**Challock Parish Council Meeting Minutes**

Memorial Hall

Wednesday, 12th October 2022 7.33 pm

Members of public present:2

Apologies

Michael Fisher (Chairman), Tracy Brown & Tony Aitken.

Present

Russell Jaques (Vice-Chair), Duncan Hardie, Max Thomas, John Ramsden & Di Sandy (Clerk).

Welcome

Vice Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

Acknowledged the sad passing of Queen Elizabeth II.

A Moment of Reflection on the Eve of the Funeral of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

took place on Sunday, 18th September adjacent to the War Memorial on the Lees, followed

by Proclamation of the Kings’ Accession His Royal Highness King Charles III.

The Parish Council would like to thank parishioners for attending.

Declarations of Interest

Councillors no new changes to the declarations of interest.

Minutes of Last Meeting

Minutes of 19th July 2022 meeting were signed by Vice Chairman Jacques as an accurate record.

Proposed by Councillor Hardie and seconded by Councillor Thomas.

All agreed.

**PCSO Report**

Brad Hobbs has left the force and Kent Police are currently re-structuring. The Police can be contacted by email csu.ashford@kent.police.uk

The Annual Police & Crime Commissioner’s Annual Survey 2022. Matthew Scott is currently appointing a new Chief Constable for Kent, following the retirement of Alan Pughsley. He is asking the public what qualities and what priorities the new Chief should have.   He also wants to know if you've been a victim of crime and if so, what sort of service you received from the police. [www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/PCC2022/](http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/PCC2022/).

There has been a couple of incidences around the cricket ground and the youth shelter. Rubbish has been placed in the skip behind the cricket pavilion and someone has been taken out a bike to use around the cricket ground. More worrying a hangman’s noose was put up at the front of the youth shelter. A couple of parents took it down and reported it to the Clerk. The Clerk has informed the community police. The cricket club will arrange for the skip to be removed.

Clerk’s Report

**Highways**

Grounds man has strimmed the footpath along Canterbury Road from Help Hire towards entrance to Green Lane and the footpath Church Lane adjacent to the Memorial towards the school. Picked up the pile flint stones on the Lees (left by UK Power Networks) near High Snoad Wood entrance and cut area.

Reported pothole adjacent to junction Kiln Close/Church Lane. Also, multiple potholes Church Lane adjacent to the Primary School.

Reported broken drain perimeter to the roundabout, Buck Street.

**Highways Inspection**

The outcome of the village highways inspection which took place Wednesday, 21st September the following works have been raised: -

Side edging along Buck Street and Canterbury Road foot paths.

Road patching repairs along Canterbury Road, High Snoad Wood, Green Lane entrances, adjacent to Clockhouse Green and Buck Street, Blind Lane junction.

Footpath repairs Canterbury Road, adjacent to the Old Vicarage.

To repaint the faded yellow lines along Church Lane.

Drain cover/road perimeter to be repaired Faversham Road opposite Paddock View and Buck Street opposite The Beeches.

Clerk has requested tree/shrub removal along Buck Street footpath opposite Forest Cottages. Waiting on clarification of land registration. If area is not registered, then the work will be raised by KCC to make safe under duty of care.

Clerk has raised with Ashford Borough Council Street Cleaning Team to remove debris and weeds along Buck Street Footpath opposite The Beeches, Canterbury Road footpath adjacent to the Old Vicarage and Church Lane/Blind Lane footpaths.

**Public Rights of Way**

Clerk has reported public footpath AE 866 from Prestige House (just off Green Lane) and continues as AE231 to Butt House (Faversham Road) is completely overgrown with brambles and is unpassable after the stile into Wormhole wood and the property Norvaleen.

**The Lees**

Grounds man has carried out the third back up on the Lees.

Clerk reported a water leak on the Lees adjacent to Hurstwood.

Clerk met up with Nikki Packham Sales Account Manager from Commercial Services. Introduction of her role as liaison with grounds maintenance team.

Grounds man has mowed wildflower areas 2 & 3.

Grounds man has trimmed hedge along verge, Canterbury Road, adjacent to High Snoad Wood entrance.

**Youth Shelter**

The grounds man has replaced the roof with new felt and edges.

**Training**

Clerk and Councillor Aitken are due to attend virtual training course on Protecting Commons, Greens and Open Spaces on the 25th/26th October.

**Mr Shirley**

Girlings has archived Mr Shirley’s legal documents and the Clerk has collected legal documents to be archived in the parish office.

