



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

## Minutes of the full Parish Council held on Thursday 1st June 2023 at 7.00pm in Old Wives Lees Village Hall

**Councillors Present:** G. Schofield (Chair), K. Uncle (KU) (Deputy Chair), G. Meaden, S. Barrett, A. Watkins, S.T. Dixon, V Hutchinson, A. Webb & C. Topley

**Also Present:** P. Coles (PC) (Clerk to the Council), and five members of the public.

**Councillor Apologies:** Not applicable

**Councillor Absentee:** Not applicable

### AGENDA

- Item**
- 2023/067** **Welcome to new Co-opted Councillors:** Councillors A. Webb and C. Topley declared acceptance of office.
- 2023/068** **Apologies for Absence:** Not applicable
- 2023/069** **Declarations of Interests And / Or Lobbying:** Councillors S. Barrett & A. Watkins fruit from farm shop for COSY
- 2023/070** **Minutes**
- 2023/070.1** To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2023.
- 2023/058.1 Pete Vogel clarified the new landowner requested advice, which I gave based on his explanation of what he intended to do. Minute should read "*Greg confirmed he had spoken to the community tree warden Pete Vogel who had confirmed that the work as described did not require permission.*"
- 2023/070.2** To receive an update on any matters arising not included in the agenda.
- 2023/058.2 Defer a decision on the environment policy to October Parish Council meeting to allow the environment working group a chance to review and revise
- 2023/058.3 In response Cllr Geoff Meaden offers the following measures that The Green Party will hope to prioritise in respect to their aims for betterment of the Ashford District. Thus, if successful in the Borough Council election on May 4th, the Ashford Green Party is promising to do all it can to promote:
- "Green" jobs that offer a secure future
  - Additional Support for high streets and other local businesses
  - A council that listens, with a new democratic committee system
  - A council that acts for every corner of the Borough
  - The continuing of ABC's descent to carbon neutrality by 2030

- Partnership with community groups to support vulnerable people and those hit by the cost-of-living crisis
- Affordable homes that are cheaper to build and to heat
- Improved Insulation in all council housing to reduce energy bills
- An action plan to help homeless people all year round
- More biodiversity on council land and net carbon zero council buildings and houses
- No large-scale solar farms on areas having high quality soils
- As well as identifying housing land in the Local Plan, identify land that should not be built on.
- Active travel schemes that make walking and cycling safer and more enjoyable

**2023/071**

**Questions from Residents**

2023/071.1 Resident: Invited by Councillors to provide an update on the engineering of the wetlands Consultation has taken place and the applicant has responded.

The Environment Agency has objected to the application as to close to the river, and to its size. South East Water strongly object. The development would sit in source protection Zone 1, these protect waste infiltration into ground water extraction site. Purpose of the zones are to safeguard water quality. A risk assessment has been asked from the applicant. South East Water opposed the application due to pollution to the water supply. Applicant has responded that the 6 ponds created will be lined ,the lining should last 100-125 years. Councillor G Meaden asked to call in the application as a ward Councillor for Ashford Borough Council.

2023/071.2 The Environmental policy was developed as a result of the Branch road Surgery and dispensary closure and was supported by over 750 parishioners. Will you please restore the item in the section 5 where it is not defined please. When it is reindorsed one would expect it has to be taken to ABC to be embedded in the Planning framework for all new build and new utility services subject to planning control.

The clerk provided a response by email previous to the meeting and attached the planning explained document, Campaign to protect rural England, bringing to attention the following:

'So, if you want to have your say in plans for the future of your city, town, village or neighbourhood it is important to get involved in the Local Plan.' Pg 14

'Town and parish councils and the public have an important role to play in the Local Plan process. They are all invited to participate by making comments (sometimes referred to as 'representations') on the draft plan. They may also be invited to participate in a consultation event, make comments at a roadshow or in response to a leaflet, or get involved in a citizens' panel. This guide will help you think about what you want to say, and to make your comments in the most effective way.'

As the local plan is not currently open to negotiation the policy as such will not be adopted by Ashford Borough Council. Councillors will be asked to consider whether the policy how they wish to proceed with the Environmental policy.

The agreed action, 2023/058.2, were confirmed

2023/071.3 The Chilham wood comment quote "it is understood all work has ceased as it was illegal." Why does the CPC tree warden supersede the tree authority in ABC this should be clarified to all concerned to avoid risk of innocent prosecution as implied by the lack of knowledge by the owner. Our ward member was quoted as stating the officer has instructed all work to stop and as procedures had not been followed and were detrimental to the wood and may be an offence. Is it an offence as it is stated or not?

Phil Cook, Tree Warden for Ashford, has emailed the following in regards to the work on Mabel's Wood. 'I will provide the factual elements as far as I may, this is an ongoing investigation so not all of the information has been established.

