**Challock Parish Council Meeting Minutes**

Audrey Allen Room, Memorial Hall

Thursday, 13th March 2025, 7.30 pm

Members of public present:1

Present

Chairperson Cllr Brown, Vice-Chairperson Cllr Thomas, Cllr Fisher, Cllr Hardie, Cllr Walpole, Cllr Aitken & Di Sandy (Clerk).

1. Welcome

Chairperson welcomed everyone present at the parish meeting

Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Shallcrass

Relevant Legislation: Local Government Act 1972, s 85

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

No change to Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

Relevant Legislation: Localism Act 2011, s 31.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting

Minutes of 13th February 2025 meeting were signed by Chairperson Brown as an accurate record.

Proposed by Cllr Fisher and seconded by Cllr Thomas.

All agreed.

Relevant Legislation: Local Government Act 1972, Sch 12, para 41 (1).

4. PC Tim Moody Downs West Ward

Drop-in session at Chilham Square between 10 – 11 am. Drop-in session at Hothfield Village Hall between 12 – 1 pm.

5. Clerk’s Report

**Highways**

Reported fallen tree branch at the roundabout.

**The Lees**

The grounds man has strimmed back edges along the Lees Woodland Walk.

The grounds man has flattened the mole mounds on the Lees. Collected some of the top soil to repair the Lees grass adjacent to Colleena.

The grounds man has repaired the damage to the Lees grass adjacent to Colleena caused by 365 Recovery vehicle.

**ABC**

Reported missed dog bin collection on the cricket ground.

**KCC Public Rights of Way**

Reported AE88 footpath High Snoad Wood – overhanging tree branches & vegetation, uneven surface, narrow footpath.

**Training**

Chairperson attended Planning Enforcement Training at ABC office on the 5th March.

**Post Office Sign**

Clerk has given the sign to parishioner. Received no response from the post office.

**Letter Box Buck Street**

Clerk has reported letter box in Buck Street in poor condition requires repairing.

**Notice Boards**

Flagging up the notice boards at the Old post office and Buck Street will require replacing by next year.

**Emergency Planning**

Clerk has completed Emergency Planning Survey requested by NALC.

**New Minister**

Chairperson Brown attended the Celebration of new minister. Reverend Susan Martin.

has been ordained for 14 years and has been at her previous parish, The United Parish of Reculver, for 11 years

6. Correspondence

All correspondence was noted.

* Email – Code of Conduct training 10th June 2025 at Appledore Village Hall.
* Email – Katie Lam MP contacted by her constituent regarding The Lees track and school parking.
* Email – NALC - In response to the government's consultation on local authority funding reform, we urged the government to grant mandatory rate relief on all parish and town council-owned buildings plus a share of business rates to reinvest in community projects. We also asked the government to allow parish and town councils to apply for all relevant central government funding on the same basis as principal authorities in the future. Our submission also pushes for it to be mandatory for principal authorities to pass on an appropriate share of the New Homes Bonus to communities required to accept new homes.
* Email – KCC Legal notification of completion of Deed of Dedication at Paddock View Faversham Road.
* Email - Forestry Commission - Invasive Spruce Bark Beetle Awareness. Posters have been placed on the notice boards and PC Facebook page.
* Email – KALC Kent has not been accepted on the Devolution Priority Programme. Minister Jim McMahon told KCC Leaders: “I had to make a judgement of the best-placed areas to take forward on the Programme according to our strict criteria, and concluded your proposals could not be taken forward due to concerns about the size of the population disparity between the two proposed constituent members of your proposed Kent and Medway Combined County Authority and the consequential impact on its governance.

Although Kent was not accepted onto the Devolution Priority Programme, central government has now requested that an interim plan for local government reorganisation be submitted by the 21st March 2025, with final proposals expected by the 28th November 2025. It is important to note that this submission is not about devolution – it is about local government reorganisation. Therefore, while Kent may be reorganising, it is not receiving devolved powers nor the finances that accompany them.

KALC is actively working to ensure that town and parish councils are prioritised in the reorganisation process.