**Defibrillator**

Clerk has ordered a new battery and pads for the Defibrillator. The Defibrillator has been tested and is working. Clerk to place a notice in the forester requesting if parishioners would be interested in attending a defibrillation training course.

Correspondence

* Received an email from Girlings regarding easement Little Barn. The Deed dated 11 March 1983; the land that is edged red should be the title boundary whereas it is the building/property itself. In order to rectify this the Deed can be varied to correct the plan.
* Received a thank you email from Jennifer Fernandes. Daughter Alice received her jubilee coin presented to her by Councillor Aitken, School Governor Pauline Aitken and Headteacher Sue Sweet.
* Received an email from Ashford Borough Council of a Great Big Green Week. A national celebration of community action tackling climate change and nature loss that is taking place from 24th September to 2nd October.
* Received an email from a parishioner concerning regular power cuts they have been receiving.
* Received an email from KCC Highways Inspector concerning our request for a noise survey to be carried out along the A252. KCC Highways do not carry out noise and vibration surveys, which are causing concerns to private properties. We are advised by senior managers to inform customers if they feel that the carriageway is a contributing factor to nuisance noise and vibration, they are to arrange an independent noise and vibration survey be carried out and send KCC Highway a copy of the report.
* Received an email from KALC notification of KCC Budget 2022-2023 Budget Consultation.
* Received an email from parishioner concerning the A252 section adjacent to Clockhouse Green, deep ruts in the centre of the road causing noise when large heavy goods vehicles travel across.
* Received KCC Kent Bee Plan July’s issue.
* Received a request from ABC Planning Enforcement requesting the Parish Council to mark the location of the units/areas allegedly in use for fitness purposes and/or builders’ yard along with the location of the resurfacing along the highway verge on attached plan. This is because part of Crispin Farm is now known as Drayhorse Farm.

In relation to the resurfacing, if this has been carried out as repair/maintenance and has not been extended, this may not require planning permission.

* Received an email from ABC Michelle Byrne notification of the launch of lottery’s The People’s Project 2022-2023. Clerk has informed community groups of the People’s Project.
* Received an email from Paul Libreri ABC notifying Parish Councils of the Parish Councillor Elections in May 2023. All parish councillors to stand for election. Nominations open with the Notice of Election on Monday 27 March 2023. Close of nominations at 4pm Tuesday 4 April 2023. Polling Day Thursday 4 May 2023. Notice of forthcoming elections will be posted in the Forester early 2023.
* Received an email from KCC Highways Jennie Watson arranging for a virtual meeting to discuss our Highways Improvement Plan. Kieran Doble has recently been recruited as Schemes and Planning Manager.
* Received a complaint from parishioner concerning a parent parking their car on the lees grass verge adjacent to parishioner’s property.
* Received a complaint from parishioner concerning parking on the Lees during the school drop off. Due to cars parking either side of the Lees track making it difficult for the parishioners to exit out of the Lees when taking their own children to school. Parishioner says the car park at the village hall is not being used to its capacity and the cars are parking up to Colleena, just before the wildflower area 5. Parishioner is concerned about the damage caused to the Lees grass.
* Received an email from John Burden, Chair of the Friends of Challock Church requesting the use of the Lees for car parking for next year’s village Fair, proposed date to TBA looking to be around the 16th September. They are looking for more helpers and parishioners willing to help organise with the preparations leading up to the day of the Fair as well as parishioners helping out on the day itself. This year’s fair proved to be very successful raising £6000.
* Received an email from ABC notifying the Queens Green Canopy will now be extended to March 2023. Given the opportunity for parishes to plant trees in memoriam and to honour the late Queen.
* Received an email from KALC concerning Gallagher Insurance on “false autumn” and the risk management guidance. Experts have warned that trees are prematurely going into survival mode as a result of the recent heatwaves and drought\*. Those in charge of tree maintenance should be aware of the additional risk to the health and structure of trees in the autumn months due to these extreme conditions.
* Received an enquiry from a parishioner concerning regulating a deed of easement for their property adjoining the Lees. Clerk has forwarded our solicitors’ contact details.
* Received an email from parishioner enquiring about Parish Council Elections and councillor allowances. To be discussed at the parish meeting in November.

