**Challock Parish Council Meeting Minutes**

Memorial Hall

Tuesday, 19th July 2022 7.30 pm

Members of public present:4

Apologies

John Ramsden, ABC Ward Councillor Larry Krause

Present

Michael Fisher (Chairman), Anthony Aitken, Russell Jaques, Duncan Hardie, 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 4th May 2022 meeting were signed by Chairman Fisher as an accurate record.

Proposed by Councillor Hardie and seconded by Councillor Brown.

All agreed.

**PCSO Bradley Hobbs**

Newsletters would no longer be sent owing to the introduction of a new messaging system called My Community Voice. To get information about scams and what your PCSO’s are doing we encourage you to sign up to My Community Voice. [www.mycommunityvoicekent.co.uk](http://www.mycommunityvoicekent.co.uk/)

We have just had a re-structure and your new PCSO is Brad Hobbs who can be contacted by email csu.ashford@kent.police.uk

Clerk’s Report

**Highways**

Clerk reported tree branch obstruction, footpath, Buck Street.

Clerk reported overgrown vegetation along narrow footpath adjacent to the Barn Shop, Canterbury Road.

Clerk reported overgrown vegetation along Buck Street footpaths adjacent to High Tree Lodge and Forest Cottages.

Clerk reported large pothole Blind Lane, adjacent to the entrance to the village hall car park.

Grounds man has strimmed overgrown vegetation along verge adjacent to Blind Lane entrance, Buck Street and overgrown vegetation along the footpath, Canterbury Road, adjacent to the Barn Shop.

Clerk has reported street lighting not working adjacent to entrance to Primrose Cottage, Faversham Road.

**A252 Canterbury Road**

Clerk requested the A252 Canterbury Road, Lees section be surveyed with intention of the road being resurfaced. Highways Inspector has carried out a site checked and performed a risk assessment and traffic survey whilst onsite. Unfortunately, the carriageway defects are all centre line defects and are of wearing course thickness only. At this present time, feel there is no need for Ashford operations and carry out essential maintenance work. I will, however, pass your concerns forward to our Road and Footway team and ask that they consider this section of carriageway for future resurfacing works. In the meantime, I will continue to monitor for further deterioration and raise a works order for repair accordingly if required to do so.

Clerk to request a noise survey is carried out. Lorries travelling along the road hit the centre line defects making it very noisy for parishioners living near the entrance to High Snoad Wood and Green Lane.

**Public Rights of Way**

Clerk reported overgrown vegetation, footpath AE88 High Snoad Wood.

**The Lees**

A tree branch hanging over onto the A252 from Lees Woodland Walk and 2 trees leaning adjacent to Dunn Esk, The Lees (Post Office). Clerk arranged for the tree surgeon Josh Buggins to remove the trees and branches. The trees cut down have been hidden in the undergrowth.

As part of the Queen’s Canopy, we have received Quercus Robar sapling to celebrate the Queen’s Jubilee. To be planted on the Lees early September.

**Play Park**

Received play park inspection report. Minor repairs required – rusting plates on the playhouse and a missing cover on the nest swing. Clerk to arrange for the grounds man to repair the rusting plates i.e., sand down and repaint. Clerk to order cover for the nest swing.

Grounds man has raked over the play bark.

**Training**

Clerk has attended a free zoom website accessibility training course.

Correspondence

* Received an email from Alan Osouha regarding the uplighters, roundabout - The works is still outstanding, and I am chasing to programme it in asap. The contractor on-site is preparing to provide me with a start date for the works which I will pass on.
* An email from Electoral Services informing parishes ABC is running an interim review of polling stations and polling places. This can be viewed on [www.ashford.gov.uk/polling-stations-and-polling-places-review-2022](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/polling-stations-and-polling-places-review-2022). Projected electorate for 2027 for Challock is 927 and projected population is 1,236 parishioners.
* Received an email from Youth Club informing the parish council need of new volunteers. If we don’t get them, we might have to close Youth Club.
* Received an email from Lisa Willoughby KCC annual notification of spring vegetation information sheet
* Received an email from ABC Simon Cole Assistant Director Planning of a planned clearance week 23rd May for all types of planning applications including pre-applications and conditions discharge in readiness for the new planning portal going live in July. It is hoped to reduce the number of outstanding planning applications 425, clearing 280.
* Received an email from a parishioner regarding dangerous parking in St Cosmas Close, during school pick up times. Email was also copied into the school.
* Received an email from KCC Ward Councillor Charlie Simkins concerning the reduce bus services consultation, specifically asked to speak to express my concern over the isolation that would be caused to the elderly in our villages if services were removed and I also drew attention to the disruption which would be caused to parents with children needing to get to school. I cited the fact that there are no alternative services in a large part of Ashford Rural West and asked that specific consideration be given to rural areas such as ours. The final decisions will be presented to the next meeting of the committee on 6 July.
* Received an email from Rural Kent concerning the local housing needs survey.
* Received a complaint from member of the public concerning the Jubilee Firework Display and requesting a copy of our risk assessment.
* Received an email from ABC Michelle Byrne regarding grant offer for CCTV. Grant offer will be made once they receive back data protection impact statement.
* Received an email KCC Jim Wooldridge regarding Hegdale Quarry Scoping Opinion - I can advise you that the Scoping Opinion in 2017 has not progressed. H R Ovenden does not currently have a license for infilling of waste. They can still extract chalk and the only recent application that has been approved is for the weighbridge and office (AS/94/1155)
* Received an email from KCC Wendy Boorman regarding Challock Highways Improvement Plan and propose to set up a meeting once their new staff are on board.
* Received an email from a parishioner concerning the condition of the Lees entrance opposite The Chequers and the verge adjacent to Ivy Farm. Grounds man has filled the entrance with loose planings.

