**Challock Parish Council Virtual Minutes**

Memorial Hall, Audrey Allen room

Thursday, 7th January 2021, 7.34 pm

Members of public present: 7

Apologies

None

Present

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

Welcome

At the start of the meeting Councillor Ramsden experienced technical difficulties

Chair 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 19th November 2020 meeting were signed by Chairman as an accurate record.

Proposed by Councillor Brown and seconded by Councillor Aitken.

All agreed.

**Jasmine Bloomfield PCSO Monthly Report**

There have been 4 Crimes reported in the Downs West Ward in December.

There were some Christmas lights stolen and 2 reports of items taken from fields.

There have been lots of reports across the Ashford District of number plates being stolen from cars.

Catalytic converters are still being stolen, sometimes during the daytime, so please report if you see anyone fiddling under a car. Honda seem to be the most targeted make.

Clerk’s Report

**Highways**

Reported hazardous footpath entrance to Clevedon Court, Green Lane. Parishioner slipped on footpath covered in moss.

Confirmation received from Highways concerning the hazardous tree adjacent to Burlington House, Canterbury Road. Will commence works within the next 2 months to remove the tree.

Received a number of complaints from parishioners in Church Lane due to the coning off for works to be carried out on the drains. Highways commenced works but due to emergency works got called away. The works have now been completed.

Highways has carried out side-edging along Buck Street leading to Blind Lane junction. Clerk to request they continue with the side edging of footpath from High Tree Lodge towards Chestnut Cottages, Buck Street.

**The Lees**

Grounds man flattened mole holes.

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 and Clerk to attend on-line Introductory to Planning on the 29th January 2021.

Correspondence

* Received an email re Kent County Council Safeguarding SPD (Supplementary Planning Document) and Statement of Community Involvement consultation as part of the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan partial review. Closing date for viewing and commenting on the consultation is 29th January 2021.
* Received an email from a parishioner enquiring about the Parish Council’s views on KCC Bee Plan.
* Received an email from KCC Ward Councillor Charlie Simkins and attachments of the detailed design plans for Faversham Road footway. Requesting authorisation from the Parish Council for the members grant to pay for the design costs.
* Received an email from Kent Community Housing Hub - a new, independent project in Kent hosted by Action with Communities in Rural Kent (although our work covers both Kent’s urban and Rural areas). Inviting parish councils to get in touch to explore ways to work together to solve local rural housing issues.
* Received email confirmation from planning inspectorate regarding Commons Act 2006 – Section 38 proposed works at Challock Lees application for electrical cabling to be laid underground. Works are granted.
* Received email from ABC Planning Policy updated advice on the Habitat Regulations Assessment – Stodmarsh Protected Sites. Advice given is to avoid the potential for any further deterioration in the water quality of the Stodmarsh European designated site pending further investigations as to the cause of the eutrophication. This has direct consequences for some new development proposals within parts of Ashford Borough.
* Received an email from ABC publishing the 5-year Housing Land Supply update. As of July 2020, the housing shortfall figure stands at 2470 dwellings. This equates to an average additional ‘requirement’ of 522 dwellings per year, over the next five years, in order to maintain at least a five-year housing land supply figure for the borough.
* Received an email from a parishioner notifying, someone has fly tipped assorted domestic and garden rubbish at Pested Lane Challock, near the gated entrance to Brush Dane wood.

They have reported the matter to Ashford District Council.

* An email from Kent Police notifying that Matthew Scott, Kent’s Police and Crime Commissioner, has launched his 2020 Annual Policing Survey.

The survey is run every year and gives residents the opportunity to have their say on what Kent Police’s priorities should be and how safe they feel amongst other topics, such as finances.

