**Challock Parish Council Meeting Minutes**

Audrey Allen Room, Memorial Hall

Thursday, 9th January 2025, 7.30 pm

Members of public present:4

Present

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

1. Welcome

Chairperson welcomed everyone present to the parish meeting

Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Hardie

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 21st November 2024 meeting were signed by Chairperson Brown as an accurate record.

Proposed by Cllr Walpole and seconded by Cllr Shallcrass.

All agreed.

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

4. PC Tim Moody Downs West Ward

There were no reported incidences in Challock for October & November.

5. Clerk’s Report

**Highways**

Clerk reported loose manhole cover adjacent to Mill Lane which was becoming very noisy when vehicles drove over it. A number of parishioners had also reported the issue. Has now been rectified by KCC Highways.

**The Lees**

**i)** Portucalea hedge - The grounds man has strimmed, removed and disposed of Portucalea hedge, Canterbury Road

ii) Tree Works - Clean Cut Tree contractor has removed the large ash tree adjacent to VicEst, near the planings. Removed the fallen tree near the planings, tree stub remaining. The contractor has also removed the two ash trees opposite near the Old Post Office.

iii) Christmas Tree – Due to high winds in December had problems with erecting the Christmas tree and damaged caused to the lights. Eventually stayed up.

**Action with Communities in Rural Kent Files**

Clerk has collected two folders mainly containing historical information dating back 1946. Information is primarily about the village hall. Very interesting. Suggest having the folders available for viewing at the Annual Parish Meeting. The opening of the new village hall coincided with 50th VE Day commemorations.

**William Oure Winter Hampers**

Made up hampers for 12 parishioners.

Knit and natter donated knitted jackets for the ladies and woolly hats for the gents. Also, a knitted posy of flowers in a pot.

Clerk has completed Charity Commission Annual Return submission for the William Oure Charity for 1st April 2023 to 31s March 2024.

Cllr Walpole. Thanked the Clerk for organizing the hampers.

6. Correspondence

* Received an updated list of KCC Highways Managers/Stewards and responsible parishes. Our Highway District Manager is Jamie Cunningham for Ashford area, and our Highway Steward for Challock is Jayne Brennan-Chapple.
* Received an email from ABC S106 informing us that the Clockhouse Green Phase 2, the development has not yet reached 75% occupations, and it is anticipated that this trigger will be reached early December.
* Regarding the S106 for PA/2023/0704 – we would advise that the contributions are payable on 75% occupation of the dwellings. The site only commenced in the Summer, and we would not anticipate any occupations in the near future.
* Received an email from parishioner requesting if the potholes on the Lees tracks could be filled in, the entrance in particular is absolutely dreadful. Appreciate that takes money away from future works, but that will be many months away still. There is still a reasonable amount of road planings on the pile here.
* We’re happy to help with pegging out for measurements or similar that needs to be done, just let us know. The school parents made another good go at widening it even further yesterday, with some lovely tyre tracks ruining the grass by the big tree at the entrance.
* Received an email notification that ABC has moved offices to International House from the 9th December 2024.
* Received a further 2 emails from parishioners who has requested for the potholes on the Lees track be filled.
* Received an email from ABC concerning its Lifeline service. This service will cease from the 25th March 2025 this is due to advances in technology in the marketplace significant investments would be required in order to keep up with the latest industry equipment and services provided.
* Received an email from a parishioner thanking the William Oure charity for the lovely hamper they received. Received a thank you card from parishioner thanking the William Oure charity for the lovely hamper they received. A thank you card was also sent to the Knit & Natter group for their knitted items included in the hamper. Also received a message from Karen Hatcher thanking the PC for her Christmas hamper.
* Received an email from a parishioner referring to government’s announcement allocating £1.6bn budget for road maintenance towards the potholes on public roads. Is it not possible to request a one-off increase in the precept to address this and other road issues in the village?
* Received an email from KCC Hardship Strategy notifying of Pensioners Just Missing Out Scheme – eligible for help with food, energy or both. To receive £200 in vouchers. Closing date for online application is the 28th February 2025. Parishioners can contact local Citizens Advice for help with online application. Clerk has placed flyer on the notice boards, PC Facebook and Challock Chatter. Also, for inclusion in February’s forester.
* Received an introduction letter from Katie Lam MP – Enclosed posters to go on the notice boards. Would like to place an advert with contact details in the forester magazine. Katie Lam MP is keen to sit down with every parish council (although with 56 civil parishes in the Weald of Kent, this may take a little while). Challock Parish Council would also be very welcome to come to Westminster and have a tour of Parliament. Clerk to arrange for Councillors to have a tour of Westminster.

