defer this item to the next Full Council meeting in June.

003/25 PRESENT

Cllrs Gibson, Goda, Newton, Rabot, Summersgill and Tippen. County Cllr Black and the Clerk were also in attendance.

004/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Adam, Boswell, Dobinson and Griffiths. Apologies were also received from Borough Cllrs Couch and Russell. Cllr Turner gave his apologies to the Clerk, via text, during the meeting.

005/25 COUNCILLOR INFORMATION

Declaration of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of interest

Changes to Register of Interest

There were no changes to Cllrs Registers of Interest

Granting of Dispensation

There were no requests for dispensation.

006/25 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Cllrs received and accepted as true records the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 15th April 2025 and the EFCM on 29th April 2025. These were duly signed by the Chairman.

007/25 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

No member of the public in attendance.

The meeting was adjourned for the following items:

PUBLIC FORUM

EXTERNAL VERBAL REPORTS (if in attendance)

County Councillor Report:

County Cllr Black introduced himself to the meeting. County Cllrs were inducted last week and happy to help with any KCC issues.

Borough Councillors Report:

Borough Cllr Summersgill reported that due to the KCC elections no meetings, other than statutory committees, had been held. The Mayor ceremony is on Saturday. Committees will be appointed shortly. Borough Cllr Russell is the Deputy Leader of the Conservative Party

Police:

Not in attendance.

The meeting was reconvened to discuss item 008/25 onwards.

008/25 CLERK'S REPORT

Cllrs received and noted the Clerk's report. Details included April's office correspondence log, Full Council action log (both of which were on the website); Resilience Planning (on agenda); End of year accounts had been submitted to the Internal Auditor and the paperwork for the External Auditor would be added to the June Full Council agenda; Cllrs Newton and Tippen were asked to sign the paperwork for Santander account closure.

009/25 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES/SUB-COMMITTEES

Cllrs to be appointed to the following Committees and Sub-Committees

Committees

Amenities:

Cllrs Boswell, Dobinson, Goda, Newton, Rabot, Summersgill, Tippen and Turner.

Finance

Cllrs Adam, Dobinson, Gibson, Griffiths and Rabot (1 Vacancy – to be filled when Council Vice-Chairman elected).

Planning

Cllrs Adam, Gibson, Goda, Griffiths, Newton, Rabot and Turner (1 Vacancy – to be filled with Council Vice-Chairman elected)

Sub-Committees

Cemetery

Cllrs Boswell, Goda, Newton, Rabot, Summersgill and Tippen

Human Resources

Cllrs Boswell, Gibson, Newton, Rabot and Tippen

Open Spaces

Cllrs Boswell, Newton, Rabot, Tippen and Turner (1 Vacancy)

010/25 APPOINTMENT OF SUB-GROUPS AND OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllrs to be appointed to the following Sub-Groups and Outside Bodies

Sub-Groups

Allotments

Cllrs Boswell, Rabot and Tippen

Assets of Community Value

Cllrs Adam, Boswell and Turner

Byelaws

Cllrs Adam and Newton

Communications

Cllrs Boswell, Rabot and Tippen

Resilience Planning

Cllrs Gibson, Goda, Newton, Rabot, Tippen and Turner

Environment

Cllrs Boswell, Dobinson, Rabot, Summersgill and Turner (1 Vacancy)

Play Scheme

Cllrs Boswell, Rabot and Tippen

Village Events

Cllrs Boswell, Newton, Rabot and Tippen (1 Vacancy)

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Cllrs Adam, Boswell, Gibson, Goda, Rabot, Tippen and Turner

Outside BodiesCommunity Engagement Forum

Cllrs Boswell and Tippen

KALC Area Committee (Maidstone)

Cllr Summersgill (The Clerk would attend on behalf of MPC in Cllr Summersgill's absence)

Maidstone Borough Council Cluster Group

Cllr Rabot

Marden Dementia Group

Cllr Boswell

Memorial Hall

Cllr Turner (to be confirmed)

Patient Participation Group

Cllrs Boswell and Tippen

Public Transport & Highways

Cllr Adam

Marden CIO

As Chairman, Cllr Rabot, would become a Trustees on the Marden CIO

011/25 PARISH COUNCIL INFORMATION**Parish Assets**

Cllrs received and agreed the list of parish assets at 31st March 2025.

Dates of Parish Council Meetings for 2025/2026

Cllrs received and noted the proposed dates for Parish Council meetings in 2025/2026.

012/25 PARISH MATTERS**Reports from MBC and KCC**

Following County Council elections Cllr Brian Black was now the County Cllr for Marden. The Clerk has emailed inviting him to a meeting with Cllrs and once a date is confirmed Cllrs will be invited to attend.

An email had been received from Borough Cllr Russell. The first MBC Full Council following KCC elections is on 17th May together with the Mayor Making ceremony. The new Mayor is Martin Round (Headcorn) and his Deputy is Brian Clark (Loose).

Police Update/Report from Police Forum

Crime Figures

Figures very low – 14 crimes for March: two of which were burglaries.

Other Police Issues

Launch of the Marden parish neighbourhood watch scheme is due to be on 10th August at the dog show at Marden Playing Field.

Communication

Newsletter

Cllr Boswell was currently drafting newsletter due to go to print 20th June with delivery week commencing 30th June. Marden Scouts had asked to have a flyer in this edition.

Marden Flooding

The water leak at Church Green had now been repaired. Cllr Goda reported that the road still dipped and asked that the be monitored.

Although a response had been received in regard to the Parish Council letter sent in January 2025 it referred more to Horsmonden work rather than Marden. No information had been given regarding the Maynard drain.

The Clerk was asked to respond to Southern Water asking for full details on the questions raised in the letter sent in January.

Infrastructure Spend Plan

See below

Survey Responses

Infrastructure Spend Plan

There had been no specific items raised which weren't already in the survey. The Clerk asked that Cllrs update the document to ensure that anything which had been completed was removed.

Highways Improvement Plan

Discussed under item 016/25

Byelaws

No responses had been received on this. Therefore, the Clerk was looking to finalise the paperwork to send to the Secretary of State.

Community Survey

The responses to the Community Survey would be put before the meeting of the Communications Sub-Group to be held in June.

Marden Neighbourhood Plan

The responses to the Marden Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 would be put before the next meeting of the Planning Committee/MNP Steering Group

013/25 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Amenities Committee

Cllrs noted the draft Minutes of Amenities Committee meeting held on 22nd April had been previously circulated and available on the Parish Council website.

Planning Committee

There have been no Planning Committee meetings held since 15th April 2025.

Finance Committee

Cllrs noted the draft Minutes of Finance Committee meeting held on 29th April had been previously circulated and available on the Parish Council website.

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars attended

Those in attendance to update the meeting on the following:

17th April: Neighbourhood Watch: Updated under Other Police Issues.

24th April: Communications Sub-Group Meeting: The Clerk had produced a report on website providers. This would be reviewed at the next Communications meeting and submitted to the Finance Committee when discussing the budget for 2026/27.

24th April: Events Sub-Group Meeting: Planning the VE Day. The next meeting will be to discuss Marden at Christmas.

24th April: South Eastern Meeting (virtual): minutes had been circulated.

7th May: AI Webinar (first of three webinars): Looking at ways AI can be used in the day to day work of the office.

8th May: VE Day celebrations – well attended and thanks expressed to the Clerk, Deputy Clerk and the Parish Groundsman.