* Received an email from KALC encouraging parish councils to complete the Climate Change Adaptation Survey for Kent and Medway. The closing date for completing survey is 15th January 2021.
* Received an email from a parishioner concerning the recent implementation of 50 mph signs adjacent to Beech Court entrance. Parishioner understood this was going to change to 40 mph signs to Monkery Lane entrance.
* Received an email from a parishioner concerning the recent implementation of 30 mph signs at the roundabout and a national speed limit sign in between the 30 mph and 40 mph signs.
* Received an email from a parishioner concerning the A252 road improvement, directional signage and widening sections as part of traffic calming of Canterbury Road.
* Received an email from a parishioner concerning the William Oure Charity and suggesting making the poor field a community orchard similar to the one at Chartham.
* Received an email from a parishioner concerning hazardous footway in Clevedon Court, Green Lane. Parishioner suggested having a community maintenance day would be a great thing in the spring. The footpaths could use some attention.  For example, the path from the Post Office to School lane is getting over-grown and muddy, not to mention where the water collects on the corner, as well as other places where the verges spill over onto the footpaths.

Matters arising from correspondence.

**A252 Road Improvements** - Clerk has contacted Alan Osuoha, Highways concerning the recent implementation of speed limit signage. Alan confirmed that the 40 mph signs will be implemented from the entrance to Beech Court Gardens to Monkery Lane junction. The signs on the roundabout are all 30mph turning to 40mph at the existing gateway zones i.e., where there are current red patches on the approaches. The speed limit signs, and Map sign changes will be to the design submitted.

The MAP type sign changes are to do with putting in posts that are safer when hit by cars. Also, when the new signs go up, we will be making slight alterations so that its visible and removes signs blocking each other. There was nothing picked up as an issue in the design drawings so I will check with the site agent that an existing sign has not been put up / left to be removed which is causing confusion. Is this something we can pick up after the contractors have completed the works.

**KCC Bee Plan** – Clerk replied to parishioner the following: - Received a request from a parishioner consider creating flower borders along Green Lane verge and the Lees verges.  Last year July’s minutes it was decided to further investigate the costs of implementing a wildflower section on the Lees.  Clerk has made enquiries depending on the sqm of area recommend 3g/sqm.  1kg of wildflower seed £125.  The area would need to be scarified, removing most of the grass.  Quite a lot of work involved scarifying the area.  A great idea to perhaps involve the primary school in spreading the seeds. Look to budget for costs in precept in January and for implementation in spring/autumn 2021.  Grounds man suggests trialing a smaller flower bed i.e.,10ft x 10ft this autumn. The parish council resolved due to the current pandemic to consider wildflower borders next year.

**Spring Litter Clean** – Subject to COVID-19 restrictions the Parish Council agreed to organize a Spring Clean Litter Pick and to arrange for cleaning of street signs as well as the usual litter pick around the village. The maintenance of the footways around the village comes under KCC Highways. Footpaths on the Lees comes under the Parish Council remit. Clerk to make enquiries into resolving the flooding of the corner of the footpath on the Lees and report back to the Parish Council. Clerk has arranged for the grounds man to do the side edging vegetation on the footpath and is currently liaising with parishioner concerning the overgrown hedge. Though the hedge has been trimmed back to edge of footway, further trimming back to the boundary is required.

Finances

The current account balance on 31st December 2020 is £9214.85.

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

William Oure Charity £3945.85

**Easements**

Outstanding £2,000 easement payment for plot 4, The Gables. Clerk has sent a letter to parishioners for an update on when payment will be made. To date no response has been received. It was agreed for the Clerk to contact the solicitors to write to residents of Plots 1 – 5 notifying them of the outstanding easement payment and grant of easement therefore remains outstanding.

**Precept & Budget 2021/22**

Clerk presented draft budget/precept for 2021/22 to the Councillors.

Due to Covid-19, Ashford Borough Council review on expenditure and the need to reduce costs the Concurrent Grant and Council Support would be part of the savings accumulating to £70,000 saved per annum.

Therefore, the amount to charge to local taxpayers precepted by Challock Parish Council is £21,000.

Councillors approved the income and expenditure budgeted for 2021/22

Proposed by Councillor Fisher and seconded by Councillor Thomas.

All agreed.

Councillors approved the precept of £21,000, the amount to charge to local taxpayers.

Proposed by Councillor Fisher and seconded by Councillor Thomas.

All agreed.

**William Oure Charity**

The Charity Commission revitalizing William Oure Fund have responded stating the current objects are very restrictive – “for the benefit of the poor of Pested Lane in the Parish of Challock”. The trustees can widen the objects to include the whole Parish of Challock if they think this will help them identify more suitable beneficiaries or they could think about introducing an additional object if they feel they are unlikely to identify beneficiaries under ‘poverty’.

