**Challock Parish Council Virtual Minutes**

Memorial Hall, Audrey Allen room

Thursday, 18th February 2021, 7.32 pm

Members of public present: 2

Apologies

Russell Jaques

Present

Michael Fisher (Chairman), Tracy Brown, Anthony Aitken, Duncan Hardie, John Ramsden, Max Thomas ABC Ward Councillor Larry Krause & Di Sandy (Clerk).

Welcome

At the start of the meeting Councillor Thomas & Chairman Mick Fisher experienced technical difficulties

Chairman Fisher thanked everyone for attending.

Declarations of Interest

Councillors’ no new changes to the declarations of interest.

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Minutes of Last Meeting

Minutes of 7th January 2021 meeting were signed by Chairman Fisher as an accurate record.

All agreed.

**Jasmine Bloomfield PCSO Monthly Report**

No reported crime or incidences in in the village in January. There have been incidences of bright torches being pointed at oncoming motorist and unauthorized vehicles driving across the Lees and on private ground. Police have been patrolling the village. The police and parish council urge parishioners to report any incidences occurring.

There has been a spate of wheelie bin thefts in Ashford.

**Crime Commissioner Matthew Scott Annual Policing Survey Response**

The Parish Council has received an email from Chief Inspector Nick Sparkes. The Clerk is liaising with Nick Sparkes who is going to arrange speed checks. Clerk has provided details of hotspots of where speeding occurs in the village. Nick Sparkes understands our frustration in delays in speed watch due to COVID-19. Clerk is liaising with the police regarding recent rural and nuisance crime.

Clerk’s Report

**Highways**

Potholes reported on the Canterbury Road, The Old Vicarage.

Reported damaged road sign message adjacent to Pony Park.

Reported soft verge damage near water mains, Blind Lane.

Reported faulty lights on signage on the roundabout.

Reported mud on the road, adjacent to new building works, near junction to Church Lane, Canterbury Road, and parking of construction workers vehicles.

**Public Rights of Way**

Leaning fence PROW, the Beeches on both sides.

**Cricket Ground**

Bridle gates to be fitted at the entrances at the bottom of the cricket ground. Additional fencing on each side of the bridle gates to be installed to fill the gap. Works to commence on 22nd February 2021.

**The Lees**

Grounds man has side edged the overgrown moss/vegetation on all footpaths on the Lees.

Grounds man filled potholes on Lees tracks.

**Play Park**

Weekly sanitization of play park equipment and refill hand sanitizer pump is continuing for the time being.

**Training**

Councillor Brown attended the on-line Introductory to Planning course.

**Welcome Letter to new parishioners to the village.**

Clerk to produce leaflet welcome to Challock Parish. To be approved at the next parish meeting.

Chairman Fisher commented the welcome leaflet is a good idea and suggested sending the copy of the forester magazine along with the leaflet.