**Matters arising from correspondence**

* The uplighter works at the roundabout have now been completed.
* The Housing Needs Survey to be issued out to parishioners in September/October.

Finances

**Bank Reconciliation**

The current account balance on 30th June 2022 is £9073.91

Clerk has sent off for VAT Refund for £1588.03.

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 £3227.13

Funds taken out for £200 cash, £501.92 School uniforms & Fruit & Veg Box x 8 £144.85

Total Funds £846.77. Awarded to Ukrainian Guests.

Chairman Fisher & Councillor Thomas signed the following cheques: -

Cheque No: 102654 Commercial Services - Lees maintenance April, May & June £842.56

Cheque No: 102655 Play Safety Ltd – ROSPA Inspection £96.60

Planning

The following planning application was discussed

**22/01010/AS The Bluebells, Buck Street, Challock, Ashford, TN25 4AR**Alterations to detached garage including two rear dormers with Juliet balconies.

Supporting: Challock Parish Council supports this application.

**Ratification of Planning Applications**

The following planning applications were ratified.

**22/00916/AS Hillside, Blind Lane, Challock.**Proposed front and rear single storey extensions, conversion of loft space with the construction of dormer windows

Commenting: I am a little concerned about the height of the new roof against the adjacent property’s roofs. Would it look out of place in AONB? I don’t believe we can allow both of these developments. The extension to existing only would be preferable.

**22/00917/ASHillside, Blind Lane, Challock, Ashford, TN25 4AU**Proposed construction of new detached dwelling

Objecting: I don’t believe we can allow both of these developments. The extension to existing only would be preferable. I do not support this application I feel it is overcrowding. I’m not in favour, it looks fairly cramped. The kitchen living space seems small for a four-bed house. It looks fairly cramped.

**22/00902/AS Drayhorse Farm, Faversham Road, Challock, Ashford, Kent, TN25 4BQ**Change of use and proposed 60m by 40m outdoor riding arena/manage for equestrian business.

Supporting: It seems fine to me, although we probably need to request that there is no flood lighting installed for winter use or a time restriction on its use if they are intending to light it. I am OK with this application.

**22/00686/AS Maple House, Church Lane, Challock, Ashford, TN25 4BU**
Proposed rear extension and proposed dormer window to front elevation.

Supporting: Neighbours do not have no objections; therefore, I support.

**Information: 20/00184/AS High Tree Lodge Planning application for 24 dwellings have been refused**

Reasons: The proposals would result in a significant and harmful intrusion within the Kent Downs AONB and would therefore be seriously harmful to the character, appearance and setting to Challock and the proposals fail to conserve or enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the Kent Downs AONB. It has not demonstrated that the proposals are able to provide safe access for service and delivery vehicles which is likely to lead to severe highway impacts. Insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that a sustainable means of drainage would support the development nor how the disposal of foul drainage will be managed. Planning obligations by a completed S106 legal agreement the proposals have not secured the required affordable housing provision. Lastly, insufficient information has been submitted to allow assessment of the implications of the proposed development upon the Stodmarsh water environment.

**Introduction to new Planning Portal**

The Council’s Planning Department is transitioning to a new cloud-based planning

system on Monday 4 July, which will bring a range of benefits to residents, ward

members and parish councils. Parish councils and ward members won’t need to sign up to alerts any

longer in order to receive consultations on applications. This will be integrated in our processes in order to facilitate the consultee portal functionality.

There will be a new ‘consultee’ module within the software specifically for clerks/councillors and consultees to get quick and easy access to planning applications they have been consulted on.

