

**Clerk to the Council, Mr P. Coles, c/o 3 The Square, Chartham, Kent, CT4 7JG**

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**Twitter: @ParishChilham**

**Minutes of the Parish Council held on Thursday 4th April 2024 at 7.00pm in Chilham Village Hall**

**Councillors Present:** G. Schofield (Chair), K. Uncle (Deputy Chair), S. Barrett, V. Hutchinson, A. Webb, G. Meaden, G. Taylor & K. Jeffries

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

**Councillor Apologies:** A. Watkins

**Councillor Absentee:** N/A

**Item**

**2024/040 Apologies for Absence:** Councillor A. Watkins due to illness

**2024/041 Declarations of Interests And / Or Lobbying:** None

**2024/042 Chairs opening remarks.**

At the last Parish Council meeting in March, I did remind those attending we would not be taking questions on the woodlands on the A252 between Taylors Hill and Church Hill. I have since been in contact with Phil Cook, the Tree Officer for Ashford Borough Council.

The following are his comments.

Regarding **The Bothy**, Phil confirmed that 80 trees are due to be planted. Approximately 50 trees are currently planted, the outstanding 30 trees were the larger ones which haven’t been planted.

The applicant has until the 9th of November 2024 to complete the planting, Phil also confirmed any trees planted in the gardens of the new properties are not part of the expected 80 trees. Phil will count the number planted when the planning condition has been met.

Phil confirmed that the negotiated replanting, as part of the Enforcement case for **Mabel’s Wood,** has been complied with and a report is due to be submitted shortly to a senior member of the Planning Enforcement Team.

On another matter, I am sad to say that on Saturday the 30th March, one of our Parish Councillors, Greg Taylor, reported being assaulted in Chilham Square. This is now in the hands of the Police so I will not be going into details.

Greg has the full support of myself, his fellow Councillors and our clerk in these difficult times. We all hope that the Police are able to deal with this matter swiftly.

**2024/043 Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council**

2024/043.1 To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 7th March 2024.

**2024/034** Agreed addition to the Minutes: Councillors agreed that the access for Farm vehicles needs to be taken into account by some form of dispensation.

2024/043.2To receive an update on any matters arising not included in the agenda.

**2023/038** The clerk confirmed that he had informed Chilham Futures Board that no Parish Councillor wishes to become a Board member.

**2024/044 Questions from Residents:** No questions

**2024/045 Borough Councillors, Policing:**

Borough Councillor notes – April 2nd 2024

1. I am on a committee that is helping develop the new Local Plan for the Borough. This Plan will set out proposals for major developments in the Ashford area until 2041, but for the first time it will be selecting various types of Green areas for conservation, i.e. as well as land for built development. It is a somewhat contentious exercise because of course there are many developers who are hoping that their land gets chosen. We might have seen the proposed areas in Chilham that were submitted. ABC Council officers will now be assessing what they see as the best sites to use, after which the public will be asked to comment on their proposals
2. There has been large scale car parking on the wide grass verge outside Badgers’ Hill garden centre, i.e. along the A252. I have managed to get KCC to come and look at this and they agree that it is a very dangerous place to be parking. They instructed the owners that the parking must be inside their property, or of course elsewhere in the village. This will be somewhat of a problem because the excessive rain has caused their parking area to become excessively muddy, and this will be expensive to address.
3. Progress is being made on the aims of Network Rail to construct an access for disabled persons in order to allow boarding of trains at Chilham on the far platform (i.e. going towards London or coming from the Canterbury direction). The process has got through the first few hoops so Network Rail are now developing proper plans which will allow them to estimate approximate costings for the scheme.
4. There is still no news on the North Court Solar Farm. We are unable to work out why such a long delay has been necessary.
5. I have been informed by a local resident that the recent Parish Magazine indicated that we (CPC) are proposing a traffic speed reduction on the A28 near the Shalmsford Road junction. However, he says that the suggested 40 MPH here already applies, so he thinks that perhaps we were referring to the junction where Bowerland Lane meets the A28. Certainly, something needs to be done at this very dangerous junction.

**2024/046 No Hate Campaign**

The Local Government Association (LGA) launched an investigation into the impact of abuse on local democracy under the Debate Not Hate banner. A call for evidence of abuse and intimidation of councillors, initiated by the LGA in October 2021 discovered. Seven in 10 councillors reported  
experiencing abuse and intimidation over the last 12 months and councillors reported feeling that abuse is becoming more common and increasing in severity. Debating and disagreeing with one another has always been, and will continue to be, a healthy part of democracy. However, the right engagement matters and abuse and intimidation crosses the line into dangerous territory and has no place in politics.

Councillors noted that Ashford Borough Council has agreed to join the debate.

**Decision:** The Parish Council agreed to join the debate and Councillors are encouraged to visit the LGA website and sign up.

**2024/047 Invitation to Communities Prepared: Building Resilient Communities training workshop.**

Councillors are invited to a free in-person community resilience planning workshop being held for parish, town and community councils on 21st May 2014 being run on behalf of the Kent Resilience Forum. Councillors G. Schofield, G Taylor, & V. Hutchinson are interested.