**Matters arising from correspondence**

* The Chairman has signed the Deed to Variation for Little Barn.
* In addition to parishioners’ complaints regarding noise along the sections of the A252, the Clerk has also received a complaint of noise along the section of the A251 opposite Crossroad Motors. KCC Aaron Thomson says the A251/A252 is inspected on a monthly basis, should any defects be found, a works order will be raised accordingly.
* KCC policy is, if a resident is experiencing noise and vibration issues, they need to have an independent noise and vibration survey carried out and a copy of the full report sent into us as evidence.
* The Parish Council would like to congratulate John Burden and the Friends of Challock Church for organising a fabulous event. Thanking all those who helped out. Councillors to approve the use of the Lees for cars parking for the village fair.
* Clerk has a virtual meeting arrange with KCC Kieran Doble for 1st November 3 pm onwards to discuss our Highways Improvement Scheme. Councillor Hardie to join the virtual meeting.

Finances

**Bank Reconciliation**

The current account balance on 30th September 2022 is £28,628.35

Received £11500 second half of precept.

Received £10,000 Easement. To be ring-fenced to Faversham Road Footpath.

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 Bollarding of the Lees

William Oure Charity £3227.13

**AGAR Correction**

The submitted AGAR form has a transposition error under Section 2 box 1 for 2022. Instead of rewriting the number given in 2021 Box 7 (£36,871) the Clerk have written (£36,781) in the following box. This is just a clerical error therefore to downgrade this from “an except for” matter to an “Other” in the External Audit Report the Clerk to resubmit the Accounting Statement by crossing out the number in 2022 and rewriting and signing the correct value in Box 1. It’s important to see the original error on the form to indicate the error has been resolved. The Clerk has updated the AGAR posted on the parish website and notice boards.

**AGAR – Notice of Conclusion of Audit**

Received notification from PKF Littlejohn of review of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return “in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority: The AGAR was not accurately completed before submission for review. The AGAR had to be sent back for amendment regarding the

transposition error for Box 1 (Balance carried forward) from 2021 to 2022.

Clerk prepared a Notice of Conclusion of audit and details of the rights for inspection and displayed on the notice boards and website along with the certified AGAR (Section 3).

Vice Chairman Jaques & Councillor Thomas signed the following cheques: -

Cheque No: 102665 D Sandy - Stationery £23.14

Planning

There was no planning application to discuss.

Received a consultation letter from ABC concerning Old Clockhouse Green Development and the naming of the new road. The proposed name of the road is Old Clockhouse Green.

Councillors discussed the street name. There is property and a cul-de-sac in the area are already named Old Clock House Green. Naming the road also Old Clockhouse Green would be confusing.

Councillor Jaques proposed the street name should be changed to New Clockhouse Green.

Seconded by Councillor Thomas

All agreed.

**Ratification of Planning Applications**

The following planning applications were ratified.

22/01075/AS Little Paddock Farm, Canterbury Road, Challock, Ashford, TN25 4DW

Retrospective planning permission for the erection of 2no. sections of 6’ high close board timber fencing on concrete gravel boards, brickwork entrance with piers and reconstituted stone capping’s and electronic sliding timber gates.

I am assuming this is because the height of the fence is higher than supposedly allowed next to a highway. Also, the brick wall and piers are higher than permitted next to an A road without planning permission.

If it had been built further into the property grounds, it would not have required permission.

My view is these works were carried out a long time ago and the property is further out of the village, it is not interfering with neighbouring properties. In fact, personally, I find the wall and fencing to be aesthetically pleasing.

**Faversham Road Footpath**

A further £8200 funds required. The Parish Clerk has made enquiries to the Road Safety Trust for funding unfortunately, the Faversham Road footpath scheme does not meet the parameters of their fund this year. We need to secure funding from other avenues, Clerk is investigating possible funding.

Awaiting from Darren Hickman quotations for the additional costs, i.e., traffic control, fencing, removal of Oak tree and residents’ walls and trees/hedges.

To date there is 1 outstanding queries regarding the deed of dedication and are completed until KCC Legal team have holding correctly executed Deeds for all five landowners so the scheme can be delivered. The parishioner has been advised to contact their solicitor for advice in order to progress. Parishioner has confirmed that this is now being sorted.

**William Oure Charity**

1. **Metro Bank Community Account** – At the William Oure Meeting in August, Trustees approved opening a community account with Metro Bank named William Oure Charity. Trustees also approved for the Clerk and Councillor Thomas to be signatories on the new account. The Clerk and Councillor Thomas attended Metro Bank to arrange for the new bank account to be set up. Chairman Fisher and Councillor Brown attended the Metro Bank to provide ID. The community account for the William Oure Charity is now up and running.