**Matters arising from correspondence**

**i)** Pothole maintenance request by parishioners – Clerk has replied to parishioners notifying

that The Parish Council is in the process of getting quotes for a more sustainable surface. The last couple of weeks we had meetings with contractors and measured the Lees track.

The Parish Council are unable to arrange for the potholes to be filled with loose planings, it is no longer sustainable to continue this maintenance programme.

At the beginning of the New Year the Parish Council will be writing to residents on the Lees inviting them to a meeting to discuss the future Lees maintenance.

7. Representatives Reports

**7.1 KALC Area Committee Meeting Minutes**

Cllr Walpole ran through the Area Committee Meeting Minutes held on the 27th November 2024

7.2.1 Working with ABC: Local Plan Infrastructure update – Ian Bailey, Team Leader Plan Making and Infrastructure, advised that the Local Plans should set out the contributions expected from development. This should include setting out the levels and types of affordable housing provision required, along with other infrastructure such as that needed for education, health, transport, flood and water management, green and digital infrastructure. Suggest between now and next summer Town and Parish Councils, if they are not already doing so, should give some consideration to what sorts of local infrastructure may be needed over the next plan period which is up to 2042. Parishes will be asked for their views on infrastructure requirements for any new development in their areas.

**7.2 Village Forester Magazine Qtr 3 Update**

Cllr Aitken ran through the Qtr 3 report Village Forester Magazine.

The following payments made to date

Editorial Fees £2000, Printing costs £1066.26 = Total £3066.26

Estimated Income

Advertising £1326

Estimated Costs

Printing £887.55, Parish Pump Subscription £52, Staff costs £240 = Total Estimated costs £1179.22

Forecast:

Estimated Income £3679, Estimated Costs £4245.81

£566.81 Estimated total loss

Estimated Molash contributions £115.35 (Last year’s contribution £131.47)

Challock PC loss £451.46 (Last year’s proportion £514.53)

New Adverts for 2024/25 £420 (5 new advertisers)

Adverts No longer required 2024/25 £530 (6 old advertisers)

Cllr Thomas. Propose that the Forester magazine changes to electronic version. More parishioners are using IT. The biggest cost is printing.

Resolved. To receive views from parishioners on the Forester being distributed electronically. Clerk to arrange for this to go in the February’s Forester.

All agreed.

Cllr Aitken requested a sub-committee meeting with Molash PC be arranged.

Clerk to email Molash to organize a Forester Sub-Committee Meeting.

8. Finances

* 1. **Bank Reconciliation for November & December 2024**

The current account balance on 31st December 2024 is £ £24,047.27

Resolved. Challock Parish Council approved the Bank Reconciliation for November & December 2024.

Cllr Brown & Cllr Thomas signed the bank account balances and reconciliations for 30th November 2024 & 31st December 2024.

All agreed.

Reserves (National Savings) Account £8816.65

£6,000 MUGA

£2,000 To be reallocated.

£816.65 Bollard Installation

Resolved. Challock Parish Councill approved the transfer from Reserves £204.83 (ex VAT) and Planning fees £1365.75 (ex VAT) for Muga to Current account.

All agreed.

* 1. **Qtr 3 Reconciliation of Accounts**

Resolved. The Parish Council approved the Qtr 3 Reconciliation of Account balances and reconciliation for 1st October 2024 – 31st December 2024.

Cllr Brown & Cllr Thomas signed the Qtr 3 Reconciliation of Accounts

All agreed.

* 1. **Precept 2025/26**

At the parish meeting on the 21st November Councillors reviewed the prepared precept budget proposals and agreed for the precept to remain the same amount at £24,000.

Parishioner’s request to increase the precept as a one off to cover the potholes on the lees track and for other road repairs in the village.

Resolved. It’s important to note that Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer’s comments, alongside the £1.6bn government funding for road maintenance, are specifically targeted at public roads. This funding and guidance do not extend to adopted tracks or areas where maintenance responsibilities are outlined in property deeds, as is the case with the track in question.