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars/Events forthcoming

15th May: Resilience Planning Meeting at Staplehurst PC

21st May: AI Webinar (second of three webinars)

18th June: AI Webinar (third of three webinars)

19th June: KALC EFCM (county devolution/re-organisation) at Aylesford

MPC Meetings to be arranged:

Resilience Planning – this would be arranged following the meeting at Staplehurst when the document would be circulated to Cllrs for comment.

Assets of Community Value – date to be agreed.

014/25 CORRESPONDENCE

Marden Parish Church Magazine

KALC Newsletter – May edition

Other correspondence to note include The Clerk and Clerks & Councils Direct magazines.

Cllrs noted all the above.

015/25 FINANCE

(A) Bank Statements:

Reserve Accounts

Nat West: £4,431.83

Unity: £203,961.02

Capital Account

Santander: £72,582.55

(B) Financial Regulations, Policies and Risk Assessment

The Finance Committee and reviewed the updates received from NALC regarding the Financial Regulations. The Clerk had contacted KALC for advice and received details of procurement. It was agreed to review this prior to putting before June Full Council meeting for ratification along with relevant policies and risk assessment.

(C) Standing Orders/Direct Debits

Cllrs received and agreed the standing orders and direct debits for 2025/26.

(D) Payments for Approval

Invoices

The following invoices were put before Cllrs for payment:

Chris Prince – Cistern fitting for public conveniences (Code 4328) - £11.99
 Cloudy IT – monthly IT support (Code 4077) - £223.44
 Q-Tec Solutions – installation of CCTV cameras (Code 4320) - £3,540.00
 Paddock Wood Community Advice Centre – donation (Code 4155) - £300.00
 Stanleys Garage – fuel (Code 4316) - £69.08
 SLCC – Deputy Clerk membership (Code 4100) - £240.00
 Graham Carey – grounds maintenance (Codes 4014/4235) - £384.00
 Lawrence Containers – cemetery container (Code 4320) - £2,802.00
 Alison Hooker – key cutting and travel (Codes 4005/4303) - £35.70
 Total: £7,606.21

All above invoices agreed and would be authorised by Cllrs Gibson and Rabot.

May Salaries/HMRC payments were agreed and authorised on 7th May by Cllrs Rabot and Tippen.

It was agreed at Full Council meeting on 15th April to transfer £50,000 from Unity to Nat West (Reserve Accounts). This was authorised by Cllrs Gibson and Rabot.

016/25 HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Highways

Highways Improvement Plan

Fingerposts: Further information had been received from Kent Highways who would be required to obtain quotes for removal of the cast iron post along with costings for traffic control etc. County Cllr Black asked the Clerk to send details to him to see if he can help resolve this issue.

Email received from resident regarding Goudhurst Road. This had been circulated to Cllrs and the Clerk had added the concerns to the survey results. Single and Double Yellow Lines – results from Traffic Regulation Order. Kent Highways had confirmed that these were going ahead and designs were currently being drawn up.

Highways Improvement Plan Survey. Cllr Tippen had reviewed the survey and one of the main issues was the corner in Howland Road (Rose & Crown Cottages). Cllr Tippen proposed that this be added as priority 1 on the Highways Priority List. Other suggestions for priorities included Beech Bridge narrowing; dropped kerbs around the village.

Other items to add to HIP: bend by West End Tavern; pedestrian crossing in the High Street and double yellow lines at Pattenden Lane junction.

Cllrs was proposed that a meeting be held with Cllrs Tippen, Goda and Newton to look at the matrix for ascertaining the items to be added to the priority list for 2025/26.

Other Highways Issues

Cllr Summersgill asked for Speedwatch to be added as an agenda item for Full Council. A stall would be set up at the Motor Show on 24th May to publicise Speedwatch.

Speedwatch Day of Action on Friday 12th September.

Public Transport

South Eastern Meeting held on 24th April – notes previously circulated to Cllrs

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.46pm

Cllr Adrian Rabot

Chairman

Date: 10th June 2025

Marden Parish Council, Parish Office, Goudhurst Road, Marden

01622 832305 / 07376 287981 / clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk /

www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

Clerk's Report – Full Council 10th June 2025

Meetings

Assets of Community Value : 19th July

Resilience Planning : to be arranged following FC meeting.

APM Review: 21st or 24th July (tbc)

HIP Meeting: 24th June

Correspondence Log

This has been updated with May's correspondence and is available in the meeting pack and on the website.

Full Council Action Log

Action Log updated following May's meeting – available in the meeting pack and on the website.

Sharepoint

Still trying to find time to trial this with several Cllrs.

Clerk's Outstanding Issues:

Allotments

Email received : Understand S106 document received and currently being signed. Redrow be back in touch once completed.

Bank Mandates

Applications submitted for Nat West and Unity – Cllrs to sign

Cemetery – Pear Technology

Amended with new section added. Waiting to install onto desktop.

Fingerposts

Timeline/information sent to County Cllr Black who is looking into issues raised by Kent Highways

Single/Double Yellow Lines

No issues raised following consultation but waiting for designs to be sent through by Kent Highways

HMRC/VAT Reclaim

Information received from HMRC/.gov website and from Tax Advisor with SLCC. Need to consider meeting to discuss further as to what MPC does in regards to being able to reclaim VAT on changing rooms refurbishment.

HR Policy Document Review

HR Policies were submitted to Peninsula (HR consultant) – meeting being held on 5th June to discuss.

Play Scheme

Registration opened on 2nd June with over 40 enquiries/applications. Staffing all in place. Application to be submitted to Ofsted to confirm registration is not required.

Public Conveniences Solar Panels

Currently being discussed by Amenities Committee

Rookery Path TPO Application

Submitted and due to be put before Planning Committee on 17th June.

Southern Water

Written again to John Mealey – waiting for response

Other Information

21st June – Children's party on Southons Field

22nd June - Children's party on Southons Field

27th June – Rude Mechanicals on Southons Field (closed to public)

18th July – Children's party on Southons Field

22nd July – Marden Primary Academy Y6 leavers party on Southons Field

23rd July to 1st August – Summer Play Scheme at Scout HQ

28th July – Bowls Club parking at Southons Field 12noon to 7pm

3rd August – Bowls Club parking at Southons Field (tbc)

4th August – interment of ashes at Marden Cemetery

10th August – Dog Show at Marden Playing Field

Saturdays 9.30am to 10.30am – Rugby Taggers

**Full Council Meetings Action Log
2023/2024**

Action No.	Minute No.	Date of Meeting	Minute Action	Allocated to	To Do	Date completed
A3	127/24	13th February 2024	Contact Southern Water regarding sewer plan for the village/The Parsonage	Cllr Summersgill & Clerk	Cllr Summersgill to assist clerk with drafting letter. Letter sent 11th March 2024. Cllr Summersgill taken a copy to SW meeting (10/7/24) MS liaising with other SW contacts (Aug 2024) <i>(see also A117 and A124)</i>	
A4	127/24		Review library status	Cllrs Adam and Boswell and Robertson	To meet to discuss	
A18	138/24		Risk Assessments - review format (see A109)	Clerk	To update prior to next review in January 2025	
A27	153/24		Review faint yellow lines in village	Cllrs	To report to the Clerk	

