**Challock Parish Council Meeting Minutes**

Memorial Hall

Wednesday, 8th March 2022 7.34 pm

Members of public present:5

Apologies

Apologies received by ABC Ward Councillor Larry Krause & Councillor Aitken

Present

Michael Fisher (Chairman), Duncan Hardie, John Ramsden, Tracy Brown, Max Thomas & Di Sandy (Clerk).

Welcome

Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

Declarations of Interest

Councillors no new changes to the declarations of interest.

Minutes of Last Meeting

Minutes of 8th March 2022 meeting were signed by Chairman Fisher as an accurate record.

Proposed by Councillor Brown and seconded by Councillor Hardie.

All agreed.

**PCSO Adam Brooks**

No report has been received by PCSO Adam Brooks this month. Clerk has received information regarding incidents of lamping in Pested Lane, which has been reported to Community Police and the Rural Task Force.

Clerk’s Report

**Highways**

Clerk requested for the island markers along Canterbury Road, The Lees be cleaned.

Clerk has reported tree branches obstruction on Buck Street footpath adjacent to cricket field.

Clerk has made enquiries with Kent Highways requesting permission to plug wildflowers at the area adjacent to the Halfway. Lisa Willoughby has arranged for the soft landscapes team to look over this. A cultivation license may be required.

Clerk reported a deceased animal at the bus layby, Buck Street to ABC Street Cleansing team.

Clerk reported debris near the drains at the roundabout, Halfway Pub.

**The Lees**

Due to the high winds in February, a couple of trees had come down on the Lees, entrance to the Post Office. Residents had kindly removed them to the other side of the Lees. The grounds man to arrange to remove them from the Lees and dispose of.

**PROW**

Clerk has reported fallen tree at the footpath opposite the entrance to Landew Meadows.

**Playpark**

The Clerk has arranged for delivery of the play bark for Wednesday, 16th March am. The grounds man to remove the concrete by the nest swing on Tuesday, 15th March and to place in a skip. The play park will be closed from Tuesday, 15th March whilst the works are being carried out, should re-open Wednesday afternoon. Due to a communication error with Bourne Amenity the delivery of bark turned up on Wednesday, 2nd March. The Clerk had to reject the delivery as no arrangements were in place to assist the driver to off load the bark. A voicemail message was left on Clerk’s phone, but the symbol was off. There is an additional charge for delivery of £262, the Clerk is prepared to pay the charge due to human error.

Noted. Chairman proposed that the Clerk is not to pay for the additional delivery charge. All agreed.

**Funding**

There is an outstanding ABC grant application for CCTV for the Village Hall and Cricket Pavilion. Should be decided soon.

