**Challock Parish Council Meeting Minutes**

Memorial Hall

Wednesday, 16th November 2022 7.38 pm

Members of public present:4

Apologies

Russell Jaques (Vice Chair).

Present

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

Welcome

Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

Councillor Aitken attended the meeting via zoom due to covid in the family.

Declarations of Interest

Councillors no new changes to the declarations of interest.

Minutes of Last Meeting

Minutes of 12th October 2022 meeting were signed by Chairman Fisher as an accurate record.

Proposed by Councillor Thomas and seconded by Councillor Ramsden.

All agreed.

**PCSO Report**

Police Community Support Officer for our parish is PCSO Megan Macleod. The Police can be contacted by email csu.ashford@kent.police.uk

The Clerk has completed Kent Priority Survey. Requesting support from the police on road safety issues, nuisance motor cyclist, rural crime.

There has been a recent spell of car thefts in the Ashford area.

Clerk’s Report

**Highways**

Church Lane repairs to bollards adjacent to Primary School

The drain cover in Buck Street has now been repaired.

**South East Water**

The clerk has registered to join a webinar to hear joint consultation from South East Water, SES & Southern Water concerning recent water shortages.

**Highways Inspector**

New Highways Inspector Ben Platt

**The Lees**

Grounds man has filled the potholes on the Lees tracks including the entrances.

**Training**

Clerk and Councillor Aitken attended a virtual training course on Protecting Commons, Greens and Open Spaces on the 25th/26th October.

Clerk to register interest to attend 3 training sessions towards the CILCA qualification.

Correspondence

* Received an email from Tessa O’Sullivan Rural Kent offering to carry out housing needs survey in mid-January.
* Received an email from KALC re Kents Plan Bee Newsletter
* Received an email from ABC regarding a new Community Transport Grant that KCC recently announced. The grant will assist parish councils, charities, and community groups to apply for a grant funded by KCC to help them provide transport for their local communities.
* Received an email from Lisa Willoughby KCC notifying parishes of the winter services. i.e., salt bins, road gritters etc.
* Received confirmation from Post Box Ltd and will now proceed with the installation of the post box on the Lees.
* Received an email from KALC - The Civility and Respect Pledge is being introduced because there is no place for bullying, harassment, and intimidation within our sector. The pledge is easy for Councils to sign up for and it will enable Councils to demonstrate that they are committed to standing up to poor behaviour across our sector and to driving through positive changes which support civil and respectful conduct. NALC invite all Councils to take the Civility and Respect Pledge. By signing the Pledge, your Council is agreeing that the Council will treat Councillors, Clerks, employees, members of the public and representatives of partner organisations and volunteers with civility and respect in their roles.
* The Local Government Authority has notified NALC that they have come to an agreement on the new pay scales for 2022-2023 to be implemented from 1st April 2022. Employers are encouraged to implement this pay award as swiftly as possible.
* Received an email from ABC notification at the October Cabinet meeting the Council Tax Base report for 2023/24 was agreed. Parish Council to complete Parish Precept form and return by the 6th January 2023.
* Received an email from John Burden Friends of Challock Church. Having discussed the Kings Coronation at our recent meeting and in view of our already busy schedule we will not be including anything specific in our programme for next year. Do the Parish Council have any plans? The Jubilee event this year was a great success and something for the whole village might go down well.
* Received a briefing from ABC regarding The Boundary Commission for England (BCE) is redrawing constituency boundaries in order to rebalance the number of electors represented by each MP, and a final consultation on proposed new constituencies is now open. The Boundary Commission’s proposed changes for Ashford have changed. The Ashford parliamentary constituency will be split between two constituencies rather than three as per the original proposals. This means that the Charing, Downs North, and Downs West wards will now be in the constituency of Weald of Kent, rather than Faversham and Mid Kent. The revised proposals would see the borough of Ashford covered by two new constituencies:

Ashford – including 24 of Ashford’s 39 wards plus wards from Folkestone & Hythe

Weald of Kent – with 15 of Ashford’s wards, including the wards of Charing, Downs North, and Downs West

The proposed new Ashford constituency would have an electorate of 73,546, while the Weald of Kent electorate would be 72,024.

 You can view and comment on the proposals for Ashford at [www.bcereviews.org.uk](http://www.bcereviews.org.uk)

**Matters arising from correspondence**

* Councillors agreed to sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge.
* Councillors discussed the proposed changes to the Ashford parliamentary constituency and proposed changes to Challock parish, Downs West Ward under Weald of Kent. Had no concerns.

Finances

**Bank Reconciliation**

The current account balance on 31st October 2022 is £26610.16

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 £3229.46

£50 Iceland Gift Card for parishioner who lost freezer food through power outage.

Balance £3179.46

Councillor Thomas & Councillor Brown signed the following cheques: -

Cheque No: 102669 Kent PCs – Forester Editorial £2,000.00

Cheque No: 102670 D Sandy - Stationery £54.49

7.50 pm Councillor Aitken joined meeting via zoom.

