



Clerk to the Council, Mr P. Coles, c/o 3 The Square, Chartham, Kent, CT4 7JG
Email: clerk@chilhamparishcouncil.gov.uk, Website: www.chilhamparishcouncil.gov.uk
Twitter: @ParishChilham

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD IN CHILHAM VILLAGE HALL AT 7.00 P.M. ON THURSDAY 13th July 2023

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: G. Schofield (Chair), K. Uncle (Deputy Chair), G Meaden, S. Barrett, A. Watkins, V Hutchinson & A. Webb

ALSO PRESENT: P Coles (Clerk to the Council) C. Bell (Kent County Councillor) & 6 members of the public

COUNCILLORS APOLOGIES: S.T.Dixon

AGENDA

Chair opened the meeting at 7:10pm

1. Chairmans Report

The past year has been a busy year for the Parish Council, and in my role as Chair I have seen the Parish Council become more friendly and approachable.

In May, Councillors Jane Marriott, Doug Marriott and Greg Taylor ended their terms as Chilham Parish Councillors. On behalf of the parish, I would like to thank them for their hard work during their time on the Council., including arranging and helping with the very successful Coronation celebrations for King Charles. Councillor Geoff Meaden kindly sponsored the coronation coins for the children of Chilham school and the members of COSY club.

New Parish Councillors- we recently welcomed 3 new councillors on to the Parish Council, Vanessa Hutchinson, Colin Topley and Tony Webb. They have already settled in well and have brought extra skills to enhance the work of the Council. Unfortunately, due to family matters, Colin has now had to resign, and we wish him and his family well. Hopefully Colin will still be involved on occasions.

COSY- Chilham, Old Wives Lees, Shottenden Youth Club

A proposal to set up a club for children was put to the Parish Council by Councillors Shani Barrett Stacey watkins and Sarah Topley-Dixon. The Parish Council was happy to agree funds for the setting up and running of the club. Due to the hard work of these Councillors, the popularity and success of COSY has far exceeded our expectations and has flourished. The COSY children's coronation celebration in Chilham Castle grounds was an amazing event, which I am sure will be remembered by all who took part. A big thank you to the owners of the castle for letting us use their gardens

In closing. I would like to thank all current Councillors, including Keith Uncle, and the Parish Clerk, Paul Coles, for all their work, which is often unseen, on behalf of the parish, as we look forward to another year in serving the people of Chilham Parish.

Regards
Gill Schofield
Chair
Chilham Parish Council

2, Unaudited Annual Accounts

	Year Ending 31 st March 2022 £	Year Ending 31 st March 2023 £
Balances Bought Forward	49,945	61,609
Precept	38,113	52,670
Total other receipts	19,550	10,570
Staff Costs	14,568	12,123
Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0
All other Payments	31,431	36,495
Balances carried forward	61,609	76,231
Total value of cash and short-term investments	61,609	76,231
Total fixed assets plus long-term investments	108,260	108,902
Total Borrowings	0	0

3 Reports from Community Groups

3.1 Old Wives Lees Choir

Old Wives Lees community choir has just passed its 11th anniversary having formed to support local events for the late Queens' diamond jubilee. Since then, we have grown in size and confidence. We currently have a membership of 40 which for a community choir in a small village is extremely encouraging.

The ethos of the choir has always been to make singing and music fun in that way feel we get the best out of everyone. There are no auditions and previous experience, or musical knowledge is certainly not required. All that is required is enthusiasm. Saying all this we do work hard to make a good sound which I think we generally achieve.

The choir is also very much about community. I think all would agree it has been a great force for good in the village with many friendships forged. Research in recent years has shown singing with others to have huge benefits on mental and physical health and several members have expressed that the choir has been an absolute lifesaver when they have been going through difficult times. It has also provided a catalyst for other musical groups to form with the recorder and ukulele group also flourishing.

The Old Wives Lees community choir is a great local resource and has provided years of support to many local events and the church. We are also a non-profit making organisation with myself as director and Caroline our main accompanist giving our time for free. This allows for extremely affordable subs and a balance that enables us to support local charities such as Catching Lives

In short, we love our choir.

Mark

4 Report from Borough Councillors

Clair Bell, Kent County Councillor Ashford Rural East

Finances of Kent County Council are in dire straits. The revenue budget for the Council is £1.3 Billion, pressure on Council from:

- Demographic changes
- Inflation
- Demand for services

Meeting the cost of Adult Social Care, Childrens Social Care and cost of transport for children, including Special Education Needs means there is less for other Council activities. The Council did receive additional funding from the Government including £6 million for potholes, dealt with the worst issues. Review on Community Assets are they all required. Review of Libraries later in the years.

Community warden service being reviewed, £1 million savings required. Savings in household waste centres will affect Faversham, not the one in Ashford. The value of Members grants reduced-will be able to fund some projects

5 Reports from Working Groups

5.1 Youth Club

The Youth club now has 73 members meeting fortnightly in the Sports hall, Chilham Parish Recreation Ground Trust. This week the members were shown how to use a defibrillator.

5.2 Communications and Information Technology

Report to Chilham Annual Parish Meeting 13th July 2023

Communications and Information Technology Working Group

Chilham Parish Council

The present Communications and Information Technology Working Group (CITWG) of Chilham Parish Council was formed late in 2022 through re-organisation of the Events and Communications working group. This recognised the growing relevance of IT to Council.

Following review of CPC's existing website, an alternative provider of internet and e-mail hosting was identified based on proven track record of dedicated solutions tailored for small local authorities, client responsiveness, business resilience and cost considerations. Design and construction of the new website started in June 2023 with launch anticipated in August 2023.

Provision of laptop computers exclusively for Parish Council business and dedicated email addresses for Councillors and CPC staff is a high priority project. This will ensure that all councillors are equipped with IT hardware and software to support performance of their roles. At the same time this will optimise cybersecurity and GDPR compliance. Procurement is currently in progress to identify devices of suitable specification within acceptable budget, for delivery during August 2023.

During the first half of 2023 the Working Group endeavoured to exploit a broader range of communication routes in addition to its online presence (website and social media). In particular articles and newsletters for Chilham Parish Magazine, noticeboards and leafletting for a target readership who may not use internet sources.

Trial livestreaming of Council meetings using a YouTube channel was carried out in Spring 2023. As well as real-time broadcasts, a video record of the meeting is saved. Technical issues around sound quality are being addressed, but the feasibility has been demonstrated and Council is committed to developing this facility to make its business more open and accessible.

Other activities of CITWG during the year have included graphic design of posters and flyers promoting Parish Council events (e.g., Easter Egg Hunt, Coronation and Youth Club) as well as producing a secure online registration form and database for youth club membership. We look forward to supporting the work of the Council moving forward.

Finally thank you to Gregory Taylor, Sarah Topley, Shanise Barrett, and Colin Topley for their contributions to the working group during the last year.

Vanessa Hutchinson, Gill Schofield & Tony Webb

13th July 2023

6 Question Time

7 Close of Meeting