Correspondence

* Received an email from a parishioner reporting a hazard on the triangle area, the Memorial. Parishioner’s son ran into the electrical post uprights which required attendance at A&E.
* Received an email from a parishioner regarding a letter sent to Councillor Aitken enquiring about the lack of village website and the Kent Bee Plan and why it wasn’t read out at February’s parish meeting. The parishioner questioned the rules of the parish meeting and requested where a matter is voted on if not unanimous, the names of councillors who voted against are listed. Parishioner also requested a name plate for each councillor.
* Received a telephone call from Alan Knight, Post Office regarding a new site. The post office has moved back to the Halfway to a Thursday afternoon 2 pm to 4 pm for the time being. It may extend to Tuesdays in the summer months, if the Halfway decides to open. Alternative sites are being looked into. The village hall committee has offered the use of the Audrey Allen room but there will be a charge. Alan says the post office will not pay for hire of a room, effectively the post office is providing a community service. The Post Office has launched a consultation hub to look for alternative premises.
* Received an email from Wildflower Group, expressing their disappointment in the recent outcome of the wildflower areas, in particular area 1 not included. The originally agreed areas of the Lees have now reduced due to a small number of complaints but without confirming who they were from or why a few complaints should outweigh the positive feedback from parishioners. The group are disappointed for not consulted on the wildflower policy and given a meaningful budget to do their areas. The group have decided to step back and concentrate on privately owned land.
* Received an email from parishioner enquiring when the village website will be up and running and request access to the minutes. Clerk has emailed minutes to the parishioner and explained the website would be up and running soon, it’s been a slow process as we were unable to transfer all the files from the old website.
* Received an email from Mike Bartholomew Chairman, Green Lanes Environment Action Movement requesting councillors to take part in the consultation and ask for new legislation to protect Green Lanes in ANOB. Drawing attention to the part of the consultation which addresses the problem of recreational motor vehicles (4x4s, quad bikes and motorbikes) driving on green lanes, in particular in the National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Consultation closes 15th April 2022. Clerk to publicise in the Forester, PC Facebook & Website, Parishioners can also respond to consultation.
* Received an email from Linda Cook from Hedgehogs R US enquiring if the parish council interested in purchasing a Hedgehog Highway which is a 5-inch gap in a fence allowing them access to forage for food and meet mates. To purchase just one box of hedgehog highway surrounds and make them available for parishioners to purchase. Each box of fifty units’ costs £150 and £7.50 postage. The suggested resale price of each Highway is £5 which will result in £250. This means you will get your £150 investment returned and will have £100 profit for a community project / hedgehog project of your choice. Clerk has made further enquiries; the surrounds cannot be purchased individually.
* Received an email from the Clerk at Kennington Community Council enquiring if the parish council is adding their views to be allowed the freedom to hold remote, including hybrid meetings when local circumstances suit.
* Received notification we have not been successful in the Cycling & Footpath grant. This is due to ABC already contributing to the Faversham Road Footpath scheme.
* Received an email from Amanda Cottrell notifying works to remove the dying ash tree adjacent to the Memorial, the Lees will be taking place on 18th March. The lower part of the trunk will remain in the hedge, as habitat and all debris cleared away but may have to leave some logs stacked there for a day depending on the weather and how much daylight time. Will take everything down on to the grass and will not have to close the road at any time and reinstate any damage to the grass.
* Received notification of the Boundary Commissions proposed changes for Ashford would see the existing parliamentary constituency of Ashford replaced with three new constituencies:
* Ashford – including 24 of Ashford’s 39 wards plus wards from Folkestone & Hythe
* Weald of Kent – including 12 of Ashford’s wards
* Faversham & Mid Kent – including the Ashford wards of Charing, Downs North, and Downs West

The proposed new Ashford constituency would have an electorate of 73,546, Faversham and

Mid Kent 76,432; and Weald of Kent 70,362. The public hearing in Ashford takes place on 24 and 25 March at the Ashford Borough Council Civic Centre, allowing people to have their say in person about the proposed changes. The consultation closes on the 4th April 2022. Clerk to publicise on PC Facebook.

* Received an email from Derek Burles requesting support to sign up to Save Aldington from excessive blight in the East Stour Valley regarding planned solar farm developments in villages. Parishioners can sign up to campaign website savealdington.com. Clerk to publicise in the Forester & PC Facebook.
* Received an email from parishioner enquiring when the William Oure farm tenancy ends. The tenancy agreement ends on 31st December 2023.
* Received notification we have been successful in the lottery Together For Our Planet and have awarded £2930 for the wildflower areas and wooden troughs.
* Received email from KALC regarding National Pay Awards for 2021 -2022. Employers should implement the new pay increase from April 2021.
* Received an email from parishioner requesting the Kent Plan Bee newsletter circulated to the Councillors.

**Matters arising from correspondence**

* Electrical Post Uprights – Clerk reported the hazard to UK Power Networks who have now encased the metal uprights with yellow sleeves. Parishioner thanked the Clerk for quick response.
* Voting Wildflower Areas 8th February Parish Meeting – It was minuted “Councillors agreed to keep to the original decision made at the 17th November 2021 parish meeting. The Wildflower Group to manage areas 2 & 3 and for area 5 to be extended.

Councillors were unanimous, Councillor Aitken commenting the wildflowers in area one is not cut too soon, with Councillor Hardie abstaining. Due to work commitments and busy with the pantomime Councillor Aitken delivered the letter from the parishioner to Clerk after the 8th February’s meeting. However, Councillor Aitken did email the Clerk prior to February’s meeting requesting the Kent Bee Plan is redistributed to the Councillors. At the February’s meeting under items for information, village website is near completion and Clerk to send over minutes and financial information. During the parish forum Clerk informed parishioner that the website would be available within the next month. Parishioners can now visit the website, officially launched at this meeting.