**2024/048** **Working Groups**

2024/048.1 To receive updates.

**2024/048.2 Finance & General Purposes:**

2024/048.2.1 Financial Transactions for Approval-Appendix 1 refers.

Councillors noted.

2024/048.2.2 ATS Payroll quote

The current three-year contract with ATS payroll is due to end. ATS submitted a new quote for three years for the preparation of payroll of £170 per annum, an increase of £15.

**Decision:** Quote approved

**2024/048.3 Planning**

2024/048.3.1 **Planning Applications**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Case Reference:** | PA/2024/0343 |
| **Location:** | 2 Shiregate Cottages, Soleshill Road, Chilham, CT4 8JX |
| **Proposal:** | Change of use from agricultural land to residential garden use (Retrospective) |
| **Decision:**  **Case Reference:** | No objection, noted this was a retrospective application  PA/2024/0549 |
| **Location:** | Shalmsford Bridge Cottage, Canterbury Road, Chilham, CT4 8AE |
| **Proposal:** | Two-storey rear extension and extension of rear balcony following demolition of existing single  storey extension. |
| **Decision:**  **Case Reference:** | **No objection**  PA/2024/0562 |
| **Location:** | Shalmsford Bridge Cottage, Canterbury Road, Chilham, CT4 8AE |
| **Proposal:** | Listed Building Consent for two-storey rear extension and extension of rear balcony following  demolition of existing single storey extension. |

**Decision:** No objection

2024/048.3.2 **Tree Orders**

2024/048.3.3 **Planning Decisions**

2024/048.3.4 **Planning Appeals**

**2024/048.4 Communications and Information technology**

2024/048.4.1 To receive a report from the Working Group on Communications

The monthly newsletter, the last issue was missing some information-to be added to the next issue.

2024/048.4.2 To receive an update on the Parish Council website.

Continuing to populate the new website.

**2024/048.5.1 Events**

2024/048.5.1 To receive a report from the Working Group on Events

140 children attend the Easter Egg Hunt event supported by over 10 volunteers. £309.50 was taken on the day.

One resident who was complimentary about the event did raise an issue with non-dairy eggs. This was discussed and lessons learnt, although fruit and other eggs were available.

The Councillors noted that local businesses are organising an event on St Georges day,

The tickets for the D Day Fish & Chips on the 6th June will be available from the Post Office.

Lighting of the Beacon to be screened in the White Horse.

Village Fete: Compere agreed for the day at £200. Funds for the evening celebration being confirmed. A proposal will come to the next meeting.

**2024/048.6 Environment & Open Spaces**

2024/048.6.1 To receive a report from the Working Group

Discussing with the environment agency on using their training videos.

2024/048.6.2 To receive a report on the Big Spring Clean litter pick

Total of 27 volunteers on the day. Pledged to pick up 10 bags, 14 were collected.

Councillors were informed that a number of the Roads that were cleared, including Mulberry Hill, were covered with litter within days. Exploring a poster competition for “do not drop litter” to be placed on those worst affected roads.

**2024/048.7 Amenities**

2024/048.7.1To receive a report from the Working Group

2024/048.7.2 To Discuss quotes for the Childrens Play Area - Old Wives Lees

Quote for repairs is £4,826.31. As the equipment 25 years old Councillors felt this was poor use of the reserves.

A quote was presented for replacement equipment, circa £52,000.

**Decision:** The majority of Councillors agreed that new equipment is required. A revised quote to be requested and circulated for agreement. Funding to be sought. Clerk to submit an Awards For all application and other grants will be sought.

2024/048.7.3 Update on the Phone box library repairs

Waiting for the weather to improve so work can begin. The Librarian is happy to distribute books to the housebound in the village.

2024/048.7.4 Update on the Parish Noticeboard, Shalmsford Road

Councillors K. Uncle & A. Webb have inspected, and the pin board needs to be replaced. The frame and glass are fine.

**2024/048.8 Physical buildings**

2024/048.8.1 To receive a report from the Working Group

No update

**2023/048.9 Chilham Parish Youth Club**

2023/048.9.1 To receive a report from the Working Group

No update

**2023/048.10 Chilham Square**

2023/048.10.1 To receive a report of the Working Group

Organising a site visit from Ashford Borough Council Conservation Officer to discuss parking before preparing plan.

Discussed the state of Peacock Antiques. Councillor G. Meaden to approach Ashford Borough Council on compulsory purchase.

**2023/049 Correspondence**

List of items received during the period 1st March 2024 – 31st March 2024, (Appendix 2)

Councillors noted.

**2023/050 Matters for Further Discussion**

Councillorto look intoimprovements to the Shalmsford Road/A28 junction at the end of Pilgrims Lane, where the vision of traffic coming from Canterbury is very restricted.

Councillors agreed to add a reduction to speed limits on Bagham & Branch Roads, Chilham to the Highways Improvement Plan.

The issue of overnight parking in Old Wives Lees Village Hall was discussed. Councillors are sympathetic and would support the hall on any action they choose to take.