2024/2025

Full Council Meetings Action Log

Action No.	Minute No.	Date of Meeting	Minute Action	Allocated to	To Do	Date completed
A33	014/24	7th May 2024	Arrange Sub-Group meetings for ACV, Byelaws and Resilience Planning	Clerk	Emailed Cllrs 9/5/24 for dates: Byelaws 13/7/24 at 9am. Resilience Planning 10/2/25 ACV to be arranged (<i>see also A128</i>)	
A37	024/24	9th July 2024	Cllrs and office staff to undertake Carbon Literacy Training	All	Look at SLCC training	
A85	092/24		Fingerpost repair	Cllr Tippen/Ali	Contact contractor to confirm acceptance of quote for works - cast iron not to be used - Cllrs discussing alternatives 11/2/25 - request more details Deferred to 11/3/25 meeting - further information received - need to revisit 15/4/25 - decision to use wood - KH contacted (<i>See also A130</i>)	
A97	124/25	11th February 2025	To liaise with Police Inspector regarding contacting ward officers	Cllr Rabot		
A105	125/25		Update Word documents to meet new Accessibility regulations	Ali	Ongoing	
A109	136/25(F)	11th March 2025	Update Risk Assessments and upload to website	Ali	Ongoing	
A111	137/25(D)(e)		Trial Sharepoint with a few Cllrs	Ali/Rachel		
A113	138/25(B)(f)		Prepare file with parish assets (devolution)	Ali	Ongoing	
A114	139(C)(a/b)		Set up bank mandates for Cllrs Dobinson and Goda	Ali	Unity/Nat West	
A117	148/25(D)		Chase Southern Water	Ali	Chased 16/4/25	
A119	148/25(H)		Review format of APM	Clerk/Cllrs		

2025/26

Full Council Meetings Action Log

Action No.	Minute No.	Date of Meeting	Minute Action	Allocated to	To Do	Date completed
A122	009/25	13th May 2025	Update Committee Structure and website	Ali	Waiting for Vice-Chairman & Committees to be appointed	
A125	012/25		Review ISP document	Ali/Cllrs	Put before June Full Council when reviewed	
A126	012/25		Finalise Byelaws paperwork	Ali/Cllrs Adam and Newton	Submit to Secretary of State	
A128	013/25		Arrange ACV/Resilience Planning meetings	Ali		
A129	015/25		Review Financial Regulations following procurement information	Ali/Finance	Send procurement info to Finance Committee - add to June Full Council meeting	

MBC Members Report from Cllr Claudine Russell

Dated: May 2025

Council

The new municipal year has begun, and much is the same as before. I wasn't aware that the budget for the Citizens Panel for £100,000 covers two discussion items, I thought it would be for more than this. It appears that each topic discussed in this way comes at a cost of £50,000.

It looks extremely likely that MBC will shortly lose the 5-year land housing supply opening the door to speculative planning applications.

The administration has decided to halt work on revising the CIL charging schedule for developers contributions so the rates remain unaltered. They are about to open the next round for CIL bidding for infrastructure and information for infrastructure providers on how to apply will shortly be on the website.

There is also another round of the summer community support scheme and local organisations can apply for one-off funding of between £500 and £5,000 to help provide support for Maidstone residents and applications will open from Monday 2 June until Thursday 26 June 2025 – details on the link below.

[MBC Summer Community Support Fund](#)

Ward Work

From across the ward there have been a number of queries asking who is now in charge of the Borough Council and who is their ward Cllr now showing a level of confusion between KCC and MBC.

MARDEN – I have been working on a council tax query and chasing planning enforcement.

NETTLESTEAD – The petition is up and running and I have also managed to work with our neighbouring KCC Cllr Sarah Hudson to persuade the bus company to get the bus stop lowered in height and to get extra signage in place.

YALDING – I attended Planning Committee for the Hatchgate House application and spoke in favour. The application was refused but solely on the grounds of size of the new dwelling.

COLLIER STREET – I have been in touch with planners again about the latest application for the Old Coach House.

HUNTON – No casework this month.

As always, if you need my help, please do not hesitate to email me at
claudinerussell@maidstone.gov.uk

Green Party Councillors' Report of **May 2025**, for Marden & Yalding Ward Parishes –

Things have got busy again within the Borough Council after (KCC) election 'purdah' in April, and Cabinet have been rapidly catching up with projects and proposals that have been 'on hold' during that period, as well as finally getting a letter from Government about Devolution confirming a November reply date for Kent's future governance proposals. Obviously with the significant change of control at KCC with much of Maidstone changing 'colour', yet with no Reform councillors on the Borough Council, there is going to be rather a hiatus until we/MBC hear what they/KCC decide to do.

All Borough Councillors attended the (mayor-making) Council meeting and Civic Parade on Saturday 17th May. With no changes to Cabinet membership or to the Council's programme for the next three years, the meeting went ahead with little debate. Mike remains as the Cabinet Member for climate & nature recovery, and on the Planning Committee (but has stepped back as vice-chair of the latter), and Grace continues as vice-chair of the climate/environment Policy Advisory Committee (CTC PAC)

Other items expected to be brought to Cabinet on 18th June will include approving Mike's updated Biodiversity & Climate Change Strategy (detail of the Action Plans) and an update on Refurbishment proposals for Maidstone House; other matters will be chiefly Financial and Budget setting, but it does appear that MBC will declare a small surplus for 2024/25 (unlike in 2023/24). The next Council meeting is due on 16th July, which will be chaired by the new Mayor, Cllr. Martin Round of Headcorn.

Updates for Newsletters/Sharing with Residents:

Maidstone's 'Big Day Out' - MBC is inviting everyone to get out and enjoy our amazing parks and open spaces, and to be part of the first community-led 'Big Day Out.' Being held on Saturday 14th June, this inaugural one-day festival is all across the Borough; see website <https://bigdayout.info/>

Don't forget the River Festival in town on July 26th, and the Battle of Britain festival at Headcorn on June 28/29th. And there will be a return of Bandstand concerts on Sundays, and Art in the Park on Fridays, in Brenchley Gardens this Summer + a new Titanic exhibition at the Museum from 12th July.

Parish Matters –

Collier Street – Mike & Grace attended PC meeting and had earlier emails from residents about The Old Coach House application, which seemed to be similar to previously decided PlanAps.

Hunton – Liaison continues with residents about activity causing concerns on an agricultural site. Sorted a 'new' bin problem on Bank Holiday Monday (due to parking issue preventing lorry access)

Marden – Mike attended the Car Club Show on 24th publicising SpeedWatch (as local co-ordinator) alongside the new PC chair – very well received by the public, and maybe a couple more volunteers.

Nettlestead – Mike & Grace publicised the zebra crossing petition to the wider M&Y Ward.

Yalding – The Repair Café event in May was attended by Mike, and seemed a big success; the Repair Café at Tovil is also being repeated on 31st May, which shows there was an unmet social need. Grace spoke at Planning Committee to support a resident. Grace attended VE Day event, and made a cake.

Laddingford landlines are currently working again, but Trooli are still in talks with BT about their equipment so that may be a temporary fix. Grace is working with MBC's emergency planning team to find a liaison contact at Trooli, as they have done with other providers. Same concern in Hunton.

Grace met with Kenward Trust - looking at opportunities for their Youth Street Outreach team to support beat officers tackling ASB (anti-social behaviour) in the summer months.

Borough Councillors Grace Couch & Mike Summersgill – 29th May 2025

Emails: michaelsummersgill@maidstone.gov.uk, gracecouch@maidstone.gov.uk

Briefing Note on the Draft Resilience Plan to Full Council – 10th June 2025

Introduction

Kent Resilience Team in partnership with Communities Prepared hosted a Conference on 3rd April 2025 to support Parish Councils to update their previous Emergency Plans to the new format of a Resilience Plan. The Team outlined:-

- Representing the local community
- Talking and raising awareness of hazards
- Capacity building within the Community
- Networking and Liaising with Risk Management Authorities in your area
- Deliver services to meet local needs
- Having, practising and using a Resilience and Emergency Plan
- Capacity building within the Community.