- The work has ceased and will not re-start without any proposal being assessed and the requisite permissions/notifications sought.
- The arborist has cleared dead, fallen and dangerous trees from the site. Having looked at the stacks of timber I cannot find any trees that would have not been permitted to be felled either as an exemption to the need for an application or a 5 Day Notification. In my view, no good quality healthy trees have been felled.
- Whilst it is noted that pockets of saplings and younger trees have been left, the impact of the machinery where it has scraped away the bramble and Ivy needs to be assessed along with any potential remedial actions.'

Before the work commenced the opinion of the Tree warden for Chilham was sought for advice. At no point has it been suggested that the Chilham Tree warded supersedes Ashford Borough Council Tree Warden.

2023/071.4 Is THT sampling of water to be disregarded or sent to Castle Water for action. The questions raised regarding the water supply have been clarified by the contractor. The report does not recommend any further action regarding supply, and this has been accepted by the Parish Council.

**2023/072**

**Borough Councillors, Policing:  
Ward Member's report to Chilham PC**

I must give a major thank you for those who voted for me at the recent local council elections. It was good to know that I was clearly doing something right because this is not always easy to tell. I hope that I can continue thus and remember that it is important for residents to make contact with me if they have any local concerns.

Could I just add that there a few things that I can do little about and probably the most important of these are the potholes. I'm afraid that these are a KCC matter and I have been told that the situation is likely to remain quite severe for a long period as the resources for fixing these are severely limited. However, can I remind parishioners that there are a range of public problems that can be brought to the attention of either KCC or ABC via online reporting. As well as potholes these include matters such as blocked drains, hedges or trees that need attention, burst water pipes, fly-tipping, some building repairs, noise nuisances, etc.

Another problem that is proving difficult to resolve is that of over-hanging hedges. I can think of three or four hedges that I have issued complaints about to ABC but they have claimed that inspections have shown these hedges are not in fact a problem. But when is a problem a problem? To my mind the hedge opposite Dave Cawdron's garage on the Street in Chilham, which is blocking movement of the rubbish cart up this street is definitely a problem, as is the hedge in North Downs Close, in which a street light is "buried", is also a problem.

But much of my time seems to be devoted to two major planning developments both of which are in the Chilham area, i.e. the large solar farm proposed near Old Wives Lees and the artificial wetland proposed at the edge of Chilham. Both proposed plans are taking many months to address because they are contentious, complex and of a major scale. My main concern with these plans are that they are likely to be determined by national governmental dictates rather than by local interests. It seems to me that national interests are very much detached from local knowledge and local needs. So, I fear that the plan for a wetland development on the Stour near Chilham, may be permitted as the need for an urgent upgrade of water quality is necessary. But in my view the water quality issue should be addressed at source by cleaning up the sewage discharges and reducing chemical runoff from mainly farming sources. Similarly, with the respect to the solar farm, I fear that a distant national government will see that meeting their energy targets is more important than other local, national and indeed international needs and considerations. Obviously, when there are so many alternative solutions to the resolution of the climate crisis, then the answer must be a tricky balance, but in our case I believe that this balance may not be correctly struck in a manner that is appropriate to our local circumstances.

Finally, as a result of the first meeting of the new Council on Ashford Borough, held on Tuesday evening this week, the ruling cabinet of the new Borough Council is likely to consist of one Conservative, five Ashford Independents and four Green Party members. This will be a huge contrast in respect to the former situation where only one of these groups was represented. There will be a huge learning curve for many of

- 2023/073 Mabel's wood.**  
Dealt with above.
- 2023/074 Proposal to apply for a Tree Preservation order to Ashford Borough Council for the trees along the A252 between Church Hill and Taylors Hall.**  
The current Tree Preservation Orders do not extend to Church Hill Lane. Councillor G Meaden to investigate this.
- 2023/075 Update from Chair:**  
2023/075.1 The Peacock  
The Peacock is a listed building which has been unoccupied for at least 25 years. The Chair has approached Ashford Borough Council regarding compulsory purchase as the building is in a state of disrepair. Ashford have replied saying they will send a Senior Conservation Officer to the property who will take photographs and write a report, which will be passed to the Enforcement Office should it be deemed that repairs are needed. It will be down to ABC to contact the owners. Councillor G Meaden to raise with the Borough Solicitor the options on compulsory purchase.  
2023/075.2 Report back from meeting with Kent Highways. The Chair and Clerk met with Kent Highways regarding Chilham Square parking. Advised to approach an Architect to develop plans for parking in the square. The Parish Council will need to pay for this.
- 2023/076 Discussion on the Annual Parish Meeting**  
Agreed to approach local groups to present at the meeting. Ideal meeting to launch the new website. Councillors G. Schofield, V Hutchinson and C. Topley to work on the Parish Council annual statement.
- 2023/077 Working Groups**  
To receive reports
- 2023/077.1 Finance & General Purposes:**  
2023/077.1.1 Confirmation of membership  
Membership of the Working Group- Councillors G. Schofield, K. Uncle and A. Watkins  
2023/077.1.2 Financial Transactions for Approval-Appendix 1 refers  
2023/077.1.3 Update on the annual accounts. Clerk to collect completed accounts, Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2023
- 2023/077.2 Planning**  
2023/077.2.1 Confirmation of Membership: Councillors G. Schofield, G. Meaden, V Hutchinson and S. Barrett
- 2023/077.3 Communications and Information technology**  
2023/077.3.1 Confirmation of Membership: Councillors V Hutchinson, A. Webb and C. Topley  
2023/077.3.2 To receive a report from the Working Group on Communications: Keeping up to date with Facebook. Mailchimp will integrate with new website enabling smooth distribution of newsletters.
- 2023/077.4.1 Events**  
2023/077.4.1 Confirmation of Membership: Councillors S.T. Dixon, S. Barrett and A. Watkins  
2023/077.4.2 To receive a report from the Working Group on Events: No events planned for the moment.
- 2023/077.5 Environment & Open Spaces**  
2023/077.5.1 Confirmation of Membership: Councillors K. Uncle, G. Meaden and V Hutchinson  
2023/077.5.2 To receive a report from the Working Group: Public footpaths to be cleared. Hedge at 10 North Down Close to be removed. Risk assessment to be completed for removal of faeces etc from Play areas after removing faces for the second time.

