



CHILHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held via Zoom Remote Meetings

on 2nd July 2020 at 7.00 pm public Forum/7.30pm Meeting

Present: Councillors: Cllrs Marriott, Martin, Meaden, Schofield and Spencer-Tanner (Chair)

Also, present Cllr Charles Dehnel (Ashford Borough Council), Caroline Vincent (Locum Clerk to Council), members of the public.

7/1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies.

7/2. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 4th June 2020/17th June be approved and signed by the Chairman when able to do so, all members agreed.

7/3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Resolved: To add an agenda item for the next meeting to enable members to look at previous matters arising and see if still relevant, all members agreed.

7/4. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Cllr J Martin declared an interest in item 10, in her capacity as the Federation of Small Businesses Advisor, the website provider is a member.

7/5. PLANNING

Members considered the following applications.

20/00727/AS 5 Beaney's Lane Chilham - Certificate of lawful development – proposed erection of conservatory

Resolved: No objections

20/00197/CONA/AS Young Manor Farm, Maidstone Road, Chilham – Discharge of conditions 4,5,6,7

Resolved: To write to ABC Building Control to ask if a thorough check has taken place regarding the materials to be used as this is a listed property, all agreed.

19/01446/AS- Appeal Received Terra Nova, Pilgrims Lane, Chilham - demolition of existing garage and erection of bungalow within the grounds of Terra Nova, with associated access and provision of 2 additional parking spaces.

Resolved: To continue to object as previously made for this application and due to garden cramming, all agreed.

7/6. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

1 Signed by the Chair: Date:.....

The schedule of meetings for 20/21 from August 20 to April 21 were circulated to members, the Chair asked if Council were happy to agree to continue with the first Thursday of each month.

Resolved: All members agreed to the new schedule of meetings.

7/7. FINANCE & GOVERNANCE

a) To consider a report from the Clerk and agree payments, a payments list with invoices was circulated to members.

1	Victory Cleaning	THT Cleaning	545.27
2	ATS Services	PAYE processing	130.00
3	T Northey	Shottenden noticeboard	260.00
4	Wealden Wheels	Annual subscription	250.00
5	D Buckett	Independent Internal Audit Fee	300.00
6	G Dear	Final expenses	31.00

Resolved: Members agreed the payments and 2 members will sign when possible.

The Clerk reported 2 emergency repairs to members:

a) to repair broken bench in Felborough Close

b) replace the broken gate at the entrance to OWLS village green, replace broken fence to rail and replace 3 small lift out posts totalling £250, this was due to the incident earlier this week and the Air Ambulance needing to get through.

Resolved: Members agreed to dispose of the old bench and to investigate the cost of a new bench and replace with like for like and re-visit at the next meeting.

Resolved: Members agreed to replace the broken gate and fence.

b) To approve payment to Yve White £75.47 for owl planters upon presentation of valid receipts.

Resolved: Members approved payment.

c) To approve payment to Cllr Spencer-Tanner for £129.79 re THT upon presentation of valid receipts.

Items were purchased to make the toilets COVID19 secure including a barrier, signage, and hazard tape.

Resolved: Members approved payment and Cllr Spencer-Tanner will send receipts to the Clerk.

d) To consider Independent Auditors Report 2019-2020.

Resolved: Members were happy to accept the Independent auditors report and made aware of the item in blue where the External Auditors findings did not have a minute reference for 2018/19.

e) To approve the cost of a new Council, Zoom Account.

Resolved: Members approved payment to continue with Zoom meetings, Cllr J Martin and the Clerk to arrange.

f) To approve any additional costs for new email set up.

Council email addresses need to be set up as a GDPR requirement, which may incur costs for Microsoft licences.

Resolved: Members agreed to setting up new email addresses and costs incurred, Cllr J Martin will Follow up.

2 Signed by the Chair: Date:.....

g) To approve the cost of a new finance system to move away from spreadsheets
Members were asked to consider an accounts package called SCRIBE which is specifically aimed at Parish Councils, providing all finance requirements at a cost of around £250 per year plus VAT.
Resolved: Members agreed to move forward with this.