* Remote Meetings Motion – Councillors approved the following motion to write to the Secretary of State showing our support:

“This Council supports the petition launched by ADSO and LLG on 5 January with regard to remote and hybrid meetings. We agree to write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities calling on the Government to change the law to allow councils the flexibility to hold such meetings when they deem appropriate within agreed rules and procedures.”

All agreed.

* National Pay Awards – Councillors approved the Clerk’s salary increase to £10.63 per hour, according to the latest National Pay Awards. All agreed.

Finances

**Bank Reconciliation**

The current account balance on 28th February 2022 is £8877.13

The NS&I account balance is £15670.71

Funds Ring-fenced

£4190 Faversham Footpath

£6000 Skate Park

£2800 Faversham Footpath legal fees (land transfer/dedication of land)

£2000 High Tree Lodge planning application consultation fees

£679 Bollards for the Lees

William Oure Charity £4109.80

**Internal Audit**

The Internal Audit with Lionel Robbins booked for 13th April at the Audrey Allen room.

**Village Website**

The Village Website invoice is £1236. The original quotation was £1344 excluding storage space at £2 per month per Councillor/Clerk’s email accounts. The quotation of transfer of files was £385. Actual invoice reduced to £145 as Parish Council Websites were unable to transfer all files across. The Clerk emailed files of minutes, finances, and councillor details.

For maximum GDPR compliance, Parish Council Websites recommend Councillors using webmail with storage space because that way if a Councillor were to leave the council all their messages could be deleted at source. This is an additional cost £192.00. The total cost for the website is £1236.00.

Noted. Clerk has completed claim form to ABC for £522 grant towards the costs of the new website. Clerk has also completed Monitoring Form as part of the grant agreement.

Councillors approved the village website invoice for £1236.

The following cheques for March signed by Councillor Brown & Councillor Ramsden

Chq No.102602 Parish Council Website – Website £492.00

Planning

The following applications were discussed:

22/00065/AS - 3 The Ransleys, Mill Lane, Challock, Ashford, Kent, TN25 4FP

Installation of a 4000 litre Calor gas LPG tank, underground, to serve all 6 properties on the development

Challock Parish Council supports this application.

22/00207/AS - The Firs, Buck Street, Challock, Ashford, TN25 4AR

Construction of new dwelling and detached garage

Challock Parish Council does not support this application as the dwelling is outside of the village confines and is in an area of outstanding natural beauty. Councillor Hardie had no objection to the application.

**Under declarations of interest Councillor Ramsden left the room whilst the following planning application 22/00207/AS Heron House, The Lees was discussed.**

22/00222/AS - Heron House, The Lees, Canterbury Road, Ashford, Challock, Kent, TN25 4BP

Prior Notification for change of use of former post office stores class A1 (shops, post offices, ticket, and travel agencies) to residential C3 (Dwelling Houses)

Challock Parish Council has no objections to the change of use.

Noted. Clerk to make enquiries on prescriptive rights regarding the letterbox and telephone/defibrillator.

21/02260/AS - The Warren, Green Lane, Challock, Ashford, Kent, TN25 4BL
Application to discharge a section 106 agreement imposed on planning permission 89/01119/AS in relation to the existing building to allow for the new build granted planning permission on 20/00273/AS

Challock Parish Council has not objections to the removal of section 106 agreement.

**Ratification of Planning Applications**

The following application was ratified.

KCC AS/94/1155/R11B Hegdale Quarry, Challock ME13 0JX

Request for approval of replacement weighbridge & office & new fuel tank pursuant to condition 11 of planning permission AS/94/1155.

Comments: Challock Parish Council has no objection to the application.