We do not believe the village should be compelled into emergency precept increases based on this statement. It would neither be fair nor appropriate to dramatically increase the precept for the entire village to cover maintenance costs that are explicitly the responsibility of individual property owners. Such an approach would place an unnecessary financial burden on all residents, which goes against the principle that these costs should be borne by those who directly benefit from the tracks.

Noted. Referring to KALC meeting proposals to allow 5% increase in N.I payment for employer contributions. The Parish Council does not pay NI employer contributions as the Clerk’s has two jobs and the primary employer will pay the NI employer contributions.

Resolved. Parish Precept Form. Total amount to be charged to local taxpayers (precepted) by Challock Parish Council payable by Ashford Borough Council £24,000. Clerk to email ABC the precept request form by the 10th January 2025.

* 1. **Authorization of January Payments**

The following cheques were signed by Cllr Walpole & Cllr Aitken

The following cheques to be approved and signed.

Cheque No 102820 The Lees grounds maintenance grass cutting £561.78

Cheque No 102821 ABC Forester Printing for November & December issues £426.50

Cheque No 102822 Clerk re ABC Planning application fees £216.5

Cheque No 102823 BLT Partnership Alex Young planning consultation fees £1638.90

Cheque No 102824 Grounds man winter maintenance village hall car park, Christmas tree & tree branch removal £98.46

Cheque No 102825 HMRC Clerk’s Tax £486.40

Cheque No 102826 Clerk Salary Adjustment £28.38 for December’s Salary

Cheque No 102827 Clerk Hospice Christmas Tree Collection & Land Registry Fee for Lees common deeds. £33.00

**8.5 Clerk’s Salary Standing Order Amendment**

Re: Updated Local Government Pay Services Agreement and Clerk’s hourly rate to increase to £13.26.

Resolved. Challock Parish Council approved letter to Santander to increase standing order payment of clerk’s salary.

Cllr Brown & Cllr Thomas signed the standing order amendment letter.

All agreed.

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

The following schedule of supplier payments paid for December 2024

Cheque No 102817 Clerk – Stationery Christmas Tree lights, flowers for parishioner Miscellaneous £29.36

Cheque No 102818 Clerk – Salary Back Pay Adjustment Pay Award 2024/25 £209.38

Cheque No 102819 Grounds man – Portaclea hedge £330

* 1. **William Oure Charity**

Bank balance and reconciliation for 31st December 2024 £3685.62.

Payments £305.22 Winter Hampers for 12 parishioners.

Receipt £500 Rental Alex Collyer

Resolved. Challock Parish Council approved the bank balance & bank reconciliation for 31st December 2024.

Cllr Brown & Cllr Thomas signed the bank account balance and reconciliation

All agreed.

9. The Lees

**9.1** **Track Maintenance**

During December 4 contractors J&M Resurfacing Ltd, Swift Surfacing Ltd, Ashford Tarmac & Lancaster visited the Lees to provide quotations for the first lees track. Measurements of the lees track were taking.

Noted. The 4 supplier quotations have been received.

Challock Parish Council Contribution – S106 Informal/Natural Green Space £8246 & £6194 for maintenance. S106 for a hard surface and seating.

Cllr Brown. S106 funding is only available for a limited time. Applications for S106 funding for Informal/Natural Green Space is by July 2027. Challock Parish Council’s contribution towards the Lees track is available for a limited time. If no agreement is reached with the residents, then the S106 contributions will be allocated to other green space projects in the village.

Resolved. Councillors agreed to the following proposals:-

1. Clerk to book a sub-committee meeting for Thursday, 23rd January in the Audrey Allen room & a resident meeting for Thursday, 6th February 2025 in the main hall.
2. Clerk to send out invitation letters to residents.

**9.2** **Mole Hills**

Clerk has made enquiries in obtaining a quotation for the mole hills on the Lees near to Beech Court entrance. Bounty Pest Control have carried out a free survey on Wednesday, 8th January 2025. Ashford Pest Control required a £65 survey fee.

**9.3 Ash Trees adjacent to Help Hire, Canterbury Road.**

Cllr Thomas requested that the Ash Trees along the footpath near to Help Hire are looked at. Concerns of safety could come down.