The Royal British Legion are holder a fundraising walk to Chilham starting at midnight on the 7th of June at Aylesford and the walkers will arrive between 10:30 and 12:30 on the 8th. They are using the White Horse pub in Chilham to give out the medals etc at the end of the walk. There will be 15 teams on the walk with each team having 4 members. Each team has a support car. At the end of the walk family members can attend so we can expect anything between 15 and 60 cars all in the car park. They are planning to pick up from Taylors Hill Car park and requested the toilets remain open. There is an event in Chilham Castle so Councillors to investigate before responding.

**Dand Time of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on 9th May 2024 at 7.00 pm in Old Wives Lees Village Hall

**Appendix**

**(1) Financial transactions**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Transaction Date** | **Transaction Description** | **Debit Amount** | **Credit Amount** | **Reason** |
|  | 28/03/2024 | P E COLES | 973.55 |  | Clerk Salary |
|  | 27/03/2024 | MRS SHANISE BARRET | 60 |  | OWL's Trees |
|  | 27/03/2024 | F M UNCLE | 9.47 |  | Magnets for noticeboard |
|  | 27/03/2024 | MRS G SCHOFIELD EXPENSES | 32.98 |  | Expenses |
|  | 27/03/2024 | P E COLES EXPENSES | 37.79 |  | Expenses |
|  | 25/03/2024 | FRESH-AIR FITNESS | 19.02 |  | Repairs to OWL's equipment |
|  | 25/03/2024 | BOURNE TO GARDEN | 1140 |  | Grounds maintenance |
|  | 25/03/2024 | ASHFORD BOROUGH CO | 6.25 |  | Rent for Latins Field |
|  | 22/03/2024 | DEPOSIT |  | 55.5 | COSY |
|  | 22/03/2024 | DEPOSIT |  | 54 | COSY |
|  | 19/03/2024 | ASHFORD BOROUGH CO |  | 500 | Grant for Noticeboard |
|  | 14/03/2024 | B.ONLINE LTD | 13.14 |  | Telephone |
|  | 12/03/2024 | DEPOSIT |  | 59.7 | COSY |
|  | 12/03/2024 | DEPOSIT |  | 55 | COSY |
|  | 12/03/2024 | DEPOSIT |  | 74.1 | COSY |
|  | 12/03/2024 | DEPOSIT |  | 55 | COSY |
|  | 11/03/2024 | CHILHAM PARISH REC | 12 |  | COSY |
|  | 11/03/2024 | BILTING FARM SELF | 46 |  | Storage |
|  | 11/03/2024 | MRS SHANISE BARRET | 50 |  | COSY |
|  | 11/03/2024 | ORCHARD ENVIRONMENT | 163.2 |  | Water check THT |
|  | 11/03/2024 | VICTORY CLEANING | 667.46 |  | Cleaning THT |
|  | 11/03/2024 | BOURNE TO GARDEN | 390 |  | Ground maintenance |
|  | 01/03/2024 | NEST | 70.44 |  | Clerks Pension |

**(2) Correspondence**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Item** | **Date** |
|  | Chief Executive Briefing - HUG 2 grant scheme | 01/03/2024 |
|  | KALC NEWS MARCH 2024 | 01/03/2024 |
|  | Renewal Information Request | 03/03/2024 |
|  | NHW Webinars and Our News | 04/03/2024 |
|  | Reconnecting communities through community transport | 05/03/2024 |
|  | Re: KALC Ashford Area Committee Meeting 7 March 2024 at 7pm | 06/03/2024 |
|  | Ashford Police Newsletter March Edition - Rural North | 08/03/2024 |
|  | Parish Council and Community Forum Briefing Note – Local Plan Call for Sites Information Published | 11/03/2024 |
|  | KALC Ashford Area Committee Meeting 7 March 2024 Draft Minutes | 12/03/2024 |
|  | CEO Briefing - review of Chamber IT equipment | 13/03/2024 |
|  | CEO briefing Day change data now live for the new service | 13/03/2024 |
|  | CEO briefing - ABC's new planning subscription service | 13/03/2024 |
|  | Chief Executive Briefing - Town Centre grants scheme is back | 14/03/2024 |
|  | Kent Bus Service Changes Bulletin - January, February, March and April 2024 | 14/03/2024 |
|  | Leader Briefing - Ashford joins the Debate Not Hate campaign | 19/03/2024 |
|  | Invitation to South East Water drop-in event in Chilham - Tuesday, 16 April | 20/03/2024 |
|  | Minutes for Planning Committee, Wednesday, 13th March, 2024, 7.00 pm | 21/03/2024 |
|  | Flyers and posters for Solar | 25/03/2024 |
|  | Public Warning and Informing - Asian Hornet sightings | 25/03/2024 |
|  | Chilham Parish Council - AGAR 2023/2024 | 26/03/2024 |
|  | Ashford Police Newsletter April Edition - Rural North | 26/03/2024 |
|  | Health and Wellbeing Update | 27/03/2024 |
|  | Egg hunt | 31/03/2024 |