1. **William Oure Charity Request for funds** – At the William Oure Meeting Trustees approved donating £50 Iceland Voucher for parishioner who lost their freezer food during recent power cut. Due to ill health and low income unable to afford to replenish the loss on freezer food.
2. **Allotments** – With the rising cost of living, there has been a renewed interest in providing allotments in parishes. The Parish Council are currently investigating the possibility of changing the William Oure field into allotments. Ashford Borough Council run a number of allotments in the Borough and some parishes run their own allotment scheme i.e., Wye. The Clerk has looked at ABC’s website on allotments and they charge £7**.**20 per perch. A typical plot contains 5 perch (125 sqm) costing £36. Allotments are discounted by 50% for families on low income/benefits and pensioners. Clerk has calculated approximately 32 plots could be available on the 2-acre William Oure field. If all plots were discounted the estimated revenue would be £576 per annum. However, setting up and ongoing costs need to be taken into consideration i.e., fencing, security, water connection, Insurance, administration, car parking surface etc.Clerk is making further enquiries to the costs and clarification of revenue as well as checking with the Charity Commission regarding articles are met. There may also be funding available for the setting up of allotments. S106 developer contributions include allotments.
3. **Rent Review -** Clerk has sent an email to the tenant to inquire if they wish to renew the farm tenancy in January 2023 and the trustees would like to negotiate a rent review. The tenant would like to continue the Farm Tenancy beyond December 2023 with the view to farming the land long term.

“Understand a rent review and increase is due after the five-year term, and the tenant would like to continue to support the charity in its cause”. The tenant requests the trustees take into consideration the time, money and husbandry spent on this land, and the considerable improvements that have been made to bring it back into productive agricultural use following its long-term neglect by the previous tenants. Together with the legal fees for the lost title deeds the tenant has borne in full to initiate the new signing of the Farm Tenancy this land within the current five-year term is yet to see a return. With this in mind the tenant would like to sign the Farm Tenancy for a minimum of another five years, with the view to ideally a ten-year Farm Tenancy with a five-year rent review. “Please will the trustees consider this whilst negotiating their rent review”.

Meeting closed 8.05 pm. Parish Forum open 8.05 pm

The farm tenant read out a statement to the trustees of the William Oure Charity: I am the current tenant and leaseholder of the poor field. I’m from Applewood Farm Pested lane. I am a farmer and farm the land I own immediately opposite and adjacent to the poor field along Pested lane. The poor field forms part of my farming operation. I believe I have been a good and reliable tenant.

I wish to negotiate and continue the farm tenancy beyond 2023. I am happy to accommodate a rent review and pay the increase in rent to help the charity. Upon signing and taking over the lease the land had been left in a terrible derelict state. This included rubbish/debris severe rabbit damage along the road frontage and a ragwort infestation.

I have spent in the region £6000 to get this land back into full agricultural use again. This does not include the ongoing maintenance I have been making since.

This has been a timely process having only been in useable condition due to the extra work required for the last 2 years within the tenancy where the land has been cropped only twice.

The land now is in very good condition overall and is being farmed in accordance with the conditions of the farm tenancy. However, my costs to reinstate this land from the state the previous tenant left it in have not been recovered within this short-term lease. Therefore, I wish to continue the lease long term to justify my expenditure made so far on the land. Currently the lease states solely agricultural or horticultural usage only according to section 4 Use and management of the holding. Section 4.1 (a) states: ‘The tenant will use the holding for agricultural and or horticultural purposes only, the whole of the holding being farmed at all times for the purposes of a trade or business under the Agricultural Tenancies act 1995’. Will the trustees allow a deviation from the agricultural conditions of the lease to accommodate persons with a non-agricultural/horticultural background to an amenity or recreational usage? There has been a proposal to turn the poor field into allotments. I would like to highlight that this would be a significant departure from the intended land use and the original intentions of the charity. The Parish council have raised concerns previously about any development outside of the village confines (including Pested Lane) and within the AONB. Neighbourhood consultation and full planning would be required to make these proposed changes should the Parish council wish to implement this scheme. This scheme would impact upon myself and other neighbours as my farm entrance lies directly opposite to the Poor field entrance. Pested lane is a singe track road, parking and access would be become a major problem and prohibit the current agricultural usage and resident traffic that the lane already services.

Please will the trustees take into consideration my statement and comments made with the view to my justified continuation of the farm tenancy of the poor field and the negotiation of a rent review?

Vice Chair Jaques. Thanked Alex Collier for attending the parish meeting. Stating the trustees are happy with the current tenancy and only wanted to negotiate a rental charge.

Councillor Thomas. Take your point on the investment you have put in. As trustees our priority lies with the William Oure Charity. Postpone until the next meeting.