Correspondence

* Received an email from South East Rivers Trust regarding 'The Sewage (Inland Waters) Bill and its aims to reduce raw sewage discharges via combined sewer overflows to our rivers and would be a hugely significant step towards improving the health of our rivers for both wildlife and people.  Parish Councils can write to their MP to encourage them to support the bill. This private members' bill has cross party support and given the huge impact of Stodmarsh and nutrient neutrality issue on Ashford, Damian Green ought to be receptive. KALC committee has sent a letter to Damian Green MP on behalf of parish councils given support to the passing of the bill.
* An email from Ashford Borough Council notifying of budget consultation 2021/22 available online and comments to be sent by 19th February 2021. Ashford Borough Council cabinet members have proposed to raise it by £5 (2.99%) for the average Band D property for the 2021/22 financial year – working out to under 10p per week on the average Band D property.
* An email from KALC regarding a call for capital project suggestions. Central government has indicated it will be launching two new funds called Levelling Up Fund & The UK Shared Prosperity Fund replacing current EU funding. Councils to send in details of capital projects by the 22nd February 2021.
* Received correspondence from KCC Ward Councillor Charlie Simkins concerning funding for the Faversham Road Footpath. KCC Highways Darren Hickman said the initial assessment of the site in 2018 costed a scheme for a new 1.5M wide footway as it was felt at the time that this would be the maximum width that would be achievable, however following the survey we have established that a wider footway can be provided which would be safer for all users in keeping them away from the edge of this busy road and that would also meet current design standards. Therefore, the extra materials required will increase the scheme costs. As councillor Simkins has kindly funded the preparation of this scheme to detail design the Parish Council may wish to obtain quotations to construct the scheme from KCC approved contractors to achieve best value. Should they wish to appoint their own contractor to deliver this project they will need to enter into a section 278 agreement with the highway authority that would require the payment of a bond to KCC to cover the costs of any defect rectification works that may become liable after construction.
* Received an email from KCC Ward Councillor Charlie Simkins advising the parish council to complete capital costs spreadsheet for the Levelling Up Fund.
* An email from Kent County Council launching a consultation on Vision Zero: The Road Safety Strategy for Kent 2020 – 2026.  As set out on the KCC website, they are consulting on their [draft five year Road Safety Strategy for Kent](https://kccconsultations.inconsult.uk/gf2.ti/f/1236610/91030597.1/PDF/-/Vision_Zero_Draft_Strategy.pdf) and their 30 year vision.  'Vision Zero' aims for zero, or as close as possible, fatalities on Kent’s roads each year by 2050. The success of this strategy will depend on engagement with Kent’s communities to work together towards safer roads, towns, and villages. KCC have organised 2 FREE virtual workshops to provide an opportunity for Parish, Town, Community and County Councillors to discuss the detail of the Vision Zero Strategy. The two free workshops will be taking place on Zoom on Wednesday 24 February and Wednesday 3 March. Councillors to notify Clerk if they wish to attend.
* Received correspondence from owners of Trees stating the driveway has been re-instated to original width. Handwritten measurements were emailed.
* Received an email from parishioner enquiring about house signage on the verge adjacent to property. Clerk responded the Parish Council would be reluctant to give permission for signage on the verge as this would be setting a precedent.  As Challock is set in an area of outstanding natural beauty and the verge is common land the Parish Council would not like to encourage the cluttering of signage on the common ground.
* Received an email from parishioner concerning the large pothole at the entrance to the Lees opposite Help Hire garage.
* Received an email from parishioner further to idea for a community orchard and in order to maintain a fund for future dispensation for the poor we could devise a small levy on each household. In order to reverse the loss of the old trees, new trees could be planted of old varieties. Such work could be undertaken by volunteers and do a great deal to foster good relations between neighbours and be a wonderful way in which to engage young children. Parishioner requested if the farm tenancy could be rescinded.
* Received email from tenant to the poor field. After a lengthy initial process to secure the tenancy on this land and covering all of the legal costs to do so, I am concerned about the future of the Poor Field. I have spent considerable time and money reinstating the field after it was left in a very dilapidated state by the previous tenants. At the time I had tried to negotiate a longer-term lease to cover my financial input required to return this land to productive agricultural use. I have greatly improved the land and as mentioned before this has been work in progress in connection with my neighbouring farm as it has been historically for many years.

I would like to continue to support the trust by renting this land on a much longer-term basis making the improvements to the land worthwhile and continuing to help the charity for local people. As a current guardian of this land, I wish to secure its future, maintain, and preserve the land for agricultural use.

Should the trustees decide that the best option is to sell the land following the review, please will they give me first refusal to purchase it?

* Received email from parishioner concerning UK Power Networks planned works to trim trees along properties, The Lees which will take place on 23rd February. Removal of conifer & large tree to be carried out by GW Gardening. Parishioner asked if there is any consideration for a sign at the end to say which properties can be accessed and a no through road sign.
* Received an email from parishioner looking to replace existing wooden posts and a 5-bar gate with brick pillars and wrought iron gates up to the hedge height 6ft but in existing location. Before planning any more detail with the relevant trades and gathering estimates parishioner wanted to confirm that the parish council have no restrictions that need to be adhered to.

Matters arising from correspondence.