While the full impact of reorganisation is yet to be determined, it is clear that parish and town councils should start mapping their local assets and services and consider what their communities may want them to take on.

* Email – Planning Portal – Notification of planning application fees going up from the 31st March 2025.
* Email - Challock Primary School concerning recent police visit to monitor parking during the school collection.
* Email – Parishioner concerning letter received by the school concerning the parking on the Lees. I think this is very misleading and will cause alarm with the mention of police and trespassing. This is ridiculous in my opinion. Parents only use a small section of the road for 10 minutes in the morning and 10 minutes in the afternoon. The village hall car park is not large enough to accommodate all the vehicles which would need to use it now the school catchment area extends significantly outside of the village confines.

I would welcome your thoughts. Perhaps the parish council could relax the rules for parents during the term time for the short period of dropping off and collecting children. Once this has been agreed, any resident who chooses to continuously complain has no recourse.

**Matters arising from correspondence**

* Katie Lam MP email. In response to constituent arranged for Kent police to carry out parking and driving safety check during the school drop off and collection times.

Received a forwarded email from the school concerning PC Moody visit - I am the beat officer for Ashford Rural North, working from Ashford Police Station.

We have recently received a complaint via the office of MP Katie LAM, from a resident of The Lees, relating to ongoing parking issues linked to parents of the school. I have investigated the matter, and visited the location on Friday afternoon, and as far as Kent Police are concerned, there are no criminal offences to pursue.

The location is classed as Common Land, and driving/parking on it without lawful consent can be construed as a civil trespass. I have passed the matter to Ashford Borough Council for their input, but in the interim period, could you please send a message to parents requesting that they do not park on the unmade road section of The Lees.

I appreciate that parking at drop off and pick up times is very limited, and I did not witness any inconsiderate or dangerous parking from any parents, but I would not like them to fall foul of any enforcement undertaken by other agencies.

The Parish Council responded to Katie Lam MP concerning the Lees common potholes and school parking issues. We are working with the residents in discussing options for maintaining the Lees track. The Parish Council are looking at measures to improve the Lees track to limit parking on the Lees. Until measures are put in place to alleviate the parking issues on the Lees track we currently tolerate as there is simply not enough parking spaces around the village. The Parish Council have requested Katie Lam MP practical support in advising us of funding options available.

The clerk has contacted PC Moody requesting to meet up with the Parish Council

Councillors discussed the parking issues on the Lees and the recent correspondence from a parent concerning the letter received from the school with regards to parking on the Lees.

MF. The school has been in there for over 50 years, my daughters work from home and drop off their children.

TB. No parking on the Lees, we have become tolerant until parking issues can be resolved.

MT. Not PC responsibility to provide parking for the school. Katie Lam MP should not have gone ahead with arranging for the police to be called out, should have approached the Parish Council first.

TB. Should make it clear it was not the Parish Council that requested police to attend.

DH. There is one parishioner not happy with parking on the Lees.

MT. There is one main protagonist but there are others not happy with parking on the Lees.

TB. We are going to install bollards at the entrance to the Lees to protect the Lees common. Considering knee high fencing intermittent along the Lees track.

JW. Since the Residents Meeting there has been a change of mood. We are looking at car park proposals.

TB. There is not enough parking and so we tolerate the parking issue as long as they are respectful. We do not want to prosecute people for parking.

Mtg Closed 7.55 pm

Open Forum

Parishioner commented there is available spaces in the village hall car park, parents choose to park nearer to school for convenience. There will always be some parents wanting to park nearer to the school.

Mtg Open 8 pm.

7. Representatives Reports

**7.1 Forester Sub-Committee Meeting**

1. Cllr Aitken reported on the Forester Meeting held on Monday, 10th March 2025.

The forester is estimated to run at loss of £500 per annum providing outstanding invoices are paid.

The Sub-Committee reviewed costs and options considered editor’s fees and reducing the pages printed in the forester. The content of the forester was discussed and to have more interesting historical facts, i.e. history of buildings in the villages.