Councillor Hardie. Received interest from the Wildflower Group. Request photographs of the field before and after. Farming is equally important.

Meeting reopened 8.15

**Parking on the Lees**

The Clerk has been monitoring the parking situation during the school drop off and collection times.

There are approximately 3 to 4 cars that tend to park on the grass on the left-hand side of the lees track near to the entrance. Having two sets of vehicles parking either side of the track can cause problems for residents exiting, also causing damage to the grass especially during the Autumn/Winter months. It was also noticeable that the village hall car park is approximately 70% full. Thursday afternoons the car park is 95% full due to the dog club in the hall. At the parish meeting last September 2021 it was agreed to move the concrete bollards from the Lees opposite High Snoad Wood entrance and place at the entrance of the Lees, Church Lane. The bollards have not been moved due to wet conditions last Autumn/Winter and the digger would get stuck. We are now in similar situation and would not be able to move the bollards this year. Plan to move the bollards in the Spring and for wooden bollards to replace the concrete bollards at the entrance opposite High Snoad Wood.

Vice Chair Jaques proposed laying a couple of large tree logs instead of temporary no parking signs.

Seconded by Councillor Hardie

All agreed.

Working with the school, Mrs Sweet the Headteacher, they have reissued a reminder about parking on the Lees. They recently had virtual meetings with all of the parents and reiterated their parking messages as well as on the regular newsletters. The community warden has also visited the school and will do regular ‘drop ins’ for the Primary School.

**Post Office**

**Letter Box -** Received a request from a parishioner to relocate the proposed pillar letter box from adjacent to the bench to further along opposite the Post Office adjacent to fallen concrete bollard. Post Box Ltd carried out a new survey but have said the area is not suitable. If the parish council have an alternative site, a new survey will need to be carried out at a cost to the Parish Council.

Councillor Thomas proposed for the letterbox to be sited adjacent to the bench.

Seconded by Vice-Chairman Jaques

All agreed.

**Pop-Up Post-Office Service –** Unfortunately, due to the closing of the Halfway Pub the village is now without a pop-up post office service. Post Office limited have approached the village hall committee to see if they would allow the post office pop up. The Clerk has also requested consideration for the post office to operate in the village hall when the Clerk is working in the office on a Wednesday.

**Wildflower & Lees Woodland Walk**

**Ash Trees –** Received quotations from Josh Buggins & Commercial Services. Josh Buggins has quoted £5,000 for 16 ash trees to be removed. Received a quotation from Commercial Services for £29,750 for the removal of 25 ash trees. Waiting for quotation from Biddenden Arboriculture. The Parish Council has been advised by both Josh Buggins and Commercial Services that a large proportion of the Ash trees are classed 4 stage of die ash back and require felling this, Autumn. £5,000 funding is secured from unauthorised encampment budget, tree maintenance budget and VAT return. Parish Councillors will need to consider when setting the precept in November costs for further tree works required for the following financial year.

Councillors agreed to consider Josh Buggins quotation subject to receiving Biddenden Arboriculture’s quotation.

Clerk to chase up Biddenden Arboriculture’s quotation.

**Wildflower Areas –** To arrange for spring bulb and woodland wildflower plug planting in the wildflower areas in Autumn. Funds are from the Together our planet lottery. Les Langley has emailed to say there has been a rising cost in timber, but he has managed to secure wood at a cheaper cost and will be making the troughs for Spring 2023.

Items for Information

**John Harvey’s Jubilee Celebrations Painting**

The Jubilee Celebrations Painting has been put up on the wall adjacent to the entranceto the main hall by Councillor Aitken. There are 10 limited editions available for sale at £60 with £20 per edition proceeds to the William Oure Charity.

**Challock Clean Up Campaign**

Clerk posted in the Forester proposed Clean Up Challock Campaign for 16th October and parishioners can hire litter pick equipment. So far have received no offers of attending the litter pick.

**Defibrillator Training**

Clerk has posted in the Forester offering parishioners of Challock & Molash free defibrillator training in partnership with BM Ambulance Service & Molash Parish Council. So far, we have received 4 parishioners wanting to attend the training. Councillor Aitken and the Clerk would like to join the defibrillator training as a refresher.

**A.O.B**

None

Parish Forum

No members of public present.

**The meeting closed at 8.35 pm.**

Parish Council Meeting Dates for 2022

Wednesday 16th November 2022

**Future Parish Meeting Dates:**

Parish Meetings 2023 TBA

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

**Dated……………………………………….**