Clerk to arrange for a tree surgeon to come out and quote a price for pollarding or cut down.

10. Highway Matters & Highway Improvement Plan

* 1. **Faversham Road Footpath Scheme**

Mark Smith (King & Johnson) has now responded with the revised deed of dedication together with a copy of the register of title number TT152468 and the title plan. Look forward to receiving King & Johnson signed engrossment of the deed of dedication KCC can execute it

**10.2**  **Highways Improvement Plan**

**10.2.1 Village gateways update**

KCC Kieran Doble -

I’ve received the feedback from my colleague, and she still believes that the locations she proposed are best for the following reasons:

Location 2: The location where the current village sign isn’t actually publicly maintainable highway. This sign would have had permission from the landowner at some point, but this can become an issue in future if they retract that permission or a new land owner takes over and retracts that permission. We are currently going through this at the moment in a different parish. Also, the location my colleague has proposed will be safer for any crew that may need to maintain the sign, and it will be more effective as part of the start of the 30mph, creating a visual pinch point and emphasizing the 30mph limit.

Location 3: The location you have proposed would be too far from where we want the impact to be, around the residential area. If we put it too far out, it loses its effect.

Location 4: This again would be too far out from the area we really want the effect to be most.

I too agree with my colleague’s feedback and feel that what is proposed would give you the best result. Let me know how you want to proceed or if you have any other questions

Cllr Walpole. Propose we follow Highways recommendations. KCC are offering to fund two of the four gateways. Challock Parish Council budgeted for 2025/26, £1250 towards the new gateways.

Cllr Fisher. Agree to follow KCC Highways recommendations.

Resolved. Challock Parish Council agreed to KCC recommendations for the new village gateways.

All agreed.

Resolved. Challock Parish Council agreed to reallocate £1,750 reserves to Village gateways. The remaining £250 to be re-allocated to the bollard installation.

All agreed.

**10.2.2 White 40 MPH painted road signs**

Cllr Brown. Proposed for white 40 road signs to be painted on the road along Canterbury Road from Monkery Lane junction, Faversham Road and Buck Street.

Resolved. At the next HIP meeting to request for inclusion in our HIP white 40 road signs to be painted on the road along Canterbury Road from Monkery Lane, Faversham Road and Buck Street.

**10.2.3** **Safety Concerns Memorial Hall Car Park/Blind Lane Crossing**

KCC Kieran Doble –

This would need to go onto your HIP for consideration for any additional engineering improvements.

In the meantime, the school has options for further support with this type of thing through their School Travel Plan (STP). They do have a STP, however the latest edition is from 2006, with the latest review of that STP in 2022. So, this would need to have a new edition so that my colleague Iona who runs these plans can offer up to date support, resources and advice. I have attached a document that details what the STP is and its benefits etc.

I hope that information helps, and that Iona can support the school regarding the walking bus etc., and I look forward to working with you on any feasible engineering improvements via the HIP in the New Year.

Headteacher’s Response - The walking buses were probably about 10 years ago!! Sadly, whenever we have tried to resurrect them, parental involvement has been lacking. The walking buses need parents to run them.

I’m happy to put something out to parents in trying to form a walking bus parent group after Christmas.

Headteacher has pointed out that there are no school signs in Church Lane warning people to slow down. Clerk to make enquiries with KCC Highways.

Cllr Thomas. Safety concerns are primarily around the time of school drop off and collection times. It is the parents/carers responsibility to ensure the children cross the road safely. Should form part of the school travel plan. Having a zebra crossing at the entrance to the village hall car park is unlikely to be approved due to poor visibility and sight line requirements.

Cllr Walpole. The school has children’s road safety signs outside the school gates. Suggest consideration for school/children crossing the road signs. Suggest having a competition for children to draw road safety posters.

Cllr Aitken. Commented that a poster competition has previously been done concerning road safety along the Lees track, which proved to be unsuccessful.

Noted. There is a children warning sign displayed near to the entrance to the village hall.

Resolved. The Parish Council agreed for review of school signage, children warning signs be added to the HIP and to be discussed at the next KCC Highways meeting.

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

11. Planning

**11.1 Planning Applications**

There were no planning applications to comment on.

**11.2 Planning Applications to be Ratified**

The following planning applications were ratified.