* Trees Driveway – the Parish Council are satisfied the trespass has now been abated.
* Poor Field - William Oure is a charity and cannot hand the land over to the community without some form of income deriving from it.  As trustees we endeavor to carry out the wishes of William Oure to help parishioners in need.  In today's current climate the William Oure Charity is available to our parishioners, who may need assistance more than ever.  When the Farm tenancy comes up for renewal in 2022 there will be an opportunity for parishioners to come forward to lodge an interest in the farm tenancy.   This was the case in 2017/18 when the tenancy came up for renewal.  The Parish Council was not approached other than the current tenant to enter into a Farm tenancy agreement.

At the next tenancy renewal, the Parish Council will consider other proposals for use of the poor field other than agricultural/horticultural purposes.

To precept money from the parish is not the wishes of the William Oure charity and would not be approved by the Parish Council.

The Parish Council do not wish to close the charity and sell the land.

* Directional signage, the Lees – the parish council would consider directional signage proposed by all residents providing the costs of signage is met by the residents. Parish Council would need to be mindful of any new signage proposals on the Lees.
* New gates and entrance request – Parishioner would need to supply planned drawings of measurements of the current width of gate and details of gates and entrance works. Confirmation the entrance/driveway will not be widened or altered.

Finances

The current account balance on 31st January 2021 is £18250.20.

Received £10,000 lottery funding for play park rejuvenation.

The NS&I account balance is £19,429.45.

William Oure Charity £4109.80

Received Cheque for £160 annual rental from tenant.

**Easement**

Outstanding £2,000 easement payment for plot 4, The Gables. Update received from Girlings Solicitor that the deeds and payment is currently with solicitors and will update us when they have had a response.

**William Oure Charity**

SPECIAL RESOLUTION under s275 of the Charities Act 2011 the following

Under the governing document it states: -

Charitable Objects

FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE POOR OF PEST STREET IN THE PARISH OF CHALLOCK

Amend to: -

THE RELIEF OF POVERTY IN PARISH OF CHALLOCK BY PROVIDING GRANTS, ITEMS AND SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS IN NEED, WORKING TO PREVENT OR RELIEVE POVERTY.

Area of benefit

PEST STREET IN THE PARISH OF CHALLOCK

Amend to: -

 THE PARISH OF CHALLOCK.

Charity Overview: -

To support elderly villagers who are in need. To support villagers or their families who have suffered a tragic accident or bereavement.

General charitable purposes.

Amend to: -

To support parishioners who are in need. To support parishioners or their families who have suffered a tragic accident or bereavement. General charitable purposes.

**This Resolution to be and hereby are approved and adopted as the new Articles of the William Oure Charity.**

Councillor Fisher & Councillor Thomas to sign the document as Trustees of the William Oure Charity

Faversham Road Footpath – Levelling Up Fund Capital Projects

Clerk has completed excel spreadsheet for funding for Faversham Road Footpath to claim for £17500. Clerk has made enquiries to the Road Safety Trust for possible funding. Clerk has completed ABC Ward Members Grant Application for £1500 from Councillor Larry Krause.

Clerk has included the A251 Faversham Road Safety Improvements scheme in partnership with Sheldwich, Badlesmere & Boughton Aluph parish councils, though this project is in its infancy. Clerk has also added footpath extension in Church Lane, adjacent to Chequers and extension of yellow lines as a capital cost. Clerk has added footpath on the perimeter of the cricket ground as there is only a partial footpath in Blind Lane.

Councillors approved the proposed projects to be put forward for capital costs.

Play Park Lottery Funding

The Parish Council has been successful in securing £10,000 lottery funding for the replacement play park equipment. Total funds available are £14,000 for replacing the junior and toddler swing and agility trail, all have been recommended for decommissioning by ROSPA. Clerk has contacted suppliers to give additional quotations to include replacing the agility trail. So far received quotation from Living Timber. Waiting on 4 other suppliers.

Chairman Fisher commented on the playgroup operates as a business uses the playpark daily and motion the Parish Council setting a rental charge towards the maintenance of the play park equipment.

Councillor Hardie commented on other playgroups using the playpark and how the parish council would manage this.

Discussion took place on the profitability of the play group and its continuation.

Councillor Ramsden suggested asking the playgroup for a donation.

It was agreed to move item to the next parish meeting.