**Precept & Budget 2023**

Clerk has prepared draft Precept & Budget 2023/24 for councillors to review. It is proposed to request a precept of £23500. Councillors discussed increasing the precept further to increase the funds towards the Faversham Road footpath. With the current economic climate Councillors agreed not to increase funds out of the precept for the Faversham Road footpath. The precept to be approved at the parish meeting on the 5th January 2023.

**Councillor Allowances**

In response to correspondence received from a parishioner at the last parish meeting enquiring about introduction of councillor allowances to encourage parishioners to apply for parish councillor at next year’s election.

Under Government Regulations made in 2003, the District Council's Independent Remuneration Panel also sits as a Parish Remuneration Panel (PRP). The Regulations allow town and parish councils to pay their members a Parish Basic Allowance and Travel and Subsistence Allowances. The basic allowance can be paid to the Chairman of the town or parish council only or to all elected members. If it is payable to all members, the amount for the Chairman may be greater than for the other members of the Council.

Town and parish councils are not under any obligation to consider the question of allowances for their elected members, nor are recommendations from the PRP binding. However, local councils are obliged to consider the PRP's recommendations before adopting an allowances scheme.

Any town or parish council which introduces an allowances scheme following consideration of the PRP's report has to give public notice in the parish, and any scheme is available for inspection or purchase from the town or parish council concerned. Town and parish councils are also required to make available details of allowances paid to councillors following the end of each financial year.

Councillors reviewed Councillor Allowances and agreed not to introduce councillor allowances. Councillors believe it would be too much hassle. Allowances would be taxable. Councillors agreed they were not elected to become parish councillors for the money.

Planning

The following planning applications were discussed.

**22/2689 Little Acorns, Green Lane, Challock, Ashford, Kent TN25 4DN**

Outline application with all matters reserved (Revised scheme 19/01312/AS)

**Commenting:** Planning application 22/2690 received notification outline application with all matters reserved (revised scheme 19/01312/AS) is invalid. No reasons provided. Chairman Fisher read out planning statement for 22/2689. Due to the unprecedented times of 2020, once again the full application was not submitted, and planning permission is about to lapse. Applicant would like to renew the planning for the two houses that were approved previous applications 15/00701 & 19/01312.

They would like to split the permission, so each house has its own permission. This will give the applicant options to either build both, build one at a time, sell both plots of land individually, or together. Councillors thought the application was confusing. Councillor Aitken commented that the site is not big enough for both houses, however, provided the neighbours’ views are taken into consideration, no objection.

**22/2742 3 The Lilybuds, Canterbury Road, Challock, TN25 4DH**

The erection of a single detached dwelling, the addition of 1no. detached garage and car port, new site access gate and driveway, and associated parking and landscaping.

**Commenting:** Not in keeping with the street scene, though similar design to 4 Lillybuds. There doesn’t appear to be any thought about the lack of main drainage – no problem with the design provided neighbours comments are taken into consideration, no objection.

**22/2768 Heathlock, Canterbury Road, Challock, TN25 4DW**

New chalet style dwelling on land adjacent to Heathlock

**Supporting:** Councillors support this application providing neighbours comments are taken into consideration, no objection.

**Ratification of Planning Applications**

**22/2305/AS Almrose, Buck Street, Challock, Ashford, TN25 4AR**

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

**Faversham Road Footpath**

Received from KCC Darren Hickman quotations for construction of footpath and additional costs. Estimated costs for footpath construction has now gone up to £111,791.00 an increase of over 50%. An as built road safety audit would be required upon completion would be £995. KCC officer to project manage the scheme would be 15% of the total £16918. We have now received an estimate from UK Power Networks for the electric cabling to be placed underground £110,000. Road closure for one day to fell oak tree & conifers (price for TTRO & traffic management) £2898. KCC have requested the Parish Council to now budget for £242,602.00 to deliver this project.

Clerk has produced a timeline for the project demonstrating increased costs.

Councillors are very disappointed at the excessive increased costs and in particular UK Power Networks. At the beginning of 2022 the Parish Council were advised of a 17% uplift on project costs and budgeted for £68,000.

The Parish Council are waiting to hear back from ABC Councillor’s Gerry Clarkson and Larry Krause.

Chairman Fisher vowed to take this further.

**Highways Improvement Plan**

Clerk attended a zoom meeting with KCC Highways Jennie Watson & Kieran Doble to discuss Parish Council’s Highways Improvement Plan. They are able to assist with the yellow road markings and placing child pedestrian safety signs along Buck Street. They will also investigate the verge adjacent to the field High Tree Lodge ownership and able to trim back the trees to improve footpath access. KCC have limited funds and are unable to assist with the Parish Plans to improve footpath access to the village. The Highways Improvement Plan has been updated.

**William Oure Charity**

1. **Community Allotments & Community Orchard** – Clerk and Councillor Brown met up with David Johnston ABC Allotments & Support Officer at the William Oure field. Suggested the Parish Council consider opening the field up to community orchard and allotments. Allowing a section for paid allotments to contribute to the Charity. NHS may be able to fund a community allotment to help people with mental health. Funding available through S106 developer contributions, Allotment society and Heritage Lottery. Councillor Ramsden raised concerns of the work involved and proposed interested parties to manage the allotments, not the Parish Council.