If the trustees decide to go down this route, need to provide proposed wording for consideration.

The trustees can also think of alternative ways of raising funds for the charity, so they are not only receiving the £160 rent from the land. This could enable them to make more significant grants.

If the trustees do not feel they are likely to identify suitable beneficiaries, it may be that the best option is to sell the land and close the charity.

Councillor Jaques commented on the William Oure charity has recently been used for 2 elderly parishioners over the Christmas period and requests the Clerk contacts the Charity Commission to ask for an extension due to the pandemic and possible further access to the William Oure charity may be required later on in the year.

Parishioner commented on the poor field been grubbed and whether the farmer had permission to do this and was this necessary. Parishioner questioned the Parish Council being responsible for the William Oure.

Chairman Fisher said the orchard was in decline due to disease (canker) and needed to be grubbed.

A parishioner who lives in Pested Lane agreed that the orchard was in decline.

Chairman Fisher informed the parish council that the Parish Council was approached to take on the William Oure Trust several years ago.

Councillor Brown commented we are halfway through the 5-year farm tenancy agreement.

Councillor Thomas commented as trustees of the William Oure we are responsible to run it as a charity.

Noted. Councillor Ramsden joined the meeting at 7.56 pm.

The Lees

**Securing the Lees - bollards**

Received quotation from Commercial Services for all threeareas £24,630.00 excluding VAT.Received quotations from Grounds man for all three areas £15,676.56 excluding VAT.

Chairman Fisher commented quotations for the bigger companies were too expensive and look for a cheaper quotation.

Councillor Brown commented the grounds man quote was the cheapest and unlikely to get a cheaper quote. Councillor Jaques commented on quality.

Discussion took place on the costs spent so far and becoming an annual occurrence. Chairman Fisher stated the Parish Council has paid over £10,000 on bailiffs. We have a duty to protect the Lees.

Councillors agreed to the installation of round wooden bollards at top section of the Lees, Beech Court Gardens and works to be carried out by the grounds man. Works to be carried out by Spring 2021.

All agreed.

Post Office

**Pop-Up Service** – Due to commence on the 19th January 2021awaiting confirmation. Clerk to advertise service details in the Forester, PC Facebook, and website.

**Community Shop** – The Parish Council has received no response from Parishioners interestedin setting up a community shop.

Planning

20/01678/AS - Land between Paddock Rise and Rock Cottage, Canterbury Road, Challock, Kent.Variation of condition 2 on planning permission 18/01566/AS (Proposed new dwelling with double car port along with separate access) to alter approved plans for fenestration, external materials, and garage design.

Challock Parish Council supports this application providing neighbours’ views are taken into consideration.

20/01687/AS - Land Between Hurstwood and Haverbrook, Canterbury Road, Challock, Kent

Variation of condition 5 on planning permission 15/01101/AS (Application for approval of reserved matters of plots 1&2 (outline approval granted under 14/01157/AS)) to alter design of garage for plot 2.

Challock Parish Council supports this application providing neighbours’ views are taken into consideration.

20/01712/AS - The Old School House, Canterbury Road, Challock, Ashford, Kent, TN25 4BJ

Erection of a log cabin as a garden room and home gym.

Challock Parish Council supports this application.

**Ratification of Planning Applications**

The following application was ratified.

20/01660/AS Keepers Cottage, Squids Gate Lane, Challock, Ashford, Kent, TN25 4DR

Single storey side extension

Challock Parish Council supports this application.

Items for Information

**Faversham Road Footpath KCC Design Report** – The basic construction costs for this scheme are currently estimated at £47,500.00. There are some caveats to this estimate that we will need to obtain quotations for should the Parish Council still wish to progress this scheme. The scheme construction cost is likely to increase in the next financial year in line with retail price index inflation and we will adjust the quotation accordingly once we know what that rate will be and when the PC confirm their agreement to fund and progress the project.