Actions for Cllrs to Discuss on 10th June 2025

Cllrs are asked to read through the document prior to the meeting and consider the following on 10th June:

- To consider any critical areas which have not been addressed;
- To agree, in principle, the draft plan and for it to be taken forward through the Resilience Planning Sub-Group.
- Date for Resilience Planning Sub-Group meeting.

Activities to date

The previous Marden Parish Council Emergency Plan has been transferred to the new Resilience Template covering:

- Before and After an Incident
- During an Incident

and this was updated following the conference.

Meeting with Staplehurst's Resilience Chair - Cllr Melanie Alesi - Outlined community led team and their focus on immediate action, preparation and kit needed to undertake an immediate community response. The key aspects of their response were to: -

- Communicate locally an abridged version of the Resilience Plan
- Have a Community Action Card to help with an immediate response (see below).
- Have an emergency response box with equipped to respond to incidents.

Activities Currently Being Undertaken

Initial contact to be made with local businesses and shops to update contacts in the Plan's appendices.

Locating all the sub-stations around the parish, providing What3Words, plotting on map and adding to Appendix.

Community Emergency Action Card

Outlines the steps and actions for local activities, helping to reduce risks to people and property for a given purpose.

It helps communities think about

- What could happen
- What they could do
- How they could do things
- Manage their activities during an incident

Flash flooding is possible or expected. Do you know what to do?

Flooding Emergency Response Card - October 2022

Before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication via website/Facebook at an early stage is essential • The Town Council maintains a supply of sand bags at the Beehive, provided by EDDC. • Sand bags (not filled) and sand are available for Honiton's residents for collection from the Town Council, • Alert your Community Emergency Response Team (Flood Wardens – when in place) to the rainfall forecast, especially if heavy rain has started; cascade of information started • The EA Flash Flood Forecasts will alert you if sustained torrential rainfall that could lead to dangerous flash flooding at _____ is forecast. This service is not available to the general public: just _____ Town Council and blue light emergency responders. • The EA Flood Warnings notify recipients if property flooding is expected from the watercourse. This service is available to the general public. • The Emergency Plan includes maps of _____ indicative flooding: Town Council Emergency Plan • Inform all Town Councillors.
During	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware. Know the signs. • Start local observations. Signs to watch for include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Heavy rain and/or severe weather reports ○ Rainfall not draining away, leading to surface water flooding ○ Rising river levels, with dark churning water ○ A build-up of debris in rivers, which could give way and cause a wave of water to surge • Establish TERG and start an Incident Log • Report flooding and blockages that may increase flood risk: phone 0800 807060 and ask to speak to your local Flood Warning Duty Officer • Call 999 if there's a risk to life, or if you're trapped • Stay safe. Prioritise your own safety at all times • Be ready to relocate to a safe place, if told to do so by the emergency services • Do not walk or drive through flood water • Provide support and guidance ahead of the arrival of the emergency services. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Stay in a safe place with a means of escape. ○ If you're in a building with at least two storeys and believe it's safer to stay where you are, move to a higher storey of the building and wait for instructions from the emergency services. Turn off your gas, electricity and water mains supplies. ○ If you are in vulnerable accommodation e.g. bungalow, caravan or tent, seek shelter in the nearest two storey building or go to higher ground ○ Be ready should you need to evacuate your home. ○ Cooperate with emergency services ○ Do not walk or drive through flood water ○ Call 999 if you're in immediate danger" ○ The _____ may be provided as a safe place for people to gather • Collect information about the flood, if it's safe to do so <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Take photos ○ Note the date and time • When emergency services arrive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community Emergency Response Team coordinator to make themselves known to the Incident Commander at an early stage and may establish a tactical control centre. ○ Provide an overview of the issues present. Relay concerns, local knowledge and issues to relevant authorities. ○ You may be asked to help relay information to the community (e.g. by door to door visits), such as areas to avoid/promote health, safety and well-being ○ You may be asked to assist with evacuation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cooperate with emergency services ▪ You can provide valuable support by directing people to a place of safety e.g. temporary community shelter/official local authority rest centre ▪ Remember: Nobody has the powers to force people out of their homes ▪ The _____ is the designated emergency reception centre.

LOG OF CORRESPONDENCE AND HOW DEALT WITH?*No names/contact details should be added here*

Date:	Contacted via	Who took call/emails?	Brief details of issue raised	Council/Committee	Outcome
01/05/2025	Face to Face	Ali	New member of staff	HR	Met in office with caretaker - show around
01/05/2025	Email	Ali	Resident regarding speeding in Goudhurst Road - what can be done	Highways	Raised issue with Kent Highways
01/05/2025	Email	Ali	Kent Highways in response to above	Highways	Put to Cllrs to add to HIP
01/05/2025	Face to Face	Ali	Resident regarding water leak at Church Green	General	Provided details of what the MPC is aware of
01/05/2025	Telephone	Ali	Resident tripped on a raised drain cover in High Street	Highways	Reported to Kent Highways Ref: 876231
01/05/2025	Telephone	Ali	Company asking for bank details following an invoice	Finance	MPC had not sent an invoice nor had been aware of company. No details were given.
01/05/2025	Face to Face	Ali	Stall holder for Christmas	Amenities - Christmas	Pass details to Lisa
01/05/2025	Telephone	Ali	mowing contractor confirming receipt of dates of events at S/F and P/F	Amenities - Open Space	Noted - to contact if mows are required between visits (fortnightly)
02/05/2025	Telephone	Ali	Funeral Directors to arrange a burial	Amenities - Cemetery	Send interment form, fees and rules - date tbc
06/05/2025	Telephone	Ali	Delivery of container to cemetery	Amenities - Cemetery	Lisa attended to direct to correct position
06/05/2025	Email	Ali	Next of kin asking if CCTV at cemetery as damage to headstone	Amenities - Cemetery	No CCTV
06/05/2025	Email	Ali	Resident asking for hedging to be cut at end of car park	General	Passed to MBC
06/05/2025	Email	Ali	KALC providing details of procurement	Finance	Add to Financial Reg papers for Full Council meeting
07/05/2024	Email	Ali	MBC - electoral roll update	General	Passed to Lisa
08/05/2025	Email	Ali	Russet Runners confirming delivery of letters to residents	General	Noted
12/05/2025	Telephone	Ali	Resident of Paddock Wood asking about burial at Marden Cemetery	Amenities - Cemetery	Provided details of criteria (not a resident of Marden)
12/05/2025	Face to Face	Ali	Resident enquiring about co-option	General	Said all vacancies had been filled - would advertise if any occurred in the future.
13/05/2025	Telephone	Rachel	Scout Group requiring information about car park boundary	General	Provided details to Ali who responded
13/05/2025	Telephone	Rachel	Resident called to personally speak with Ali about plot in Cemetery	Amenities - Cemetery	Referred call to Ali