**Faversham Road Footpath**

A further £18200 funds required. The Parish Council and Michelle Byrne, Ashford Borough Council to apply jointly to the Road Safety Trust for the additional funds in September 2022. Awaiting from Darren Hickman quotations for the additional costs, i.e., traffic control, fencing, removal of Oak tree and residents’ walls and trees/hedges. A meeting to take place within the next month to discuss additional costs.

KCC Legal Dept will be writing to residents along Faversham Road concerning the deed of dedication. At the parish council meeting 13th April, it was agreed for £10,000 Deed of Easement to be ring-fenced towards the Faversham Road Footpath. This will reduce the funds required to £8,200.

**A251 Road Safety**

A recent fatality at Leaveland Corner, Faversham Road. Helen Whately MP has requested for a traffic accident report for Faversham Road stretching from Challock to North Street, Faversham. The Chairman from Sheldwich Parish Council has kept us updated and requested we write to our MP raising our concerns of road safety of the A251 in light of the recent fatality.

We have now received the accident report for accidents between 2017 and March 2022 with clusters of minor accidents occurring in Buck Street, Mill Lane, Pested Lane, Badlesmere & North Street. With a serious accident at Challock Roundabout, Pested Lane, Shottenden Lane junction, Badlesmere Garage and North Street. In the 5-year period 01/04/2017-31/03/2022 there were 39 collisions along the route including 5 serious and 34 slight collisions. This resulted in 51 casualties including 5 serious and 46 slight. There were no fatalities recorded during this period.The report concluded the A251 is considered a lower risk road in comparison to a sample of 43 other rural A roads sections in the county.

Speeding during peak times tend to fall within the speed limits whilst off peak which represent free flow conditions, show mean speeds remain below the posted speed limit for the 50mph sections but are above posted speed limit in the village sections. 85th percentile speeds are frequently above the posted speed limit indicating that when conditions are free flowing vehicles can be expected to travel over the posted limits. Challock Speed watch demonstrates drivers keeping within the speed limit when there is a convoy of vehicles however, less vehicles will go above the speed limit in particular at Westwell Junction, Beech Court Gardens entrance and Buck Street.

Conclusion - There are no cluster sites along the route and none of the junctions are consider highest risk in comparison to similar junctions around the county. That said, there have still been a significant number of collisions, and further investigation into these was warranted to identify further opportunities for intervention. A review of the approaches to the Mill Lane, Broomfield Lane, Shottenden Road and Dayton Road junctions may be prudent to check forward visibility of the junctions. Likewise, consideration to the ability for drivers to consider overtaking between Badlesmere and Challock may reduce the risk of head on collisions.

Councillors approved the draft letter to MP Damian Green and to include reference to the above report.

Chairman commented on the speeding vehicles going across the roundabout at 70/80 miles per hour and the lack of police operating speed monitoring. Chairman requests the clerk writes to Police Commissioner Matthew Scott of concerns of speeding and lack of police conducting speed monitoring.

**William Oure Charity**

**Treasurers Account** – Nationwide has shut down the Treasurers Account and cannot offer an alternative account. Clerk has made several enquiries to other banks who seemed to be doing the same thing. Contacted the Charity Commission who advised that providing the account is named William Oure, they have no concerns and signposted to CAF Bank (Charity Aid Foundation). Clerk contacted CAF who are happy to set up a charity account however, charge £8 per month (£96 per annum). Clerk has applied to Metro Bank and Santander and waiting to hear back.

**Rent Review** – Clerk contacted BTF who confirmed a minimum of 12 months’ notice needs to be served on the tenant prior to initiating the first review, which would have actually been due on 1st January 2022 i.e., seven months ago. For an area of just over 2 acres and an annual rent of £160 per annum, it is better dealt with by simply contacting the tenant and asking him whether he wishes to continue occupying the land past 31st December 2023 and if so that the Parish Council feel that the rent ought to go up to say £200 or even £250 per annum. If tenant will not review the rent now, then perhaps it may be time to serve notice to terminate the agreement and start again on 1st January 2024. Advising the Parish Council to be conscious that initiating a formal rent review procedure and subsequent discussions that may arise is likely to cost more in professional fees than the annual rent. Councillors agreed the rent should be increased. In the region of £250 per acre. Clerk to make enquiries with BTF.

**Tenancy Renewal** – Land Tenancy Agreement – Due to end in December 2023. Received an enquiry from parishioners interested in taking over the tenancy. As part of the tenancy agreement, we have to give the tenant 12 months’ notice ahead of the tenancy renewal.

It was agreed to open the meeting for parishioners to discuss their proposals.

Councillors concurred the parishioners’ proposals to extend the forest school, affordable camping scheme and replanting fruit trees and wildflower meadow were very good. Clerk to proceed with the rent review.