Additional costs requiring quotation (not included within the estimate provided):

1. Tree removal and stump grinding (to include conifers that currently form the current boundary between private land and public highway)
2. Accommodation works to private driveways to tie into new footway.
3. Demolition of existing boundary fences and walls
4. Replacement of fencing to private land (1M or 2M close boarded fencing proposed)
5. Kent lane rental fees
6. Replacement tree planting
7. Any legal costs associated with land transfer/dedication of land.

We estimate a build time for this project of between 6 to 8 weeks and a construction date is subject to agreement to fund the works from the PC and availability of road space.

Unfortunately, it is likely we will have to remove the mature tree that is sited outside Paddock View, to accommodate the new footway. Darren has discussed the possibility of leaving the tree and diverting the new footway around it with our tree officer but have been advised that it is likely the tree would die anyway as the new footway would have to run tight to the tree and would ultimately suffocate the root system. As the tree is not a KCC asset the PC will need to obtain landowners consent for its removal and will also need to seek the advice of the Ashford Borough Council’s tree officer over its removal. Should approval for the tree’s removal be agreed, in line with national policy, we will provide two replacement trees to be sited at an agreed location. Any removal works for existing trees and hedges is restricted by bird nesting season and this will also restrict our planned construction window.

Chairman Fisher raised his concerns on the increased costs of the footpath since the original quote.

ABC Ward Councillor Krause suggested the Parish Council writes to Charlie Simkins of our concerns of the increase costs of the works and how the parish council is expected to fund the increased costs.

**Christmas Tree –** The village Christmas tree was donated by Foodari and Christmas tree lights donated by Kent Surfacing Contractors. The primary school and children from the village was invited to make and hang decorations on the tree. The Parish Council would like to thank Councillors Jacques, Hardie and Brown for arranging for the Christmas to be installed adjacent to the war memorial and the donations made by Foodari and Kent Surfacing Contractors. The Parish Council would like to thank the primary school children for making lovely decorations for the tree.

The clerk is arranging for the disposal of the tree with a local tree maintenance company and will donate to Pilgrims hospice.

A.O.B

**Footpath, Post Office - the Lees.** It was agreed for Councillor Brown to make enquiries into resurfacing the foot path.

**30 mph signs – Canterbury Road.** Councillor Ramsden commented on his disappointment on the A252 Road improvements and the many changes throughout the process. The installation of the 30 mph signs at the roundabout should be extended throughout the village.

Discussion took place of the speeding traffic through the village and the lack of support from the police.

Discussion took place concerning speed cameras through the village and funding. Councillor Jaques commented this was rejected by KCC during the A252 Road Improvement Scheme consultation. It was agreed for Councillor Brown to investigate into speed cameras in the village.

ABC Ward Councillor Krause suggested the Parish Council writes to Police Commissioner Matthew Scott of our concerns and lack of support from the police on speed monitoring.

Noted. Police Commissioner Matthew Scott will seek evidence of traffic surveys and community speed watch to back up our concerns.

Chairman Fisher referred to traffic survey funded by Charlie Simkins carried out previously.

Councillor Jaques informed, the parish council upon completion of the works the Parish Council will be writing a report on the A252 Road Improvement Scheme to KCC. The Clerk has been corresponding with Alan Osouha during the installation of works raising awareness of safety concerns/hazards that have occurred.

Parish Forum

Parishioner referred to agenda item wildflower borders and KCC Bee Plan. Wildlife on the Lees could be enhanced by creating wildflower borders. Parishioner commented poppies and cornflowers would not flourish on the Lees due to the soil being quite wet most of the time. By simply not mowing some of the grass areas, would allow native wildflowers to grow. Parishioner’s own garden has abundance of wild orchids growing.

Councillor Jaques suggested parishioner forms a group to come up with a plan of areas on the Lees where they would like to encourage wildflower borders. To bring their proposals to the next parish meeting for Councillors to consider. Councillor Hardie said he would like to help and get involved. Clerk to send a map of the Lees and details of grass mowing schedule.

**The meeting closed at 9.11 pm.**

Parish Council Meeting Dates for 2021

Next Zoom Parish Meeting Thursday, 18th February 2021

**Future Parish Meeting Dates:**

Thursday 18th March

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……………………………………….**