13/05/2025	Telephone	Ali	Resident - complaining about grass cuttings on headstones	Amenities - Cemetery	Passed on to Neil
13/05/2025	Telephone	Ali	Resident arranging appointment to pay for interment of ashes	Amenities - Cemetery	Arranged to visit 13/5/25 @ 2pm
13/05/2025	Telephone	Ali	Scout Group regarding insurance cover for play scheme	Amenities - Play Scheme	Noted to inform MPC insurers
13/05/2025	Email	Ali	Resident reporting "illegal" motorbikes on land	General	Passed to Police/Community Protection Team
13/05/2025	Email	Ali	Funeral Directors sending memorial application	Amenities - Cemetery	Completed and returned
13/05/2025	Face to Face	Ali	Resident visited office to pay for interment of ashes	Amenities - Cemetery	Paid via card machine
13/05/2025	Email	Ali	Internal Auditor requesting copies of Nov/Feb invoices	Finance	Scanned and sent over
15/05/2025	Email	Ali	B.Cllr Couch cc'd MPC regarding email on dropped kerbs/footways	Highways	Provided details of HIP and asked for other roads to be considered
15/05/2025	Email	Ali	Rams Hill - details of mower repairs	General	Ready for next week
16/05/2025	Email	Ali	Play Scheme staff with address/email details	Amenities - Play Scheme	Filed to send contract letter next month
16/05/2025	Email	Ali	Email to confirm inflatable booked for play scheme	Amenities - Play Scheme	Noted
16/05/2025	Email	Ali	Gravedigger confirming preparing plot on 10/6	Amenities - Cemetery	Noted
19/05/2025	Email	Ali	MBC Planning - details on how to respond to applications on portal	Planning	Noted
19/05/2025	Telephone	Rachel	Resident reporting unsafe signage for diversion at Summerhill Road closure	General	Referred to Kent Highways
19/05/2025	Telephone	Rachel	Resident called for contact for a stonemason	Amenities - Cemetery	Left message for Ali
21/05/2025	Email	Ali	County Cllr Black - taken up issue of fingerposts with KCC Officers	Highways	Noted
21/05/2025	Email	Ali	Resident reporting sheep being kept in neighbours garden	General	Emailed Community Protection Team
21/05/2025	Email	Ali	Motor Show arranging visit to office for signing of forms etc	Amenities - Open Space	Arranged for 22/5/25
22/05/2025	Email	Ali	Community Protection Team in response to sheep concerns	General	Passed information to resident
22/05/2025	Face to Face	Ali	Motor Show to sign papers	Amenities - Open Space	Passed Risk Assessment

22/05/2025	Telephone	Ali	Community Protection Team telephoned - Marden now has a PSCO	General	Attendance to be arranged for a village café on a Friday
22/05/2025	Email	Ali	Russet Runners confirmation of invoice payment	Finance	Noted
22/05/2025	Email	Ali	Peninsula confirming receipt of MPC HR policies	HR	Noted
22/05/2025	Email	Ali	Golding Homes to arrange meeting for signing of CCTV licence agreement	General	Noted - 17/6/25 @ 2.00pm
22/05/2025	Email	Ali	KCC requesting use of space for a G&T mobile NHS bus	General	Responded - ? Memorial Hall
27/05/2025	Face to Face	Rachel	Resident visited office to enquire about their brother purchasing a plot at Marden Cemetery	Amenities - Cemetery	Gave resident two
29/05/2025	Email	Ali	Russet Runners - RA and insurance documents	Amenities - Open Space	Noted
29/05/2025	Email	Ali	KALC regarding new location for EFCM	General	Passed info to Cllr Tippen (attending with the Clerk)
29/05/2025	Email	Ali	Pear Technology - update to cemetery database	Amenities - Cemetery	Confirmed - to be uploaded to computer
29/05/2025	Email	Ali	Pitney Bowes confirming setting up of direct debit	Finance	Noted
29/05/2025	Email	Ali	Rugby Taggers - dates used S/F in May	Finance	Noted - invoice to be sent w/c 2/6
29/05/2025	Email	Ali	Network RaiU/South Eastern	Public Transport	Looking into issues raised at meeting
29/05/2025	Telephone	Ali	Resident with enforcement concerns	Planning	Reported to Borough Cllr Russell
29/05/2025	Telephone	Ali	Resident asking who to contact regarding ASB	Police	To report to 101
29/05/2025	Telephone	Ali	Resident with enforcement concerns	Planning	Noted and reported to Borough Cllr Russell
29/05/2025	Email	Ali	Resident reporting overgrown vegetation on PROW KM244	Highways	Reported to Kent Highways Ref: 250588875 - Resident asked for details of how to report - sent link
29/05/2025	Telephone	Ali	CCTV Company to arrange date for annual maintenance	General	Arranged for 30/5/25
29/05/2025	Email	Ali	Scout representative asking about play scheme admissions	Amenities - Play Scheme	sent to Play Scheme Sub-Group for comment
29/05/2025	Email	Ali	B.Cllr Russell confirming reported issues to MBC Enforcement	Planning	Noted
29/05/2025	Email	Ali	CCTV Company cancelling appointment	General	Noted - (engineer not available) will arrange a further date next week
30/05/2025	Email	Ali	Kent Highways confirming receipt of PROW KM244 issue	Highways	Noted

30/05/2025	Telephone	Ali	Scribe (Finance software) asking if MPC would be interested in changing to their system	Finance	Asked to phone back in September for quotes to see if it is comparable to Rialtas (which MPC currently use)
30/05/2025	Email	Ali	MBC - confirmation of TPO submission	Planning	Noted
30/05/2025	Email	Ali	Parent regarding child attending play scheme (outside of parish)	Amenities - Play Scheme	Provided criteria and if wished can add to waiting list for early July



MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL

STATEMENT ON INTERNAL CONTROL FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH 2025

1. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Marden Parish Council (the Council) is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently, and effectively.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions, and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

2. THE PURPOSE OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The system of internal control is in place at the Council for the year ended 31st March 2025 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts and, except for the details of significant internal control issues at section 5, accords with proper practice.

3. THE INTERNAL CONTROL ENVIRONMENT

The Council:

The Council has appointed a Chairman who is responsible for the smooth running of meetings and for ensuring that all Council decisions are lawful.

The Council reviewed its obligations and objectives and approved budgets for the following year at its Finance meeting during the third quarter. Councillors, at this meeting, agreed the level of precept for the following financial year and this was put before Full Council at an Extraordinary Full Council meeting on 28th January 2025 for approval.

The Council has appointed a Finance Committee of Members who meet quarterly each year and monitor progress against objectives, financial systems and

Office Opening Times:

Mondays, Tuesdays & Fridays 10am - 12 noon

Email: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

Website: www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

Statement of Internal Control 2024-2025



procedures, budgetary control and carry out regular reviews of financial matters. The minutes of the meetings of the Finance Committee are reported to Full Council and approved at the next Finance Committee Meeting.

The Full Council has met monthly during the financial year, other than June 2024 when meeting was not quorate, and monitors progress against its aims and objectives at each meeting by receiving relevant reports from the Finance Committee and the Parish Clerk.

The Council carries out regular reviews of its internal controls, systems and procedures.

Clerk to the Council / Responsible Financial Officer:

The Council has appointed a Clerk to the Council who acts as the Council's advisor and administrator. The Clerk is the Council's Responsible Financial Officer and is responsible for administering the Council's finances. The Clerk is responsible for the day-to-day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks. The Clerk also ensures that the Council's procedures, control systems and policies are adhered to.

Payments:

All payments are reported to the Council for approval. Two Cllrs authorise payment for bank transfers with Unity Trust Bank with the Clerk inputting the relevant banking information. Three Members of the Council must authorise every cheque on the Nat West Account. Two signatories are required for release of funds from the Santander Account.

Risk Assessments / Risk Management:

The Council carries out regular risk assessments in respect of actions and regularly reviews its systems and controls and Financial Regulations.