It was agreed not to increase printing costs. To continue to look for more advertisers.

Following issues were raised concerning the report.

TB. There are a lot of fillers that could be reduced or replaced by interesting facts.

JW. Queried the quality of paper.

AA. Colour advertising revenue would be affected if the standard of paper is altered. ABC offer cheaper printing.

JW. Look at prices. Editor’s fees commissioning. Open to receiving quotations.

8. Finances

* 1. **Bank Reconciliation for February**

The current account balance on 28th February 2025 is £18,694.92

Resolved. The bank reconciliation was reviewed and accepted.

Cllr Brown & Cllr Thomas signed the bank account balances and reconciliations for 28th February 2025.

Reserves (National Savings) Account £8930.53

£6,000 MUGA

£2,000 Village Gateways

£930.53 Bollard Installation

William Oure Account £3685.62

* 1. **Authorization of March Payments**

The following cheques were signed by Cllr Walpole & Cllr Thomas

Cheque 102837 Clerk – Stationery £75.50

* 1. **Accounts for Payment for Information only**

The following schedule of supplier payments paid for March

Cheque 102835 Clean Cut Trees – Tree works on the Lees £1700

Cheque 102836 Village Hall – Room Hire for parish meetings during 2025 £222

**8.4 Internal Audit**

Internal Auditor Lionel Robbins to carry out audit of parish council accounts on the 30th April 2025.

9. Funding

Following funding schemes were reviewed and accepted.

i) S106 Contributions Update & Review

Received an updated S106 Contributions available

Clockhouse Farm & Old Clockhouse Green and Maintenance Informal Green Space £26,397.77

Clockhouse Farm and Old Clockhouse Green Outdoor sports capital and maintenance £66520.82

Further estimated funding from S106 High Tree Lodge Outdoor sports capital and maintenance £20,809.88.

Old Clockhouse Green Young Peoples play and maintenance £37,665.58

Parish Council approved the revised S106 application for young people’s play for remaining funds for Track Slider £3519.27 and £3515.44 maintenance.

Noted. S106 maintenance is required to be clearly accounted for.

10. The Lees

**10.1** **Track Maintenance**

 i) Lees Track Residents Meeting Update 3rd February 2025

The residents had a meeting on Wednesday, 26th February with reference to setting up a Residents Committee along with discussing plans for all the works that need to be carried out on 2nd March (ordering aggregate, payments, etc.) Subsequently the Parish Council received an email from the Residents Group about their plans as an emergency/interim action for a number of volunteers to fill the potholes along the length of the track from Church Lane. Purchasing four 1-ton bags of Type 1 aggregate which will be delivered on Saturday 1st March and hopefully deposited on the verge at 4 strategic points along the track, including the point for the planings as used previously. Spent £377 on materials and ask for the Parish Council to cover this cost. In response the Parish Council emailed to say that the cost of materials was too expensive and that we require 3 quotations and would not be able to pay for the cost of materials.

In response the resident group said we understand the process for granting the cost of the materials, would you be able to donate a sum of money towards our costs?

For various reasons, we were able to cancel our expensive order and have managed to source 7 tons of aggregate at £322 which is not as cheap as your supplier, but we were working on a short timescale.

There does not appear to be any enthusiasm for the formation of a Residents Association although there was a very positive response from the residents to our working party. We hope that you are getting replies from the residents about the long-term future of the track because there seems to be a mood change provided, we can control speeding and parking because some people would probably change their position. As we have already said, we do not intend to continue to fill the potholes on a maintenance basis.

The current status is there are 10 residents happy to contribute to the resurfacing of the Lees. With the majority of residents opting for resurfacing this means the main section of the Lees track could be resurfaced leaving a gap between the access field and Methodist Chapel and the end of the Lees track from Eastbury up to Otterpley. It was agreed for the clerk to write to the remaining 7 residents to check if they have changed their decision and would consider contributing to Lees track resurfacing. Councillors to approve draft letter to send out to residents.

