KESGRAVE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 29 September 2025

Councillors present:
A Athwall
N Beecroft-Smith *(Chair)*
A Cook
R Gibson
J Ling
G Lynch
J Ogden
G Ward

Officers present:
J Abbott – Town Clerk

1. **Welcome and Apologies for Absence** – The Chair welcomed all those present, apologies received from Cllr Comber, reason – personal, following the vote these were accepted. Apologies also noted from District & County Cllr McCallum.

2. **Declarations of Interest** – Cllr J Ogden, item 8 - Scout Leader, non-pecuniary.

3. **Minutes of the Town Council meeting** held on 21 July 2025, following the vote these were agreed and signed by the Chair.

4. **Chairman's Communication** – Cllr Beecroft-Smith provided the following update:

   - Cllr Skinner has given his resignation, which was accepted, and East Suffolk Council have been informed. The Chair advised Mr Skinner was very complementary of all the work the town council undertake. The Chair on behalf of Council thanked Mr Skinner for all he did in his time as a Town Cllr.
   - The Suffolk Community Awards 2025 took place on 23 September, with the town clerk being awarded 'highly commended' Town Clerk of the Year.
   - On 26 August saw the refurbished WI sign be reinstated at The Walk with residents of The Walk and WI members being present. Thanks to Justin one of the councils Estate Operatives who undertook the refurbishment, Jennie the councils Events & Estate Manager for organising and funding being received from District Cllr McCallum's enabling budget.
   - Attended a SALC/District Council workshop on LGR with the town clerk on 2 September.
   - Presented the Kesgrave Library Reading Quest Awards on 7 September with over 200 children completing the quest. Numbers were slightly lower than previous years, but Kesgrave was still the top Library in Suffolk for those completing the reading quest.
   - Attended Ipswich Borough Councils (IBC) meeting on 24 September with the Clerk to see the presentation on LGR and the outcome. IBC unanimously agreed to support the three unitary councils for Suffolk proposal.

5. **Clerks/Officer Report/Update** – J Abbott provided the following report:
    - Traveller encampment at Martlesham P&R site for 1 week, now moved on.
    - Attended ESC Community Partnership meeting 5 August – application for 'Snap Skool' local business working with schools in Kesgrave and neighbouring parishes received full funding – project will take place within the 25/26 school year.
    - Heath School Road Safety – held meeting at KTC, discussed new SCC school road safety Initiatives. Moving forward, working with Cllr McCallum on securing funding for works looked at earlier this year.
    - Attended ESC Chief Ex/Town Clerk meeting.
    - Attended many meetings during August and September all connected with agenda items to be discussed this evening.
    - Alan Brown Kesgrave 10K road race taking place next year on 28 June 2026.
    - Public land ownership issue identified following a dead oak tree being reported to the office. KTC instructed a tree contractor to remove the dead oak tree for health and safety reasons.

6. **Members of the Public** – none.

7. **County and District Councillor Reports** – District Cllr Lynch advised the following:

    - Attended Audit meeting; questions on using reserves and the recent press article on ESC property investments loss of '£3.5m in value' within a 12-month period, questions on how property/land can be worth nothing?
    - Attended Scrutiny meeting; critical of 24/25 Annual Report, lack of KPI's, questions on tree planting and housing targets.
    - Attended Full Council meeting; review on recycling, interested in the "deposit return scheme", successful in other districts. Highlighted concerns over no. of bins, could there be alternative ways to collect, dispose of recycling?
      LGR – districts proposal was for 3 unitary councils, which was voted through.

8. **Finance & Governance** –
    a. Finance & Governance committee meeting minutes 15 September 2025 – these were received and noted.
    b. Schedule of Accounts –
        - List of Payments for the period 01/06/2025 to 31/08/2025 - all accepted and agreed following the vote.
        - List of Receipts for the period 01/06/2025 to 31/08/2025 - all accepted and agreed following the vote.
    c. Detailed Income and Expenditure to 31 August 2025 - all accepted and agreed following the vote.
    d. Transfer from Savings Account and the KTC Card Payments Account – the transfers for the period June, July and August 2025 were agreed following the vote.
    e. Trial Balance for August 2025 – the report was noted.
    f. External Auditor Report and Certificate (section 3 of the AGAR Form3) – PKF Littlejohn LLP have completed the review of the AGAR on 16 September 2025 for the year ended 31 March 2025. There were no matters for concern. The audited accounts have been uploaded to the website. Cllr Beecroft-Smith informed that signatures should no longer be displayed on website documents. The Clerk gave thanks to the RFO for a seamless audit.

g. Notice of Conclusion of Audit for the AGAR year ended 31 March 2025 – The notice has been published on the website and the KTC office external noticeboard before the 30 September 2025 deadline, in line with the statutory requirements.
h. Draft Budget 2026/27 Proposals – Cllr Gibson reiterated that the budget should cross-reference with the KTC Business Plan. Additional budget items were discussed at the F&G Committee meeting held 15 September 2025. A provision for a promotional KTC video, estimate £4,500 subject to further quotes, to be included.