Internal Audit:

The Independent Internal Auditor for Marden Parish Council currently is RBS Accounting Solutions. Audits were undertaken remotely in January 2025 (Interim report) and in May 2025 (Final report). A report is produced and provided to the Council on the adequacy of its:

Records
procedures
systems
internal control
regulations
risk management
reviews

The effectiveness of the internal audit is reviewed annually.

External Audit:

The Council's External Auditors, Mazars, submit an annual Certificate of Audit, which is presented to the Council.

4. REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The Council has responsibility for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of:

- the Full Council;
- the Finance Committee;
- the Clerk to the Council / Responsible Financial Officer who has responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control environment and managing risks;
- the independent Internal Auditor who reviews the Council's system of internal control;
- Mazars, the Council's external auditors, who make the final check using the Annual Return, a form completed and signed by the Responsible Financial Officer, the Chairman and the Internal Auditor. Mazars issue an annual audit certificate;
- the number of significant issues that are raised during the year.

5. SIGNIFICANT INTERNAL CONTROL ISSUES

Whilst no significant internal control issues were identified during the year the Council strives for the continuous improvement of the system it has adopted for internal control and has addressed all the minor issues and weaknesses raised and reported during the review process.

Signed:

Cllr A Rabot
Chairman
Marden Parish Council

Alison Hooker
Clerk/RFO
Marden Parish Council

Dated: 10th June 2025

Dated: 10th June 2025

Marden Parish Council

Internal Audit Report 2024-25

Jack Turner

*For and on behalf of
Auditing Solutions Ltd*

Background

Statute requires all town and parish councils to arrange for an independent Internal Audit (IA) examination of their accounting records and systems of internal control and for the conclusions to be reported each year in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

This report sets out the work undertaken at our final review for the 2024-25 financial year, which has been undertaken remotely in May 2025. We thank the Clerk for her assistance, providing all necessary documentation facilitate commencement of our review for the year. We will update this report following that final remote review.

Internal Audit Approach

In commencing our review for the year, we have again had regard to the materiality of transactions and their susceptibility to potential misrecording or misrepresentation in the year-end Statement of Accounts / AGAR. Our programme of cover is, as usual, designed to afford appropriate assurance that the Council's financial systems remain robust and operate in a manner to ensure effective probity of transactions and to afford a reasonable probability of identifying any material errors or possible abuse of the Council's own and the national statutory regulatory framework. The programme is also designed to facilitate our completion of the IA Certificate in the Council's AGAR, which requires independent assurance over several internal control objectives.

Overall Conclusion

We are again pleased to conclude that, the Clerk & Council continue to maintain adequate and effective internal control arrangements with no issues identified requiring recommendation at this year's review. We are again pleased to acknowledge the quality of records maintained by the Clerk and thank her for her assistance, which has ensured the smooth progress of our review process.

Detailed Report

Maintenance of Accounting Records & Bank Reconciliations

The Council uses the Rialtas Alpha software to maintain its accounting transactions with four bank accounts in use. Current and Deposit accounts exist with NatWest with a daily sweep facility between the two, together with Santander and Unity Trust bank accounts, the last now being used for the bulk of the Council's transactions which are generally processed online: the NatWest account is still used to pay previously existing direct debit and standing order transactions and occasional cheques.

Our objective here is to ensure that accounting records are being maintained accurately and currently and that no anomalous entries appear in cashbooks or financial ledgers. We have: -

- Agreed the opening Alpha software trial balance detail for 2024-25 with that in the 2023-24 Statement of Accounts and certified AGAR;
- Verified that the financial ledger remains in balance at the end of March 2025.
- Ensured that the cost and expenditure coding structure remain appropriate for purpose;
- Checked and agreed detail of all transactions to 31st March 2025, in view of their relatively low volume, in all cashbooks; and
- Verified the accuracy of bank reconciliation detail on all accounts at 31st January 2025 and 31st March 2025.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no significant issues have been identified in this review area.

Review of Corporate Governance

Our objective here is to ensure that the Council has robust corporate governance documentation and processes in place, and that, as far as we may reasonably be expected to ascertain as we do not attend Council or Committee meetings, all meetings are conducted in accordance with the adopted Standing Orders (SOs) and no actions of a potentially unlawful nature have been or are being considered for implementation.

We have noted previously that Standing Orders (SOs) were reviewed and re-adopted at the March 2025 meeting with the Financial Regulations (FRs) being adopted at the same Council meeting. We note that the latest Financial Regulations, adopted in March 2025, are the latest revised copy of NALC Model regulations.

We have reviewed Council and Standing Committee minutes, as posted on the Council's website, for the year to date, excluding those relating to planning issues, to ensure that no actions have been taken or are being considered that might result in unlawful activity or expense being incurred by the Council.

We are also pleased to note that the 2023-24 AGAR has been signed off by the external auditors without recommendation or comment. Additionally, we note that the statutorily required Notice of Public Rights has been appropriately posted on the Council's website advertising availability of the Council's financial records for the year for the requisite 30 working days.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues have arisen in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation: we shall continue to consider the Council's approach to Corporate Governance issues at future reviews.

Review of Expenditure

Our aim here is to ensure that: -

- Council resources are released in accordance with the Council's approved procedures and budgets
- Payments are supported by appropriate documentation, either in the form of an original trade invoice or other appropriate form of document confirming the payment as due and/or an acknowledgement of receipt, where no other form of invoice is available
- Members are provided with full details of all payments made at meetings as appropriate and that they are formally verifying the supporting invoices accordingly
- All discounts due on goods and services supplied are identified and appropriate action taken to secure the discount
- The correct expense codes have been applied to invoices when processed. and
- VAT has been appropriately identified and coded to the control account for periodic recovery.

We have examined all payments made in November 2024 and February 2025, selecting all those non-salary related transactions in the NatWest and Unity Trust accounts to ensure compliance with the above criteria.

We note that the 2024-25 VAT reclaim was submitted at the end of the previous financial year.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no issues arise in this review area warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Assessment and Management of Risk

Our aim here is to ensure that the Council has put in place appropriate arrangements to identify all potential areas of risk of both a financial and health and safety nature, whilst also ensuring that appropriate arrangements exist to monitor and manage those risks in order to minimise the opportunity for their coming to fruition.

We have examined the Council's current insurance policy schedule with Hiscox, to ensure that appropriate cover is in place, noting that Public and Employer's Liability cover both stand at £10 million, together with Fidelity Guarantee cover at £500,000, all of which we consider more than adequate to meet the present needs of the Council.

We are pleased to note that the Council has again reviewed and re-adopted its Financial Risk Assessment at the May 2024 meeting. We again note the existence of a very comprehensive file

of other service delivery specific risk assessments which are also subject to periodic review and re-adoption. We have reviewed the resultant document and consider that it remains appropriate for the Council's present requirements.

We also noted from our examination of risk documentation that, with the approval of Insurers, detailed health and safety inspections in accordance with RoSPA guidelines are undertaken at the Council's play areas fortnightly, also noting that the results of these inspections are reported to members with any necessary appropriate action taken to address issues identified.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no issues have been identified in this review area warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Budgetary Control and Reserves

We aim in this area of our work to ensure that the Council has appropriate procedures in place to determine its future financial requirements leading to the adoption of an approved budget and formal determination of the amount to be precepted on MBC; that effective arrangements are in place to monitor budgetary performance throughout the financial year and that the Council has identified and retains appropriate reserve funds to meet future spending plans.

We are pleased to note that in January 2025, the Council formally approved the budget for 2025-2026 and set the precept at £206,526.73, as recorded in the minutes.