**Post Office Letter Box**

The post office is currently on the market. A planning application has been lodged for permission for change of use. The post office owners have requested for the post letter box to be decommissioned (covered up) and at the request of the Parish Council for a pillar box to be installed adjacent to the bench on the Lees.

The Parish Council decided the pillar box should be located within the vicinity of the post office as deemed a central and safe place. Post Box who organises the decommissioning and installation of letter boxes have sent an agreement for the Parish Council to sign. The process of installing a new letter box takes up to 26 weeks. Angela Puxted has kindly agreed for the decommissioning of the old letter box and installation of the pillar box to coincide at the same time to avoid disruption.

The Parish Council have received an email from neighbouring resident objecting to the letter box being installed and suggest it is relocated to either the village hall, Barn Shop, or the Halfway Pub. Resident is concerned that this will affect their value of their house. Also, the post office when sold will become residential.

Councillors agreed the proposed location adjacent to the bench, on the Lees. It is central to the village and the letter box is known to parishioners and will be situated on parish land.

**Wildflower & Lees Woodland Walk**

**Ash Trees** – A recent survey carried out by Josh Buggins Clear Cut Trees indicated that about 30 ash trees need to be felled. Approximately, 10 trees are deemed as dangerous and are required to be felled this, Autumn. There is an Ash tree adjacent to Haverbrack track that will need to come down as well as the Ash tree opposite Dunn Esk. Clerk is obtaining quotations from G W Gardening, Landscapes as well as Clear Cut Trees. Estimated cost for all trees to be felled is in the region of £6000. Budgeted for £1000. Recent tree work spent £420. Monies precepted for unauthorised encampment could go towards the tree works.

Councillor Brown proposed using the £2,000 ring-fenced for High Tree Lodge Planning Application consultation fees go towards the tree works. It was agreed to keep the £2,000 ring fenced for High Tree Lodge for the time being as it is likely a new application may be lodged.

**Wildflower Areas -** Area 5 has produced some more wildflowers in particular chamomile, cornflower, marigold petals & poppies. The primary school children, Cllr Aitken and the Clerk recently helped with adding bee bombs to the area. The bee bomb seeds consist of night flowering catchfly, fox glove, red clover, and wild marjoram. Areas 2 & 3 have produced very little wildflowers. Clerk suggests planting woodland wildflowers, daffodil bulbs for these areas in the Autumn and tulip bulbs for the memorial. It is noted that there is an increase in ox-eye daises around the village, these are very evasive and can overtake preventing other varieties of wildflowers coming up. Councillors agreed for the grounds man cut areas 2 and 3 at the next back up in Autumn.

Parishioner commented that the ox-eye daisies need to be controlled.

**Items for Information**

1. Presentation of Jubilee Coin for naming of Lees Woodland Walk.

The competition winner is 5-year-old Alice Fernandes who attends Challock Primary School.

The Clerk has arranged for Councillor Aitken, Headteacher Mrs Sweet and School Governor Pauline Aitken to do the presentation at Challock Primary School.

1. John Harvey Jubilee Celebrations Painting to be placed on the wall of the Audrey Allen room.
2. Challock Boot Fair August Bank Holiday – Challock Parish Council agreed to put the boot fair on hold until next year and concentrate of the Village Fete in September.

**A.O.B**

Village Highways Inspection will take place in September.

Helpers required for the car park marshalling at the village fete in September.

Parish Forum

Parishioners enquired about the land adjacent to Drayhorse Farm and whether any change of use planning applications has been permitted. Clerk to make enquiries with ABC Planning.

A parishioner enquired who he can contact regards to a complaint of dogs barking. Chairman Fisher advised parishioner to contact Ashford Borough Council. Parishioner requested Clerk’s email address. Parishioner asked if the notes Councillors have during the meeting could be shared with parishioners.

Clerk updated the Parish Council on South East Water supplies issues – The clerk has been updating the village website and Challock Chatter providing parishioners the latest information on the water supply issue.

Challock Parish Council have sent a letter to Damian Green MP, Leader of Ashford Borough Council Gerry Clarkson, ABC Ward Councillor Larry Krause and KCC Ward Councillor Charlie Simkins. The impact it is having on our parishioners, vulnerable parishioners, farmers, livery, small holders, pre- school, and the primary school. Clerk informed the Parish Council that there will be an investigation by South East Water called a “wash up” and they will attend a parish meeting later on in the year.

**The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.**

Parish Council Meeting Dates for 2022

Wednesday 14th September 2022

**Future Parish Meeting Dates:**

Wednesday, 12th October

Wednesday, 16th November

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

**Dated……………………………………….**