The Lees

1. **Wildflower Borders Proposal –**

A proposal and map of the Lees have been received in advance of the parish meeting. The proposal is for 4 areas of the Lees for wildflower borders with possible future areas near the planings (area 5) and Haverbrack/Beech Court Gardens end of the Lees. No funding required for the first year as this will be to establish what wildflowers will grow in these areas. Only to purchase biodegradable spray to mark the areas. Future funding for possibly seating/picnic tables and extra wildflower seeds.

The wooded area of the Lees, Beech Court Gardens end provides a haven for wildlife and wildflowers to grow. The wooded area adjacent to Haverbrack on the Lees could be developed further to encourage wildflower growth. The parish council have given permission for a seat to be placed and a tree sapling to be planted in this area. At the parish meeting in October the Parish Council resolved for a trial wildflower section in area 5 (planings) involving the primary school to be delayed until the pandemic eases.

Councillors agreed to concentrate on trialing the wildflower border for area 5. Councillors agreed for the wildflower group to liaise with the primary school to ensure children’s involvement.

1. **Footpath resurfacing**

As discussed at the parish meeting on 7th January, quotations for resurfacing the footpath adjacent to the village stores, the Lees have been received from Kent Road Contractors & Wilson Tarmac. Waiting on quotation from Trevor May.

1. **Tarmac entrances Lees tracks**

Clerk arranged for quotations for the tarmacking of the entrances in response from a parishioner concerning the Lees track entrance opposite Help Hire. Clerk also obtained a quote for filling the entrances with planings for comparison. Councillors agreed for the Clerk to send the quotations to residents for their consideration and whether they will contribute to the costs of installation.

Planning

21/00147/AS - Paladin, 2 The Lilybuds, The Lees, Canterbury Road, Challock, Ashford, TN25 4DH Construction of single detached dwelling (plot 2) (amended design to design approved under planning permission 14/01157/AS

Challock Parish Council have no objections and supports this application providing neighbours’ views are taken into consideration.

21/00247/AS - Northstead, Blind Lane, Challock, Ashford, TN25 4AU

Single storey side extension

Challock Parish Council have no objections and supports this application providing neighbours’ views are taken into consideration.

**Ratification of Planning Applications**

The following application was ratified.

**21/00032Loxwood, Green Lane, Challock, Ashford, Kent, TN25 4BL**Proposal for detached garden office for working at home.

Challock Parish Council supports this application.

Items for Information

1. **Spring Clean Litter Pick**

Clerk to organize a spring clean litter pick subject to COVID-19 19 rules. Likely to occur late spring. Clerk is currently holding litter pick equipment on hire from Ashford Borough Council. Parishioners can borrow the equipment should they wish to do their own litter pick. Parish Council would like to thank parishioner who carried out a litter pick in Green Lane in January.

1. **A252 Road Safety Improvements**

Clerk has been liaising with KCC Alan Osuoha concerning correspondence received by parishioners concerning the A251 Road Safety Improvements Scheme.

1. Regarding concerns of the widening of the island sections along Canterbury Road. Note. At the A252 consultation meetings the Parish Council raised concerns of the width of these islands and how they were often clipped by lorries, farm vehicles and even cars. The following response was received from Alan Osouha - the recommended road width for a 40mph road is 3.0m with the width of an average HGVs at 2.55m excluding wing mirrors. Now I have increased the existing widths from 2.8 to 3.0 which has a negligible change to an average car but means that local tractors using the route can pass the islands without mounting the footway. In general, cars passing that section would not increase speed from a 200mm widening**.**
2. Red painted sections are peeling – Alan Osouha says result of poor adhesion owing to the cold wet/moisture weather which will be rectified by the contractor as part of the same snagging process.
3. Signage covered by overgrown vegetation – Trimming of vegetation will be taken place in the near future.
4. The large ADS sign to be installed south of the roundabout (A251) is required as currently there are no directional signs for the roundabout which will improve the safety of vehicles turning at the roundabout.
5. There are two signs provided at gateway and speed limit changes across the whole scheme which helps so that if we do have any visibility issues such as overgrown hedges or large vehicle obstructing views. This is not so much of the case with repeater sign when the road speed is already identified.
6. With the exception of Challock Roundabout (north arm) in which the gateway (30/40mph) was installed and requires relocating a newly planted tree…there is no need to remove any additional trees in Challock Roundabout.
7. The proposal to provide a village wide 30mph would have required less signage as 30mph repeater signs are not used because the criteria of built-up environment and system of streetlights would have applied. However, with my experience of the A252 scheme, less signage will not encourage better adherence to the speed limit.
8. The speed limit provided on the A251 section is specific to the approaches to the roundabout.
9. The positioning of the gateway north of Blind Lane junction removes the need to add additional signs in Blind Lane and Church Lane. So, it can be considered reducing sign clutter limiting the speed transitions as proposed.
10. The gateway signs are positioned to work within the skid resistance surfacing length of the roundabout give-way points to address speed related issues at the junction.
11. 40 mph signage from Beech Court Gardens entrance to junction at Monkery Lane. Received confirmation 50 mph signage will be changed to 40 mph.