We are again pleased to note that members are provided with detail of monthly transactions, together with detail of bank balances and budget performance reports based on the Alpha accounting software throughout the course of the year. We have reviewed the position as at 31st March 2025 with no matters arising.

We are also pleased to note that, following our previous recommendation, a raft of specific earmarked reserves have been identified and exist in the Alpha accounting software. We are pleased to note that the Council has well above the minimum requirements for their reserves. The Council's reserves at the financial year-end total £95,366 being made up of a General Reserve of £43,151 and earmarked reserves totalling £52,215.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues arise in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Review of Income

In addition to the annual precept, the Council receives income from additional service areas, including the cemetery, the annual Christmas Fayre, the Summer Holiday Play Scheme and occasional rental income from the Playing and Southons fields, together with occasional grants from the parent Council.

We note that fees and charges in respect of the cemetery have again been reviewed and formally adopted by the Council for 2024-25.

We have examined the controls in place in respect of the cemetery in relation to the identification and processing of fees arising in respect of interments and erection of headstones, etc and considered them sound. We have, as part of this interim review, examined the interments taking place to 31st March 2025 agreeing the fees charged to the approved scale of fees and charges.

We have also examined the detailed nominal income records in the Alpha accounting software for the financial year to 31st March 2025 to ensure that, as far as we are reasonably able to ascertain, no income receivable has been overlooked to date in the year with that received coded to the appropriate nominal income account.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues arise in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Petty Cash Account

The Council does not operate a formal Petty Cash scheme: any out-of-pocket expenses incurred by staff are reimbursed on submission of a properly authorised and supported claim form, together with till receipts and / or trader invoices.

Review of Staff Salaries

In examining the Council's payroll function, we aim to confirm that extant legislation is being appropriately observed as regards adherence to the Employee Rights Act 1998 and the requirements of HMRC legislation as regards the deduction and payment over of income tax and NI contributions.

The Clerk uses bespoke Sage payroll software to produce the monthly payroll for the permanent members of staff, together with casual Play Scheme helpers. Consequently: we have:

- Verified the gross salaries paid in September 2024 and January 2025 to the five permanent staff members by reference to the approved NJC scales (Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Administrative Assistant) and hourly rates for the two "outside" staff;
- Verified that Tax and NIC deductions have been calculated correctly by reference to the monthly payslips as above also ensuring that these deductions have been paid over to HMRC in an accurate and timely manner.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues arise in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Asset Registers / Inventories

The Practitioner's Guide requires all councils to maintain a record of all assets owned. We are pleased to note that a formal register is in existence and that it has been updated appropriately during the year and balances to the Annual Return. There is also a photographic record on file

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues arise in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Investments & Loans

Our objectives here are to ensure that the Council is investing “surplus funds”, be they held temporarily or on a longer term basis in appropriate banking and investment institutions; that an appropriate investment policy is in place; that the Council is obtaining the best rate of return on any such investments made, that interest earned is brought to account correctly and appropriately in the accounting records and that any loan repayments due to or payable by the Council are transacted in accordance with the relevant loan agreements.

We are pleased to acknowledge the existence of an appropriate Investment Policy adopted by the Council in April 2021, as required by the statutory guidance on Local Government Investments which came into force on 1st April 2018.

The Council has one residual PWLB loan repayable half-yearly: we have verified the value of the repayment’s for 2024-25 to the PWLB demand note as part of our above referenced payment review sample.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues arise in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Statement of Accounts and AGAR

The 1996 Accounts and Audit Regulations required all Councils to prepare annually a detailed Statement of Accounts, together with supporting statements identifying other aspects of the Council’s financial affairs. This has subsequently been superseded with the AGAR now forming the Council’s statutory Accounts subject to external audit review and certification.

Section 2 of the AGAR forms the Council’s formal Statement of Accounts subject to external audit review and certification. We have examined the detail in the draft detail provided for our examination to be recorded in Section 2 for 2024-25 agreeing that detail to the underlying financial and other records.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues arise in this area and, based on the satisfactory outcome of our work programme for the year, we have signed off the IA Certificate in the AGAR assigning positive assurances in each relevant area.

Marden Parish Council Current Year

Bank - Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 31 March 2025

Confirmed Bank & Investment Balances

Bank Statement Balances

31/03/2025	Nat West (Revenue)	5,304.86
31/03/2025	Santander	73,156.83
31/03/2025	Unity Bank (Revenue)	16,745.86

95,207.55

Unpresented Payments

4,406.93

90,800.62

Receipts not on Bank Statement

422.50

Closing Balance

91,223.12

All Cash & Bank Accounts

1	NatWest	4,723.66
2	Post Office A/c	0.00
3	Santander	73,156.83
4	Unity Bank	13,342.63
	Other Cash & Bank Balances	0.00
	Total Cash & Bank Balances	91,223.12

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25 Form 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
 - The **Annual Internal Audit Report** **must** be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Sections 1 and 2** **must** be completed and approved by the authority.
 - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2025**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2025**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2025
 - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2025 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2024/25**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2024/25**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2025 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review. It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024/25

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty) and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2025.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- **You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chair, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the bank reconciliation is incomplete or variances not **fully** explained then additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2024) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2025).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2025**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?		
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights , been provided for the external auditor?		
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?		
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?		
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?		
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting?		
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?		
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2025 been reconciled to Box 8?		
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?		
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.		

**Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices*, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2024/25 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.			
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.			
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.			
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.			
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.			
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.			
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.			
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.			
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.			
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. <i>(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")</i>			
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.			
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations <i>(during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set)</i> .			
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR <i>(see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes)</i> .			
O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

DD/MM/YYYY DD/MM/YYYY DD/MM/YYYY

ENTER NAME OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

***If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).**

****Note:** If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.			<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.			<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.			<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.			<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.			<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.			<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.			<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.			<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A <i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	
			<i>Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.</i>
1. Balances brought forward			<i>Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.</i>
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies			<i>Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.</i>
3. (+) Total other receipts			<i>Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.</i>
4. (-) Staff costs			<i>Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.</i>
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments			<i>Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).</i>
6. (-) All other payments			<i>Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).</i>
7. (=) Balances carried forward			<i>Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).</i>
8. Total value of cash and short term investments			<i>The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.</i>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets			<i>The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.</i>
10. Total borrowings			<i>The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).</i>

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)				<i>The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.</i>
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)				<i>The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.</i>

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2024/25

In respect of

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02 as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/> .

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2025; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2024/25

(Except for the matters reported below)* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2024/25

We certify/do not certify* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2025.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

ENTER NAME OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

External Auditor Signature

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

EN MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL

www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk/community/marden-parish-council-13394/home/

During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2024/25 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			✓
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

DD/MM/YYYY 13/05/2025 DD/MM/YYYY

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

JACK TURNER OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

SIGNATURE REQUIRED 

Date 13/05/2025

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL
Statement of Variances - Year ended 31 March 2025

Instructions for completing this template:

1. Enter figures per the AGAR in the cells highlighted in light blue. This will automatically calculate a percentage change between years.
2. If the variance is within 15%, no explanation is required. However, if it is outside this threshold, the percentage difference will highlight in yellow and an explanation is required.
3. Explanations should be entered in each section, quantified to show the figures for each year. This will automatically calculate the remaining difference and the percentage unexplained.
4. Once a sufficient explanation has been given to bring the percentage within 15% between years, the percentage difference cell will highlight as 'green' in the 'adjusted' line.

Please note that for fixed assets, regardless of the percentage change in the figure, an explanation is required for the movement.

