

**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 13th June 2024 at 7.00pm in Chilham Village**

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

**Also Present:** P. Coles (PC) (Clerk to the Council) plus one member of the public

**Councillor Apologies:** K. Uncle

**Councillor Absentee:** N/A

**Item**

**2024/064 Apologies for Absence**

Councillor K. Uncle, hospital appointment

**2024/065 Declarations of Interests And / Or Lobbying**

No declarations

**2024/066 Chairs opening remarks.**

Unfortunately, I have to report that the seating provided by the Parish Council in Latin Field has been vandalised. The seating is made out of used Pallets, with the screws holding in place.  However, the screws on the top Pallet have been removed and this could have caused a serious accident if the Pallet had fallen on someone. Also, the cable ties holding the goal nets in place have been removed.  Please could you keep an eye out as we don’t want an accident in the future.

I and my fellow Councillors are well aware of the concerns of villages regarding the land that has been put forward for development in Chilham during Ashford Borough Council calls for sites. We all share your concerns. At the moment the Borough Council has not selected the sites they wish to develop from all those that have been submitted across the Borough. As soon as we are aware of any sites that are accepted for development, we will call a public meeting to discuss the matter.

The success of SOWLIS is an inspiration for how to oppose development effectively using well researched objections based on planning policy. Our Borough Councillor, Geoff Meaden is as concerned as all of us on any potential development and will inform us as soon as he is aware of any decision relating to land around Chilham.

It is worth bearing in mind that just because land has been submitted as a possible development site, it does not mean it will be accepted by the Borough Council.

Gill Schofield

Chair Chilham Parish Council

**2024/067 Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council**

2024/067.1 To receive and approve the minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on Thursday 9th May 2024.

**Decision:** Approved

2024/067.2 To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 9th May 2024.

**Decision:** Approved

2024/067.3To receive an update on any matters arising not included in the agenda.

No matters arising

**2024/068 Questions from Residents**

Were the Parish Council aware of the Hedonism Wines event at Chilham Castle.

Yes

The event generated a high footfall in the village and the Council should work in tandem with the castle to promote Chilham.

The Councillors noted the question and agreed

**2024/069 Borough Councillors, Policing:**

**Borough Council Report (from Geoff Meaden) June 2024**

Firstly, a reminder that the general election takes place on July 4th but the important point to realise is that this particular Ward is no longer in the constituency of Ashford but is in a greatly modified “The Weald” ward. This ward covers much of south Kent, i.e. almost across to the Sussex border. It takes at least an hour to drive to the other side of the Ward from here. There are only two larger towns in the Constituency (Tenterden and Hawkhurst) but neither of them has a hall large enough to do the election count so this will still be done in Ashford.

As part of my Borough Councillor’s job, I am on the board of the River Stour Inland Drainage Board. Last week I attended a meeting at which there was a speaker describing Beaver activities on the river. I was surprised to hear that there are now well over a hundred beavers along the lower reaches of the Stour and on the flat marshy areas between Deal and Sandwich where beavers were first released about 15 years ago. They are particularly prolific just the other side of Canterbury and in fact all the fruit trees in my ex-mother in-laws garden have now been felled by beavers. So, their re-wilding is now causing a number of concerns and the future may well see some culling or translocations. Beavers have failed to move further upstream from Canterbury, i.e. towards Chilham, because the city is proving a barrier to this movement.

One of two matters of major concern recently is the fact that someone (who was anonymous) distributed a professionally produced leaflet around Chilham describing how Chilham will soon become a building site “with much destruction of its greenbelt”. Both me and the KCC councillor’s names and their email addresses were given, and this resulted in an undue number of messages and amount of social media activity. The problem was partly caused by the wording used in some promotional publicity given to the Borough’s search for development sites. This gave the impression that a large number of sites (about 350) were all to be developed. This was untrue, and in fact these sites were those being promoted by developers and from which the ABC planning officers could carefully choose those they considered were suitable for development. Only a small proportion will be chosen and even then, these sites will go out for further public consultation. If any sites in our area are selected, then they need to come to our Parish Council for their consideration.

Finally, the other matter causing me seemingly endless involvement is that of the new bin collection arrangements. The borough councillors all met with ABC officers and representatives from the bin collection company (Suez) on Tuesday evening. Here we were given explanations of why the waste and recycling collection had incurred so many problems. Briefly the problems included:

* Absence of information provided from the previous contractors.
* Familiarity with new technology being used both in bin collection and in storing information.
* Too many bins were damaged.
* Not all roads were accessible to large vehicles.
* Cars blocking access for collection trucks.
* Knowing which properties had paid their council tax and could thus have a collection.
* Knowing which properties had paid to have their garden waste collected.
* The frenzy whipped up by social media.
* Much of the collection data was not up to date.
* The online bin problem reporting facilities were not operational for much of the time.
* There were some bin collection staffing problems.