The Methodist Chapel have emailed their response and feel the same as many of the residents that the biggest issue is from parents of children at the school and also delivery vehicles, plus the residents who own the car sales business and frequently bring trailers of vehicles to their property.

We could not support any huge outlay for making up the road as we do not have the funds. However, making the top part of the Lees a suitable parking area with bollards preventing misuse of the green area like has been done at the far end of the Lees seems a better solution. We must ask that our members using the Chapel for worship be permitted to park outside our premises as some are infirm or disabled and unable to walk from the car park.

As regards assistance to fill holes, you will appreciate that we are all of an age where we are unable to contribute labour to assist with this and mainly female members anyway.

Councillors agreed not to contribute to the cost of materials ordered by the residents. The residents’ group should have consulted the Parish Council prior to ordering the materials.

ii) Lees Damage Claim 365

Clerk has sent a letter before claim to Director of 365 Recovery. Next step to apply to the county court small claims. Clerk to complete small claims application for Councillors to approve.

iii) Deed of Easement Hilgay

Correct Deed of easement has been issued and can now be re-signed. Cllr Thomas signed the deed of easement and clerk signed as witness.

11. Highway Matters & Highway Improvement P

**11.1 Highways Improvement Plan**

Village gateways update. KCC Kieran Doble - Sent over gateway proposals to their Design & Delivery Team to draw up detailed designs and give a cost estimate. KCC have not had confirmation of their budget for the next financial year, so they are unable to say whether they can assist with funding for this scheme yet or not. Kieran says he is hoping to get at least what they have this year, and if so, would be able to assist with maybe funding two of the gateways.

Kieran to confirm once they know what finances they have.

Village gateways update. KCC Kieran Doble - Sent over gateway proposals to their Design & Delivery Team to draw up detailed designs and give a cost estimate. KCC have not had confirmation of their budget for the next financial year, so they are unable to say whether they can assist with funding for this scheme yet or not. Kieran says he is hoping to get at least what they have this year, and if so, would be able to assist with maybe funding two of the gateways.

Kieran to confirm once they know what finances they have.

ii) Public Rights of Way

Footpath AE96 adjacent to The Beeches has had a hard surface installed. Clerk made enquiries as to the funding of the project. The funding came out of our capital budget. The reason for the path scoring high on our maintenance list and being done so quickly is that it was deemed a danger to the public.

The danger came in the form of broken glass emerging to the surface of the path which was first reported over 5 years ago. KCC surveyed the path last year and dug various trenches on the path finding large shards of glass, which kept emerging creating an obvious danger. Because of this, our priority scoring system (due to the immediate danger), it scored highly.

Noted. There are still shards of glass adjacent to the footpath. Clerk to report to KCC PROW.

iii) Village Hall Car Park – Councillor Walpole to report findings.

Councillors Aitken, Brown & Walpole attended the village hall car park and the top of Lees to consider possible extension of parking bays. The councillors looked at the area behind and adjacent to the cricket pavilion and approximately, 10 – 12 car parking bays for use by the cricket club and MUGA sports facility. Could be used during school collection and drop off. However, there were concerns regarding child safety when driving past the play area.

The village hall car park itself it was agreed that a further 7 car parking bays could be constructed by the area where the recycling bins used to be sited. We need to cut back vegetation and dig out the mound of earth.

The councillors then looked at the area at the top of the Lees, Church Lane. It was agreed that installing parking bays on the Lees would be deemed as encouraging people to park on the Lees and creating further encroachment on the Lees common. Whilst here we decided to have a look at the Methodist Chapel car park. It was calculated that there could be parking bays available for up to 15 vehicles. Suggest negotiating with the Methodist Chapel on permitting parents to park in the Chapel car park. Support financially by offering to pay towards the cost of emptying their cesspit. To ensure safe parking for parents.

Cllr Thomas. It is not our responsibility to provide parking for the school parents.

Cllr Walpole. Offered to help raise funds for the Methodist Chapel when organizing the Open Gardens event last year but the Methodist Chapel was not forthcoming. Need to protect the Lees and help assist with funding for the school.