Item	2023-24	2024-25	Difference	%	Additional comments / explanations
Box 2: Precept or Rates and levies	175,565.00	182,504.00	6,939.00	4.0%	
			-		
			-		
			-		
			-		
Box 2: Precept or Rates and levies (adjusted)			6,939.00	4.0%	No further explanation needed
Box 3: Total other receipts	34,233.00	41,575.00	7,342.00	21.4%	
Play Scheme Fees	5,486.00	5,977.00	491.00		
Insurance claim	911.00	-	-911.00		
Overpayment of salaries (repaid)	3,197.00	-	-3,197.00		
Christmas donations	607.00	709.00	102.00		
Electricity refund	533.00	-	-533.00		
Grants	7,000.00	6,529.00	-471.00		
Bank interest	1,154.00	986.00	-168.00		
Cemetery income	4,680.00	6,684.00	2,004.00		
Open Space hire	670.00	783.00	113.00		
Parish Services Scheme Grant	8,454.00	8,741.00	287.00		
CIL Income	-	11,165.00	11,165.00		
S106 income	1,540.00	-	-1,540.00		
Box 3: Total other receipts (adjusted)			-	0.0%	No further explanation needed
Box 4: Staff costs	116,470.00	121,155.00	4,685.00	4.0%	
			-		
			-		
			-		
			-		
Box 4: Staff costs (adjusted)			4,685.00	4.0%	No further explanation needed
Box 5: Loan interest/capital repayments	18,238.00	18,238.00	-	0.0%	
			-		
			-		
			-		
			-		
Box 5: Loan interest/capital repayments (adjusted)			-	0.0%	No further explanation needed
Box 6: Other payments	84,829.00	82,661.00	-2,168.00	-2.6%	
			-		
			-		

			-		
			-		
			-		
Box 6: Other payments (adjusted)			- 2,168.00	-2.6%	No further explanation needed

Box 9: Fixed assets plus long-term investments	208,843.00	211,344.00	2,501.00	1.2%	
Office equipment	-	293.00	293.00		
Football goals	-	1,083.00	1,083.00		
Notice board	-	1,165.00	1,165.00		
BBQ	-	250.00	250.00		
Christmas lights	-	210.00	210.00		
Disposal of shed	-	500.00	500.00		
Box 9: Fixed assets plus long-term investments (adjusted)			-	0.0%	No further explanation needed

Box 10: Total borrowings	272,654.00	264,019.00	- 8,635.00	-3.2%	
			-		
			-		
			-		
			-		
Box 10: Total borrowings (adjusted)			- 8,635.00	-3.2%	No further explanation needed

Marden Parish Council Current Year

Supporting Reserves Reconciliation for ANNUAL RETURN 31 March 2025

Explains the difference between boxes 7 & 8 on the Annual Return

<u>Code</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Last Year £</u>	<u>This Year £</u>
	Total Reserves	93,340.71	95,366.16
105	VAT Control A/c	3,359.52	4,143.04
	Less Total Debtors	3,359.52	4,143.04
	Plus Total Creditors	0.00	0.00
	Equals Total Cash and Bank Accounts	89,981.19	91,223.12
200	NatWest	11,430.89	4,723.66
202	Santander	72,396.36	73,156.83
203	Unity Bank	6,153.94	13,342.63
	Total Cash and Bank Accounts	89,981.19	91,223.12

Instructions:

Please complete the coloured boxes with figures per the AGAR and figures for earmarked reserves.

The 'Explanation Required?' box will indicate whether an explanation is required to explain reserves exceeding the tolerable threshold set by Forvis Mazars (1.15 x the higher of precept and total payments).

If explanations are required, please document these in the rows below (*insert more rows where required*).

Once a sufficient amount of explanations has been provided, this will be shown with a 'Yes' in the 'Explanation sufficient?' line.

Box 2	Precept	182,504	x 1.15 =	209,880
Box 4	Staff costs	121,155		
Box 5	Loan interest / capital repayments	18,238		
Box 6	Other payments	82,661		
		222,054	x 1.15 =	95,060
	Max level of reserves			209,880
Box 7	Balances carried forward			95,366
	Explanation required?			No
	<u>Explanation(s) for earmarked reserves:</u> NB: NOT 'general' funds/reserves			
	Office equipment			816
	Outdoor/Maintenance equipment			1,545
	Station enhancement			5,000
	Infrastructure Spend Plan (CIL)			12,536
	Infrastructure Spend Plan (MPC funded)			3,831
	Christmas lights			3,800
	Open Space (street furniture/litter bins etc)			1,500
	Highways Improvement Plan (projects)			8,000
	CCTV			2,500
				39,528
	Reserves not earmarked			55,838
	Explanations sufficient?			Yes



Mrs Alison Hooker
Parish Clerk
Memorial Hall
Goudhurst Road
Marden
Tonbridge
Kent
TN12 9JX
Tel: 01622 832305
Mobile: 07376 287981
Email: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

DECLARATION

I CONFIRM, AS RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER FOR MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL, THAT THESE ARE THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE PARISH COUNCIL TO YEAR END 31ST MARCH 2025.

THE STATUS OF THE ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS ARE UNAUDITED AND THAT THE ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS, AS PUBLISHED, MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE DOCUMENTS ON MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE ARE A SCANNED COPY.

SIGNED:

ALISON HOOKER
RFO/CLERK
MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Office Opening Times:
Mondays, Tuesdays & Fridays 10am - 12 noon
Email: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk
Website: www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk



Local council name: **MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL**

Notice of appointment of date for the exercise of public rights
Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2025

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, and
The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 (SI 234)

<p>1. Date of announcement: 16th June 2025 (a)</p> <p>2. Any person interested has the right to inspect and make copies of the accounts to be audited and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers and receipts relating to them. For the year ended 31 March 2024 these documents will be available on reasonable notice on application to:</p> <p>(b) Alison Hooker, Clerk & RFO to Marden Parish Council 01622 832305 clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk</p> <p>commencing on (c) Tuesday 17th June 2025</p> <p>and ending on (d) Monday 28th July 2025</p> <p>3. Local Government Electors and their representatives also have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the opportunity to question the auditor about the accounts; and• the right to make objections to the accounts or any item in them. Written notice of an objection must first be given to the auditor and a copy sent to the Authority (f). <p>The auditor can be contacted at the address in paragraph 4 below for this purpose during the inspection period at 2 above.</p> <p>4. The auditor's limited assurance review is being conducted under the provisions of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 and the National Audit Office' Code of Audit Practice. Your review is being carried out by:</p> <p>Mazars LLP, The Corner, Bank Chambers, 26 Mosley Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1DF Email: local.councils@mazars.co.uk</p> <p>5. This announcement is made by (e) Alison Hooker, Clerk & RFO to Marden Parish Council</p>	<p>(a) Insert date of placing of this notice on your website.</p> <p>(b) Insert name, position and contact details of the Clerk or other person to whom any person may apply to inspect the accounts.</p> <p>(c)And</p> <p>(d)The inspection period must be 30 working days in total and commence no later than 1 July 2025.</p> <p>(e) Insert name and position of person placing the notice</p>
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MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL

ASSERTIONS

Assertion 5: Risk Management

Risk Management Document: [attachments.asp](#)

Minutes of 11th March 2025 Item number: 136/25(F) - [attachments.asp](#)

The documents are currently being updated to confirm with the Website Accessibility Regulations – these will then be uploaded again to the Parish Council website.

Assertion 8: Significant Events

There have been no legal claims in 2024/25 nor any outstanding as at 31st March 2025.

Assertion 9: Trust Funds

Marden Parish Council does not have any Trusts/Charities