PA/2024/2180 - 26, High Snoad Wood, Challock, TN25 4DQ – Proposed single storey side extension and garage conversion.

In Support. Provided there is adequate parking space, and the extension is in keeping. Neighbour's comments are taken into consideration.

PA/2024/2079 - 21, High Snoad Wood, Challock, TN25 4DQ

Proposed two-storey side extension including single storey link to garage

Challock Parish Council. In Support. No objections.

Relevant legislation: Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

12. Multi Use Games Area

**12.1 Planning Consultant Update**

A site visit took place on the 13th November to carry out Biodiversity Net Gain assessment. Email correspondence between Alex Young BLT and Digby Hayden from Ecology Partnership.

Essentially, there will be an element of additional planning required to achieve a ‘netgain’. Digby has proposed an element of scrub and tree planting, as proposed on the attached. However, there are other actions that could be taken such as planting a small wild flower meadow. However, it is recognised that this would require much more management. I have had an initial crack at the BNG calculations for this site and given that we are replacing an area of grassland and scrub (albeit the poorest of conditions), there will be some planting required to offset the loss. There are a variety of options for this, however one constant is that an area of approximately 70m2 of scrub planting is required, due to the presence of bramble scrub on site. This, alongside the planting of 11 trees would give you the required 10% net gain and would require minimal management.

Received amended plan from Sovereign.

Alex Young has lodged planning application on ABC planning portal.

**12.2 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 £9,534.00 Maintenance £1950.00

S106 Clockhouse Green Phase 2 £30,191.00 Maintenance £6194.00

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

Parish Council Reserves £6,000

Total Estimated Funds £59,174.93

Further funds to obtain £11,575.00

Cllr Brown. Concerned that the S106 funds for High Tree Lodge will take some time to be paid to the P, 70% occupation is unlikely to be achieved for at least another 18 months. Upon planning application being granted, propose applying for other funding streams in order to commence the installation of the MUGA during this year. Look to applying for two grants of £10,000 each. The S106 funds for High Tree Lodge could be requested for another project i.e. new play park surface.

Resolved. Upon the outcome of the planning application for the MUGA. To apply for funding for the remaining monies required in order to commence the installation of the MUGA for this year.

Clerk to make enquiries of funding opportunities available.

All agreed.

13. Village Community Events

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

VE Commemorative Event Thursday, 8th May 2025

Clerk has made enquiry to the Daisy Chains for Friday, 9th May 2025 Standard 6 piece: £1400. Deposit: £200 to be paid on confirmation of booking.

Resolved. Councillors agreed to the Clerk booking the Daisy Chains for Friday, 9th May 2025 in the evening. Clerk to check village hall availability on Friday, 9th May.

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.

Clerk is investigating the cost of purchasing a flag pole. Prices start from £49 aluminum type pole to £350 depending on supplier. The least expensive flag poles are on sale from Amazon, eBay etc. The expensive type is from a Flag Pole company.

**Cllr Thomas.** Requested the flag pole has an internal rope system.

Clerk to make enquiries to the Summer Fair Committee for funding towards the flag pole.

Clerk to check with BTF if planning permission would be required for a permanent flag pole.

1**3.2 Kingswood Players Anniversary Celebration Cinderella Pantomime**

Pantomime is to be held on Friday, 31st January & 1st February 2025, Challock Memorial Hall. With two performances on the 1st February. Tickets can be purchased at the Barn Shop.

Relevant Legislation: Local Government Act 1972.

14. Public Participation

There were no members of public present.

Relevant Legislation: Local Government Act, s 100.

Parish Council Meeting Dates for 2025

Thursday, 13th February 2025

Resolved. To change the 20th March 2025 meeting to the 13th March 2025. All agreed.

Cllr Walpole sends her apologies for the next parish meeting 13th February 2025.

**Future Parish Meeting Dates:**

Any items to be emailed to: clerk@challockparishcouncil.gov.uk no later than Tuesday, 4th February 2025.

Future Parish Meeting Dates:

13th March 2025

10th April 2025

22nd May 2025

Tuesday 20th May 2025 Annual Parish Meeting

19th June 2025

17th July 2025

18th September 2025

16th October 2025

20th November 2025

**The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.**

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

**Dated……………………**