Mtg closed. 8.45 approx.

Parish Forum. Chairman to the village hall committee Tim Freeman. We would have no objection to further extension of the car park or the school to use the car park. School parking is not used to capacity and some parents prefer to park nearer to the school. Getting the Methodist Chapel to agree to them allowing for parents to park in their car park.

Mtg reopened. 8.50 approx.

Cllr Thomas. We can ask the question.

Cllr Aitken. According to the license the Methodist Chapel are responsible for the upkeep of the Lees track at the entrance. May be able to come to a compromise.

Cllr Walpole. There may be polling station funding available.

Clerk to enquire on funding avenues that may be available for village hall car park extension.

Relevant Legislation: Highways Act 1980;1997, Local Government and Rating Act, s.30

12. Planning

**12.1 Planning Applications**

PA/2025/0368

Little Paddock Farm, Canterbury Road, Challock, TN25 4DW

Erection of 2no sections of 1m high close board timber fencing on concrete gravel boards, brickwork entrance with piers and reconstituted stone cappings and electronic timber gates (part retrospective)

Comments: Challock Parish Council supports this application.

PA/2025/0376

Former Mill Lane Contractors building, Canterbury Road, Challock, Ashford, TN25 4BJ

Erection of new office building with associated access, parking areas and amenity space following demolition of existing commercial building.

Comments: The Parish Council are in support of this application for a business unit to bring new employment opportunities. However, we have concerns about the style and size of the building, as it appears quite dark in colour and quite substantial in size. We request that planners consider carefully if the building design and materials would conserve and enhance the appearance of the landscape (ANOB) and blend with existing building designs in Challock.

With completion of this site will amount to 104 vehicles from the whole of the development accessing the Canterbury Road. Request road safety measures are implemented for pedestrians accessing the housing developments on foot. Access out into Canterbury Road in a 40-mph area there is no footpath. Pedestrians will be facing oncoming traffic entering the housing development. The public right of way adjacent to Mill Lane Development can be inaccessible during the winter months due to being very muddy. Safety concerns access from the footpath onto the Canterbury Road, opposite Church Lane junction onto a 40-mph road, and the sightlines are poor. Requests for S106 monies be made available for the footpath to be made into a hard surface footpath and a kissing/bridel type gate to prevent pedestrians walking/running straight out onto the Canterbury Road. Consideration for 40 mph is reduced to 30 mph along this stretch of Canterbury Road.

PA/2025/0377

Mill Lane Barn, Canterbury Road, Challock, Ashford, TN25 4BJ

Outline application for the erection of up to 7no dwellings with all matters reserved save for access.

Comments: In support, providing it is in keeping, conserving and enhancing the appearance of the landscape (ANOB). Support 30% affordable housing and 10% rental. The 15-metre buffer is unclear on how this area will be maintained. With completion of this site will amount to 104 vehicles from the whole of the development accessing the Canterbury Road. Request road safety measures are implemented for pedestrians accessing the housing developments on foot. Access out into Canterbury Road in a 40-mph area there is no footpath. Pedestrians will be facing oncoming traffic entering the housing estate. The public right of way adjacent to Mill Lane Development can be inaccessible during the winter months due to being very muddy. Safety concerns access from the footpath onto the Canterbury Road, opposite Church Lane junction onto a 40-mph road. Requests for S106 monies be made available for the footpath to be made into a hard surface footpath and a kissing type gate to prevent pedestrians walking/running straight out onto the Canterbury Road. Consideration for 40 mph is reduced to 30 mph along this stretch of Canterbury Road.

**12.2 Planning Applications to be Ratified**

There were no planning applications to ratify.

**12.3 TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPEAL UNDER SECTION 174**

 **Little Paddock Farm, Canterbury Road, Challock, Ashford, TN25 4DW**

Alleged breach: Without planning permission, the erection of a fence, walls, piers

and gate exceeding one metre in height adjacent to a highway used by vehicular

traffic

Appeal reference: APP/E2205/C/25/3358367

The appellant has appealed against the notice on the following grounds:

\*Ground (f) – the steps required to comply with the requirements of the

notice are excessive and lesser steps would overcome the objections.