Despite all these problems there were very few “contaminated loads”, i.e. loads where waste was mixed with recycling materials. At one stage the Borough council had 60% of their office staff deployed on dealing with the 10’s of thousands of bin collection requests, comments and complaints. But both Suez and ABC consider that the vast majority of problems have now been sorted out and they will be keeping a strong eye on future progress. Both the Council and Suez apologised for all the stress this matter has incurred

Councillor G Taylor: what was said on Facebook was unfair and suggested that the Parish Councillors should offer our support to our Borough Councillor.

**Decision:** Agreed

**2024/070 To confirm the Parish Councils annual accounts.**

2024/070.1 Outcome of the internal audit

The clerk reported our Internal Auditor had finished the audit and signed off the Internal Audit

2024/070.2 Annual Government statement

The Annual Governance statement was presented to Councillors.

**Decision:** Approved by Councillors and agreed that the Chair and Clerk could sign

2024/070.3 Accounting Statement for 2023/24

The clerk reported that the Internal Auditor had checked the Accounting Statements and approved.

**Decision:** Approved by Councillors and agreed that the Chair and Clerk could sign

**2024/071 Refuse collection in the parish of Chilham**

The Chair of the Council has written to Ashford Borough Council regarding the poor performance of the new refuse contractor.

**2024/072 Quotes for play equipment in Old Wives Lees**

Councillor S. Barrett shared the following quotes:

Playscape Solutions Ltd Excluding Value Added Tax (VAT) £51,768.21

RTC Safety surfaces Ltd Excluding VAT £52,470.56

**Decision:** Councillors agreed that the clerk with the support of Councillor V. Hutchinson should apply for funding to purchase new play equipment

**2024/073 Community Resilience plan**

Clerk shared the Resilience plan template from Tenterden Council

**Decision:** Councillors agreed to complete the template

**2024/074 Taylors Hill Car Park bay marking**

Councillor A. Webb confirmed that the Parish Council would not need to use Ashford Borough Council’s preferred contractor.

**Decision:** Councillors agreed that Councillor A. Webb should seek three quotes for the work. Contractors to design the parking bays to maximise parking.

The clerk to liaise with Ashford Borough Council once the Parish Council decides on the preferred contractor.

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**024/075** **Working Groups**

2024/075.1 To receive updates.

**2024/075.2 Finance & General Purposes:**

2024/075.2.1 Financial Transactions for Approval-Appendix 1 refers.

Councillors noted

**2024/075.3 Planning**

2024/075.3.1 **Planning Applications**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Case Reference:** | PA/2024/0852 |
| **Location:** | Hambrook House, Hambrook Lane, Chilham, CT4 8DJ |
| **Proposal:** | Installation of a 12kw domestic air source heat pump to the North-East elevation |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Case Reference:** | PA/2024/0813 |
| **Location:** | Cutlers Farmhouse, Maidstone Road, Chilham, CT4 8EU |
| **Proposal:** | Conversion of existing barn to annexe with alterations to roof.  Approved but noted that it will stand out in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Case Reference:** | PA/2024/0746 |
| **Location:** | Beech House, Hambrook Lane, Chilham, CT4 8DJ |
| **Proposal:** | Proposed side and rear extension, including a new porch.  Approved |

2024/075.3.2 **Tree Orders**

Not applicable

2024/075.3.3 **Planning Decisions**

Not applicable

2024/075.3.4  **Planning Appeals**

Not applicable

**2024/075.4 Communications and Information technology**

2024/075.4.1 To receive a report from the Working Group on Communication

The group will post reminders of the Three Villages fete every two days on Social media.

They will produce a template page for Chilham Parish Council Facebook page

2024/075.4.2 To receive an update on the Parish Council website.

Request to increase the font size for the CPC logo on the website.

Request to add a link to agendas and minutes to the Chilham Parish Council header.

**2024/075.5.1 Events**

2024/075.5.1 To receive a report from the Working Group on Events

Chair-D-day event was a great success. The Choir was great.

The fete budget was presented. No additional funds required for the fete from our Ashford Borough Councillor.

**Decision:** Councillors approved the Budget

**Decision:** Stall holders to pay on the day for their stalls. Expecting 20 stalls paying £20 for stall

Nest events meeting planned for Wednesday 26th at 6 pm in Chilham Village Hall

**2024/075.6 Environment & Open Spaces**

2024/075.6.1 To receive a report from the Working Group

Hedges at Old Wives Lees green need cutting back. Three quotes sought from local businesses

**2024/075.7 Amenities**

2024/075.7.1To receive a report from the Working Group

See above 2024/072

**2024/075.8 Physical buildings**

2024/075.8.1 To receive a report from the Working Group

Handrails for the Toilets delivered

Victory Cleaning have appointed a new cleaner. Complements received on the cleanliness of the toilets. Councillors asked Councillor K. Jeffries to pass on our thanks

**2023/075.9 Chilham Parish Youth Club**

2023/075.9.1 To receive a report from the Working Group

Children attending increased to 40. As the weather is warmer children playing outside

Recruiting a new volunteer to help at the youth club

**2023/075.10 Chilham Square**

2023/075.10.1 To receive a report of the Working Group

Ashford Borough Conservation officer did not accept the parking plan for the Square.