Upon completion of works –allowance for the new road improvements to be imbedded in and for the Parish Council to review whether the road improvements have changed driver’s behaviour. Clerk to compose a report by Spring & Autumn 2021 of findings and comments received by parishioners. The Autumn report will be based upon speed watch findings.

Chairman Fisher requested for the Clerk to make enquiries with KCC regarding the national speed limit in Green Lane and should a controlled sign be in place.

Councillor Hardie commented Brake (Road Safety Charity) is calling for a review of speed limits on rural roads, saying the current limit gives a false impression that 60mph is a safe speed.

1. **Speed watch**

Clerk is arranging to borrow speed watch equipment from Sheldwich Parish Council for police to set it up in anticipation for speed watch training to commence as soon as lockdown eases.

1. **The Lees – Bollard implementation**

Clerk is waiting on plans of BT optic cabling installed along the Lees, Beech Court Gardens end before commencing with installation of bollards. Clerk has been liaising with BT and Freedom group who will be installing the electric cable along the same length where the BT cabling is.

A.O.B

**The Queens Platinum Jubilee June 2022 -** Nation will come together over a four-day Bank Holiday weekend to celebrate The Queen’s 70-year reign. Extensive programme of public events will mix traditional pageantry with cutting edge technological displays. Jubilee medal will be created and awarded to public services workers. Opportunity for the village to come together and organise events to mark this special occasion post pandemic.

**Wooded Area, The Lees** – Councillor Brown requested for footpath signs to be installed at both entrances of the wooded area footpath. Not all parishioners are aware this footpath exists.

Councillors agreed for Clerk to make enquiries.

**Pop Up Post Office** - Councillor Ramsden commented on the appalling service since the start of the post office pop-up service. Computer system has failed for the past 2 weeks. Councillors agreed for the Clerk to write to Sam Coe, Post Office Ltd a letter of complaint.

**Salting of paths Church Lane** – Councillor Aitken on behalf of the school thanked the grounds man for salting the paths around the school area, St Cosmas Close, Church Lane. Councillor Ramsden thanked the grounds man for salting the post office car park and footpath on the Lees.

Parish Forum

Mr Burden raised his disappointment on the parish council’s decision to trial area 5 of the Lees and not consider the other areas proposed by the Wildflower Group.

Discussion took place on the areas 1 - 4 and initially there would be no cost incurred in the first year as to see how the wildflower borders develop.

Councillors agreed for the areas to be trialed providing the primary school is involved. Councillor Aitken agreed to be the contact lead with the school and to liaise with the Wildflower group.

Clerk to email details of costings for area 5 to Mr Burden.

Mr Burden offered to volunteer distributing the forester magazines in Chapmans Close.

**The meeting closed at 9.13 pm.**

Parish Council Meeting Dates for 2021

Next Zoom Parish Meeting Thursday, 18th March 2021

**Future Parish Meeting Dates:**

Thursday 15th April

Thursday 20th May

Tuesday 15th June 2021 Annual Parish Meeting Main Hall

Thursday 15th July

Thursday 16th September

Thursday 14th October

Thursday 18th November

NALC is currently working with the Local Government Association and others to press for a continuation beyond May 2021 of the flexibility to hold remote council meetings.

**Signed as a true record by: ……………………………Michael Fisher Chairman Challock Parish Council**

**Dated……………………………………….**