\*Ground (g) – that the time given to comply with the notice is too short.

All representations must be received by 3 April 2025.

**12.4 Planning Enquiry Flag Pole**

Planning permission would be required concerning installing a flag pole adjacent to the War Memorial.

Councillors agreed to put up the flag pole on a temporary basis.

Relevant legislation: Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

13. Multi Use Games Area

**13.1 Planning Consultant Update**

The detailed drawings from Paul Dilnutt (Carre Planning Consultant for Sovereign) have now been received. Jack Sadler from BTF has taken over from Alex Young who is on maternity leave has submitted the revised drawings to Ashford Planning Validation team and is waiting to hear back from them. Jack will keep us up to date with any further correspondence.

**13.2 MUGA Funding**

Supplier Sovereign £67,750 + VAT

Planning Consultant £3,000 estimate (so far costs £1570.58 ex VAT)

Estimated Cost £70,750 + VAT

Funds

S106 Clockhouse Green Phase 1 £9,578.82 Maintenance £1965.18

S106 Clockhouse Green Phase 2 £45,617.84 Maintenance £9,358.98

S106 High Tree Lodge £13,449.93, Maintenance £7,359.95

Parish Council Reserves £6,000

Total Estimated Funds for MUGA £74,648.07

Total Estimated Funds for Maintenance £18,684.11

Total Estimated Funds for MUGA & Maintenance £93,332.18

14. Village Community Events

**14.1 VE Commemorative Event Thursday, 8th May 2025**

i) VE 80 Anniversary Event Thursday, 8th May 2025

The Daisy Chains have been booked for Friday, 9th May 2025 Standard 6 piece: £1400 to commence at 7.30 pm. Booked for 2 hours with an ½ hour interval. To provide the band members food and drink. Clerk has booked DH Catering. Approach Cricket Club to see if they would like to run a bar. WI VE Cake (orange & ginger) to recognize the women’s incredible effort during WW11. Request our village cake bakers to make WI VE Cake for children’s picnic.

On Thursday 8th May 2025 we are encouraging the lighting of Beacons and Lamp Lights of Peace at 9.30pm, the raising of a unique VE Day flag at 9am. “I Vow To Thee My Country” song at 9.30 pm. Check whether the Ladies Singing Group would attend. To check with Challock Cricket club if they can assist with setting up a beacon. At 9.00 am Proclamation at the War Memorial. Councillor Thomas to carry out the Proclamation.

Councillor’s agreed for Clerk to purchase VE80 flag and bunting.

Flag £19.99, and 4 x 5m lengths of bunting £39.99 and 3 x 4 lamppost signs £56.99. Total cost £59.98.

Budget for VE80 event £2,000.

Cllr Walpole. Offer free sausage and chips as well as an ice-cream.

Cllr Walpole to make enquiries regarding costs for children’s ice cream through Waynes Whippy.

Clerk to make enquiries with DH Catering for sausage and chips.

Councillors agreed for DH Catering to offer fish and chips.

Cllr Aitken to make enquiries with the school to check what they are doing for VE80.

Relevant Legislation: Local Government Act 1972.

14. Public Participation

No issues of concerns were raised by parishioner.

Relevant Legislation: Local Government Act, s 100.

Parish Council Meeting Dates for 2025

Thursday, 10th April 2025

**Future Parish Meeting Dates:**

Any items to be emailed to: clerk@challockparishcouncil.gov.uk no later than Tuesday, 1st April 2025.

Future Parish Meeting Dates:

Tuesday 20th May 2025 Annual Parish Meeting

22nd May 2025

19th June 2025

17th July 2025

18th September 2025

16th October 2025

20th November 2025

**The meeting closed at 9.31 pm.**

**Signed as a true record by: ……………………………Tracy Brown Chairperson Challock Parish Council**

**Dated……………………**