Scaffolding outside Peacock Antiques as the house being refurbished

**2023/076 Correspondence**

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

Councillors noted

**2023/077 Matters for Further Discussion**

Chilham Sports Ground requested a grant to cover the cost for an Emergency Bleed Kit for the Recreation Ground to fit inside the defibrillator lockable box. The provider is London Hearts at a cost of £67 50p.

**Decision:** Councillors approved

**2023/078 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

To confirm the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on11th July 2024 at 7.00 pm in Chilham Village Hall

**Appendix 1**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Transaction Description** | **Debit Amount** | **Credit Amount** | **Reason** |
| 30/05/2024 | MRS KIRSTY JEFFRIES | 107.94 |  | Taylors Hill Toilets repairs |
| 30/05/2024 | P E COLES | 692.75 |  | Clerk salary |
| 28/05/2024 | A J KILBEE | 100 |  | Internal audit |
| 28/05/2024 | AJGIBL GBP CLIENT | 1423.24 |  | Insurance |
| 28/05/2024 | SCRIBE | 414.72 |  | Accounting software |
| 28/05/2024 | MRS G SCHOFIELD | 38.39 |  | Taylor Hill Toilets repairs |
| 16/05/2024 | CASTLE WATER LTD | 79.01 |  | Taylors Hill Toilets water |
| 15/05/2024 | B.ONLINE LTD | 13.14 |  | Telephone |
| 14/05/2024 | T COOK | 85 |  | Taylors Hill Toilets repairs |
| 14/05/2024 | MRS G SCHOFIELD | 20 |  | Taylors Hill Toilets repairs |
| 10/05/2024 | 500030 |  | 46.8 | COSY |
| 10/05/2024 | 500029 |  | 57 | COSY |
| 10/05/2024 | 500028 |  | 38.9 | COSY |
| 10/05/2024 | 500027 |  | 60 | COSY |
| 09/05/2024 | KALC | 778.9 |  | Annual subscription |
| 09/05/2024 | CHILHAM PARISH REC | 60 |  | COSY |
| 09/05/2024 | BILTING FARM SELF | 46 |  | Storage |
| 02/05/2024 | HMRC |  | 4748.22 | VAT refund |
| 01/05/2024 | D TODD | 270 |  | OWL Noticeboard |
| 01/05/2024 | BOURNE TO GARDEN | 390 |  | Ground maintenance |

**Appendix 2**

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|  | **Item** | **Date** |
|  | Leader Briefing - Update on the new waste services contract | 03/05/2024 |
|  | Joint Leader Chief Executive Briefing - water and energy saving scheme | 07/05/2024 |
|  | Chief Executive Briefing - Second round of Rural England Prosperity Fund now open | 09/05/2024 |
|  | Ashford Borough Council - Our Plan for the Borough 2024 - 2028 | 10/05/2024 |
|  | Weald of Kent AGM | 15/05/2024 |
|  | CEO Briefing - Judgment in ABC v Fergus Wilson in the High Court | 17/05/2024 |
|  | FW: Safety of Lithium ion Batteries and e-bikes and scooters | 17/05/2024 |
|  | Chief Executive Briefing – Ashford Border Control Post at Sevington up and running | 20/05/2024 |
|  | Introducing a new road safety partnership | 20/05/2023 |
|  | Leader Briefing - Draft Borough Plan out to public consultation | 20/05/2024 |
|  | Agenda KALC Ashford Area Committee Meeting 29 May 2024 at 7pm | 21/05/2024 |
|  | Draft Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2024-39 - Submission Notification | 21/05/2024 |
|  | The newsletter from RACE - the Rural & Community Housing Enabling Service for Kent | 23/05/2024 |
|  | Minutes for Planning Committee, Wednesday, 15th May, 2024, 7.00 pm | 23/05/2024 |
|  | Joint Leader and Chief Executive Briefing - Waste and recycling collection service update | 24/05/2024 |
|  | Latest alerts from Kent Trading Standards | 24/05/2024 |
|  | CSU Newsletter | 28/05/2024 |
|  | Local Needs Housing Event - 10 July from 2 - 5:30pm | 29/05/2024 |
|  | Kent Resilience Forum Presentation | 31/05/2024 |