

MINUTES of the Badgers Mount Parish Council Meeting held on **Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2026** in Badgers Mount Memorial Hall.

Meeting attended by: Cllr Plumb, Cllr Lake, Cllr McCartney, Cllr Grint (arrived late due to clashing meeting at SDC), Clerk

**Meeting started: 19:15**

## MINUTES

1. *APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE*: Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Dunlop
2. *APPROVAL OF MINUTES*: The minutes of the meeting held on **16 July 2026** were deferred to the next meeting.
3. *DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS*: Cllr Plumb and Cllr McCartney declared interests in **Items 6.3.1 and 6.3.2**.
4. *PUBLIC SESSION*: A resident raised concerns regarding the use of AI-related imagery in council communications. The Clerk read out the resident's WhatsApp message, which asked that the Council refrain from using AI-generated images and requested that the matter be added to a future agenda. The Clerk clarified that the illustration used in the recent newsletter was created in Canva using standard design tools, not an AI text-to-image generator, and was intended purely as a visual aid rather than a realistic photograph.  
The Council noted national guidance from NALC and the Local Government Association, both of which recognise that AI is now part of modern public administration when used responsibly, transparently, and with human oversight. BMPC's own IT Policy confirms that AI may be used for drafting, summarising and producing illustrative graphics, but not for decision-making, handling confidential data, or operating without human review.  
Councillors discussed the resident's concerns and agreed that while risks must be understood, it is important to distinguish genuine issues from generalised "scaremongering". The Council remains open to adopting new technologies where they improve efficiency and accessibility, provided all use remains within legal boundaries, including GDPR, the Council's IT Policy, and recognised best practice.
5. *DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT*: A brief update was provided regarding ongoing Local Government Review matters, changes within SDC's Property & Commercial Ventures team, and developments relating to Fort Halstead.
6. *FINANCE AND STAFFING*
  - 6.1. Approve Accounts for Payments: The schedule of payments was approved
  - 6.2. Bank reconciliation Aug 2026: The reconciliation for August 2026 was completed and noted.
  - 6.3. Grant Application request
    - 6.3.1. BMRA: BMRA submitted a grant request for essential tree works on unadopted roads where recent high winds had caused safety concerns. As these areas do not fall under the statutory responsibility of the Parish Council, BMRA will undertake the works. The Council **approved the grant under Section 137**. The application was voted in favour by Cllr Grint, Cllr Lake & Cllr Dunlop (by telephone)
    - 6.3.2. Badgers Mount Memorial Hall: The Memorial Hall requested funding to level part of the car park and fill potholes. The Council unanimously (Cllr Grint, Cllr Lake & Cllr Dunlop via telephone) approved a partial grant, to be funded through the **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** schedule.
7. *CHAIRMAN'S REPORT*: The Chairman reported no new items.
8. *CLERKS REPORTS*
  - 8.1. Regulation 19 Consultation Local Plan- The Clerk circulated draft comments, primarily concerning the inclusion of Broke Hill within the proposed sites. Councillors agreed the main points. The Clerk will submit the response online before the deadline.
  - 8.2. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule Review Consultation – The consultation deadline has been extended. The Clerk will compile BMPC's response and circulate it for comment.

- 8.3. Update on A224 Speed reduction- Following KCC's approval of the speed reduction, Kent Highways has issued an invoice for the works. Once payment is made, implementation is expected within 90 days, subject to weather conditions.
- 8.4. Discuss request from residents & BMRA for upkeep of the verges/trees on Highland Road & Badgers Road on an periodic basis: Further to previous discussions, the Council confirmed its intention to make an annual financial commitment to BMRA to employ a contractor to clear overgrown brambles and hedges on unadopted roads, particularly at junctions where visibility is reduced. BMRA will be required to submit annual reports to BMPC detailing the works undertaken.

9. *AMENITIES/PROJECTS/SAFETY*

- 9.1. Parking cards & parking signs on unadopted roads including Woodlands- As previously agreed, the Parish Council cannot install parking signage on unadopted roads. Residents may do so themselves if they wish. The Council will arrange for parking cards to be printed and distributed to residents for use when vehicles are parked inconsiderately.

10. *PLANNING:*

- 10.1. There were no pending planning applications at the time of the meeting.

**Meeting concluded: 21:30**