**2023/077.6 Chilham Parish Youth Club**

2023/077.6.1 Confirmation of Membership: Councillors S. Barrett and A. Watkins

2023/077.6.2 To receive a report from the Working Group: During half term attendance was down on the usual numbers.

**2023/077.7 Chilham Square**

2023/077.7.1 Confirmation of Membership: Councillors G. Schofield, G. Meaden, A. Webb and C. Topley

2023/077.7.2 To receive a report of the Working Group: Covered earlier

**2023/078 Correspondence**

List of items received during the period 1st May 2023 – 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023, (Appendix 2)

**2023/079 Matters for Further Discussion**

Councillors provided feedback on draft template for monthly newsletter. Further feedback to be emailed to Councillor V Hutchinson.

Councillor V Hutchinson to represent the Parish Council on Old Wives Lees Village Hall

**2023/080 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

To confirm the Annual Parish Meeting and the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on 13th July 2023 at 7.00 pm in Chilham Village Hall

**Appendix 1 Financial Transactions**

Transaction Date	Transaction Description	Debit Amount	Credit Amount
26/05/2023	BILTING FARM SELF	46	
26/05/2023	SCRIBE	414.72	
26/05/2023	P E COLES	931.7	
26/05/2023	NEST	28.26	
23/05/2023	MRS SHANISE BARRET	1376.91	
23/05/2023	CHILHAM PARISH REC	156	
23/05/2023	SEVERN C PRODUCTS	472.8	
23/05/2023	MISS YVONNE WHITE	24	
23/05/2023	T COOK	145	
23/05/2023	VICTORY CLEANING	594.05	
15/05/2023	SPOTON.NET LTD SPOTON	64.8	
12/05/2023	Deposit		1190
11/05/2023	ALLAN SWAN	450	
11/05/2023	MR ADRIAN ADAMS	240	
11/05/2023	BOURNE TO GARDEN	390	
11/05/2023	CHILHAM PARISH REC	40	
11/05/2023	VICTORY CLEANING	784.1	
	MR S D & MRS G A H CORONATION		
05/05/2023	CAKE	45.56	
05/05/2023	ANDREW J DOBLE	500	
02/05/2023	BEST IN TENTS	1116	
02/05/2023	ANDY MACLEAN BANDS	600	
02/05/2023	ANYTHING GOES	400	
02/05/2023	GREENWOOD AUDIO	650	
02/05/2023	MR KIERAN M LAW	250	

## Appendix 2 Correspondence May

Item	Date
Parish Council Community Cost of Living Grant Scheme	04/05/2023
NALC CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BULLETIN	09/05/2023
Arcus Online Planning Portal	09/05/2023
Market Stalls Event	09/05/2023
Arcus Online Planning Portal-18/07/2023	09/05/2023
Your feedback is important: Have your say on our Local Account; join the Kent and Medway Wheelchair Service User Group	10/05/2023
Kent's Plan Bee April 2023 Newsletter	11/05/2023
KENT COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAYS SOFT LANDSCAPING WORKS PROGRAMME 2023/2024	11/05/2023
Invitation from The Mayor of Ashford: 'Family Bat Walk and Ploughman's Supper'	12/05/2023
KALC Councillor info	
Send KALC Your Coronation Stories!	17/05/2023
street lights	17/05/2023
Register to attend the Kent Care Summit: shaping a better future, together - 21 June 2023	22/05/2023
Join KALC at a Venue Based Dynamic Councillor Learning Event in New Romney!	24/05/2023
Arcus Training Slides	25/05/2023
Urgent Road Closure - Shottenden Road, Molash - 8th June 2023 (Ashford)	26/05/2023
Grass Pitch Funding - Town & Parish Council	26/05/2023
Chief Executive Briefing - Tenterden Pool to Re-Open	30/05/2023
Chief Executive Briefing - Summer edition of Ashford For You magazine	31/05/2023
Join KALC for our summer conferences	31/05/2023