**A251 Faversham Road Footpath**

Clerk attended a Teams meeting with Darren Hickman & Wendy Boorman to discuss the installation of the footpath. The construction works will now commence during the summer 2023 and not this year as originally planned. This is because the bird nesting season is about to begin and the removal of the oak tree and hedging, trees etc cannot be done until Autumn 2022. We have also been informed of a 17% uplift in costs overall, so we are looking at approximately £8700 in addition to the construction works. Ashford Borough Council had allowed for £2500 contingency £1500 of which will be from Challock Parish Council and ABC the remaining £1000. The additional costs are estimated at £12,000. Total Project work is now estimated at £68200. A further £18200 funds required. Mr Damian Green MP suggest the Parish Council and Michelle Byrne Ashford Borough Council apply jointly to the Road Safety Trust for the additional funds. The funding bid for the Road Safety Trust opens every year in September. Therefore, we will be applying in September 2022. The Parish Council are currently crowdfunding for the Jubilee celebrations but after this will set up a crowdfund page for the Faversham Road footpath as well. Clerk has asked KCC to consider installation of the footpath to commence in Autumn 2022. Darren Hickman is making enquiries, though he warned that we might receive increased complaints regarding the traffic control. At the meeting Darren Hickman recommended he would get quotes for additional costs, i.e., traffic control, fencing, removal of Oak tree and residents walls and trees/hedges rather than the Parish Council obtaining quotations from local contractors. This is because of the A251 is a main road and would require traffic control to be in place whilst these works are being carried out.

Clerk has commenced with the deed of dedication with our Solicitor and awaiting to hear back from KCC Legal to see if they are able to assist in order to keep the costs down. Solicitor charges are £950. Thankfully, this is a lot less, the Parish Council had ring-fenced £2,800.

Councillors agreed to holding a boot fair on the Sunday, the Spring Bank Holiday weekend to fund raise for both the Jubilee Celebrations and for the Faversham Road footpath. Councillors agreed to help out on the day. Councillors Fisher and Brown agreed to attend the next meeting with KCC Darren Hickman & Wendy Boorman. Mr Stuart parishioner in attendance was invited to attend the meeting with KCC.

**Local Housing Needs**

Clerk attended a Teams meeting with ABC Mark James & Claire Poile. Due to family commitments Councillor Brown was unable to attend.

Mark explained his role in the Development Team and primarily his job is to look for available land to build affordable homes. Houses built through S106 developers or by Ashford Borough Council. Since 2011 over 500 affordable housing have been built. Claire Poile role as Partnership Project Officer to ensure Council housing stock used affectively, support people who wish to downsize, in partnership with other providers i.e., English Rural. The committee is chaired by Councillor Mick Burgess, Councillor Jessamy Blanford and Alison Thompson representing English Rural. Action with Communities in Rural Kent assist with funding Local Housing Needs Surveys. A questionnaire issued to every parishioner in Challock regarding development in the village and the type of housing needed. Share results, giving a snapshot of local housing needs.

Councillors agreed not commission a housing needs survey conducted by Ashford Borough Council as affordable housing i.e., part-share ownership or low-cost renting in the village is not being taken up by local people and therefore there is no housing need in the village.

**Collenna Driveway – The Lees**

Recent improvement works to property Collenna, resident has extended driveway onto the access, second lands, the Lees. The widening of the access and is subject to variation to deed of easement. The parishioner has questioned the width extension and believes it is less than 1.2m. Parishioner with the understanding that in order to keep the access would need to hire a surveyor and arranged for a solicitor to do the variation to the deed of easement. The Parishioner formerly requests the Parish Council grants permission.

Councillors agreed that the parishioner can apply for a variation to the deed of easement concerning the widened access providing all costs including the parish councils’ legal fees are met by the parishioner. Any changes made to the access should incur no costs to the Parish. The Surveyor would assess the actual extended width of access and propose recommended compensatory value. Councillors had no objection to the stone chippings on the access.

**Queens Platinum Jubilee**

**3rd June Village Event -** Clerk has been unable to book funfair rides as they are booked up or book any entertainment. Managed to book the village hall just in case of severe weather. Clerk has set up crowdfunding page to secure funding for the entertainment. To be launched by the end of this week. A claim for VAT £1000 can be available to fund the Jubilee event. Clerk request help from Councillors in organising the Jubilee event.