9. Planning & Development –

a. Committee meeting minutes; 28 July 2025, 11 August 2025 and 1 & 15 September 2025 – these were noted, no questions raised. Chair of P&D Cllr Gibson referred to the P&D meeting held before this meeting, where the recently published ESC 'New Planning Policy Documents' were noted. It was initially thought the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan wasn't due for review until September 2026, this raises questions on the possible impact to the Kesgrave Neighbourhood Plan and the current ESC 5yr housing supply.
b. Bloor Homes; Land at Foxhall Road, bordering Kesgrave – the Clerk confirmed an email was received from Bloor Homes representatives on 24 September of the proposed consultation but initially no map to clarify the exact location was provided. This was requested and brought to the attention of ESC Planning, the map was received today (copy attached to these minutes). Bloor have invited KTC to have a pre meeting ahead of the public consultation. The office is also aware some residents received a leaflet form Bloor today. Information will be shared on the town council social media and website.

10. Community & Recreation –

a. Pump Track Project – the Clerk advised ESC Planners have requested further information on the revised track design. Our Events & Estate Manager is in correspondence with our architect and the pump track contractor.
b. ESC Land Adoption – the Clerk advised still in negotiations with ESC, specifically around costings for tree (woodland) management. The Clerk, Cllr Comber and Events and Estate Manager will be having a site meeting with the ESSL Tree Inspector in October.

11. Devolution/Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) – the Clerk advised of her report, no questions raised. Cllr Gibson advised of the SALC Forum he and the Clerk attended where SCC gave a presentation on LGR which included a list of assets and services, which some towns/parishes may wish to adopt, undertake (this is included in the report, attached to these minutes).

12. Website review /upgrade, incorporating domain upgrade to .gov.uk – Cllr Beecroft-Smith advised work on the website upgrade ongoing. The town council .gov.uk domain is now registered and has been implemented; 'kesgravetowncouncil.gov.uk'. All email accounts are registered and live, further work to update accounts, IT, documentation etc ongoing. There is currently a website 'landing page' for the new domain, while works continue with the website upgrade.

13. Annual Action Plan and Local Council Award Scheme Proposal – Cllr Gibson referred to his reports and supporting documents provided to council. Following a discussion it was proposed by Cllr Gibson and seconded by Cllr Beecroft-Smith to proceed with introducing an Annual Action Plan and move forward with the requirements to be able to apply for the Bronze Local Council Award Scheme with submitting our application by 3 January 2026. Following the vote this was unanimously agreed (copy of reports and documents attached to these minutes).

14. **ATM Award Scheme** – Cllr Gibson referred to his paper to implement a local award scheme to improve public attendance at the ATM and community engagement. Following a discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Gibson and seconded by Cllr Lynch for Cllr Gibson to draft a 'KTC Recognition Award Scheme' to be considered by the F&G committee at their meeting in October. Following the vote this was unanimously agreed (copy of paper attached to these minutes).

15. **Industry Partner; Engagement with Students Proposal** – Cllr Gibson referred to his paper confirming his proposal. Following a discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Gibson and seconded by Cllr Lynch to proceed with the student engagement and for them to present at a council meeting, this was unanimously agreed following the vote (paper attached to these minutes).

16. **Promotional KTC Video** – Cllr Gibson referred to his paper outlining his proposal. Following a discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Lynch and seconded by Cllr Ling for this to be referred to the C&R committee to seek further quotes and to engage with media students at the high school and local college. Following the vote this was agreed (paper attached to these minutes).

17. **Other/Urgent Communications** – none.

18. **Date of Next Meeting** – Monday 27 October 2025, 7.15pm, at the Town Council office – noted.

19. **Agenda Items for Next Meeting** – none.

20. **Resolution to exclude the Public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960** – agreed, no members of the public present.

Agenda items 21a, 22a, 23 and 24 were then discussed in the CONFIDENTAIL part of this meeting.

this part of the meeting finished at 9.20pm.

Chair ………………………………………………Date…………………………………