It was agreed to place a notice in the forester for parishioners to write in or attend the next meeting to register their interest in an allotment scheme.

1. **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. 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”.

The tenant would like to enter into rent negotiations and is happy to pay an increase in rental charge.

Under the tenancy agreement the William Oure Charity has to give 12 months’ notice prior to the tenancy ending December 2023.

It was agreed to arrange a William Oure Charity Meeting on Thursday, 15th December at 7.30 pm in the Cricket Pavilion.

**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. The Village Hall Committee have refused the Post Office pop-up service in the village hall. Due to increased heating and lighting costs the Village Hall Committee would offer the post office service to operate in the village hall if they would pay £22 per week rental. Clerk has made enquiries with the village hall committee and if the parish council were to pay for the rental, they would give a discount. The Parish Council would need to budget £1144 annual rental charge into next year’s precept. The Clerk is waiting to hear back from the Chairman of the Village Hall Committee.

**Wildflower & Lees Woodland Walk**

**Ash Trees** – Josh Buggins Clean Cut Trees has commenced felling the Ash trees. Took up the opportunity whilst Canterbury Road was closed week commencing 7th November. To return to complete the work within the next few weeks. The felled trees will be taken to a processing plant to be logged up. Parishioners will have the opportunity to purchase the logs from the processing plant who will deliver. A large lorry containing the logs approximately valued at £500 to be split amongst parishioners requesting the logs. It is not advisable to leave the trees on the site for parishioners to go up and cut them up themselves due to public liability. Parishioners wanting to purchase the logs to let the Clerk know who will pass on contact details of the processing plant.

**Wildflower Areas –** Clerk has ordered spring bulbs and woodland wildflower plugs for planting in the wildflower areas in Autumn. Funds are from the Together our planet lottery. Les Langley has emailed to say he will be making the troughs for Spring 2023.

Items for Information

**The Kings Coronation 6th May 2023**

The Kings Coronation event was discussed. The Clerk has budgeted £2,000 for the Coronation. It was agreed to hold the event on the bank holiday Monday, 8th May. Look to book a band and catering stall.

Councillor Aitken said the Cricket Club are willing to support/help with any event that the PC are planning.

**John Harvey’s Jubilee Celebrations Painting**

Parish Council approved the purchase of a limited edition for the church.

**Act of Remembrance**

The Act of Remembrance took place on Friday, 11th November. The event was well attended with Councillor Thomas reading out the names of the fallen and parishioner reading the Kohima address, children from Challock Primary carried out the laying of the wreaths.

The Parish Council would like to thank all parishioners attended and Challock Primary School. A thank you to Reverend Cathy Silgrist for carrying out the Act of Service.

**Defibrillator Training**

Defibrillator training took place on Monday, 14th November with parishioners from Challock, Molash & Charing attending. Councillors approved a donation of £50 to BM Ambulance service for conducting the training.

**A.O.B**

**Hilgay, Canterbury Road - Deed of Easement -** Receivedan email from our solicitors Girlings attached Deed of Easement. The owners of Hilgay would like to regulate the prescribed access rights in Deed of Easement.

Councillors agreed to the Deed of Easement. Parish Clerk to sign the Deed of Easement.

**Councillor Aitken: The Cricket Club** would like to thank everyone who attended/supported also helped us to put on the event. It was well attended with lots of positive comments. The Cricket Club would like to put on the event next year and the proposed date being 28th October. If no objection to the proposal, the Cricket Club would like to ask to use the top of the Lees for parking. There may have been some issues this year and although we do not advertise outside of the village, obviously we would make any repairs to the grass if required. The money raised is already being put into use, the materials are ordered to allow for completing the upstairs with a view to opening early next year.

The Parish Council have no objections to the Firework & Bonfire event going ahead next year and give permission for the use of the lees for parking.

The Kingswood Players are putting on Jack and the Beanstalk as this year’s panto, it will be in memory of Ann Macey who sadly passed away this year. With Barry’s agreement it has been decided to put the proceeds towards a second defibrillator for the village. They have already got funding towards it via the British Heart Foundation and are consulting with the village hall committee.

Parish Forum

The parishioner inquired about repeater signs near Westwell & Green Lane Junction. KCC are looking to implement the repeater and junction signs.

**The meeting closed at 9.15 pm.**

Parish Council Meeting Dates for 2022

Thursday, 15th November 2022 William Oure Charity

Thursday, 5th January 2023

**Future Parish Meeting Dates:**

Proposed Parish Meetings 2023

Thursday, 5th January

Thursday, 23rd February

Thursday, 23rd March

Thursday, 20th April

Tuesday, 16th May 2023 Annual Parish Meeting

Thursday, 18th May

Thursday, 21st June

Thursday, 19th July

Thursday, 20th September

Thursday, 18th October

Thursday, 22nd November

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

**Dated……………………………………….**