Councillors approved the claim for £1,000 VAT refund to ring-fence for Jubilee event.

Councillor Brown and Councillor Hardie offered to help with the organising the Jubilee event. Councillor Hardie to make enquiries at the Halfway Pub for details of bands. Parishioner suggested a 1940’s singing group may be available in the evening. Parishioner to email contact details of group to the Clerk.

Clerk to apply to Lottery Awards for All for funding for the Jubilee.

**Jubilee Tree Planting -** Received one request from a parishioner for a tree sapling. Clerk to publicise further and inquire if the school would like one. Councillors agreed for some tree saplings to be planted in the wooded area, the Lees.

Councillors agreed to have a naming competition for the wooded area, the Lees. Clerk post details in the Forester and PC’s Facebook and website. Clerk to consult with Woodland Trust and Kent Wildlife Trust for advice on the wooded area.

**Wildflower Policy Update**

The Wildflower group have decided to step back and concentrate on private lands.

Councillors agreed to keep areas 2 & 3 for wildflowers. The funds from the lottery Together our planet to arrange for school children to make wildflower bee bombs and place in areas 2, 3 & 5. Commission Les Langley to build wooden troughs 8ft x 1.5 ft. Councillors agreed for the grounds man to extend the front of wildflower area 5. To scarify the area and lay topsoil with flower seed mix. The children to add bee bombs on this area. The area will need to be watered regularly before it becomes established. As well as buddleia shrubs to be planted at the back of area 5, Councillors agreed to the planting of sunflowers, involving the children. Timescale for the seeding of these areas to be carried out the first week of April. Councillor Aitken has offered to look after one of the troughs. Councillors agreed for the Clerk to post in the Forester, PC Facebook & website to ask parishioners suggestions of where they would like to see the troughs sited, and if any groups/organisations would like to help look after them. Any remaining troughs would be maintained by the Parish Council.

Councillor Brown requested consideration for one the troughs to be sited at the top end of the Lees, Beech Court Gardens.

Items for Information

**Parish Council Village Website**

The Parish Council website is now up and running and officially launched this evening. There are further enhancements/amendments to be made.

**Speedwatch**

Due to inclement weather no sessions have taken place. Speedwatch sessions to recommence as soon as the weather improves, hopefully during March.

A.O.B

Councillors agreed for the Clerk to organize a litter pick campaign in April.

Councillor Ramsden proposed arranging a meeting with the Village Hall Committee to consider having a pop-up post office in the village hall to coincide with a community tea and cakes session to cover the village hall costs. The post office is heavily subsidized and wouldn’t be able to pay charges for the use of a room/hall.

The Methodist Chapel are unable to have a pop-up post office in their room as they are only permitted to have community nonprofit groups.

Noted. Councillor Hardie informed the Parish Council that he received a text from Councillor Jaques sending his apologies as he has covid.

Parish Forum

Parishioner suggested holding a family picnic for the Jubilee celebrations and to look to local musicians in the village that might provide the entertainment.

Parishioner raised concerns for people who have mobile difficulties accessing the post office at the Halfway.

Parishioner informed the Parish Council that the Wildflower group are concentrating their efforts on encouraging people to grow wildflowers in their gardens.

Parishioner asked why the Parish Council Wildflower Policy is based on Brooks Wildflower Policy and not used Selling’s Policy. Felt that the Parish Council is doing very little regarding the wildflower areas.

Clerk commented that the Parish Council are doing something and would like to do more with the wooded area and the Wildflower group didn’t appear interested in working with this area.

Parishioner said the wooded area should be left as it is, as wildflowers would not grow.

**The meeting closed at 9.15 pm.**

Parish Council Meeting Dates for 2022

Next Parish Meeting

Wednesday, 13th April 2022 in the main hall.

**Future Parish Meeting Dates:**

Wednesday, 6th May AGM

Tuesday 17th May 2022 Annual Parish Meeting

Wednesday, 15th June

Wednesday, 13th July

Wednesday, 14th September

Wednesday, 12th October

Wednesday, 16th November

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

**Dated……………………………………….**