7/8. TAYLORS HILL TOILETS

Chair reported that the toilets have now been made COVID secure by placing signs for washing hands and social distancing for 2 meters. In the gents the urinals have been closed off, encouraging use of the cubicle and in the ladies one of the sinks has been taped off. The hand dryers are working, and soap dispensers are being filled and signs from the cleaning company have been put up to say when the toilets were last cleaned to make people aware, they are cleaned regularly. An audit of numbers still needs to be arranged as use of the facilities has been quite busy recently and hand sanitisers maybe considered for use.

7/9. SOCIAL MEDIA

Cllr J Martin circulated a report to members with an update that a Council Facebook page has now been established which a quite a few followers and several likes on posts, with Taylors Hill Toilets post of the COVID safe pictures proving to be the most popular. Cllr Martin made suggestions of topics for July for Facebook and asked members to let her know if they had anything to add.

Cllr J Martin made a proposal to members to establish a Twitter account which is mainly used by bloggers and journalists and explained this would be good for the Council.

Resolved: All members unanimously agreed for Cllr Martin to set up a Twitter account.

7/10. WEBSITE

Chair explained that our current website no longer conforms to current regulations and needs to be compliant with the Accessibility Regulations by September, hence the reason to change the website.

Cllr J Martin circulated a report to members with an update on website providers and the costs involved. A local company called itseeze have been sourced who custom build the site and are more cost effective at £599 plus VAT to set up, with a quick turn around of 17-20 days. There is also a possibility of a grant from NALC.

Cllr J Martin proposed the approval for itseeze to begin the work to update the Council website.

Resolved: Members unanimously agreed. The Clerk was asked to find out about the funding and Cllr Martin to also ask about the email set up for members.

7/11. ASB IN OWL

Chair put to members that a follow up meeting should be organised following the recent public consultation and a way forward to engage younger members of the community. It was suggested 2 young members from each village represent the young people and meet with the Parish Council.

Resolved: Members to agree to a date in early September and advertise on Facebook, the notice boards and the magazine for representatives to come forward to present the views of the youth of the community and move forward from there.

7/12. COMMUNICATIONS BUDGET AND FIRST NEWSLETTER

Cllr J Martin circulated a report to members with costings for communications including the website and emails. Storage of council contacts were discussed and the use of a Customer Relationship

3 Signed by the Chair: Date:.....

Management System to do this which also allow the creation of emails and newsletters which integrates with the website. A social media tool “hootsuite” which can project manage, schedule posts was also suggested along with a Canva to create newsletters, all of these are cost free. Cllr Martin suggested Saxo Print for producing the newsletter and flyers.

Cllr J Martin proposed the use of Mailjet free for the CRM, Hootsuite free for the Social Media tool and Saxo Print for the newsletters and flyers.

Resolved: Members unanimously agreed to Cllr Martin’s proposal and to produce 2 newsletters this year.

Cllr J Martin spoke about content with the newsletter to include items such as a welcome from the Chair, introductions of Councillors and Clerk, vacant positions, funding, questionnaire for renaming the parish, Highways Improvements, and the Handy man. Cllr C Dehnel asked if the Ward grant funding could also be included.

Resolved: All members agreed they were happy with the content.

Members briefly discussed memorial benches and concern over too many and what could be used in place of benches, the planting of trees was suggested, and this will be re-visited at a future meeting.

7/13. NEW HANDY PERSON

The existing handy person has decided to no longer continue, and members were asked for suggestions on the way forward. Cllr J Martin spoke about the Handyman Scheme which other parishes use and share a handy man.

Resolved: Members agreed to explore the Handyman Scheme and possibly join with neighbouring villages.

Cllr C Dehnel will ask at his neighbouring ward villages and get back to us. The Clerk was also asked to find the quotes provided previously for work to be done.

7/14. BOROUGH COUNCILLOR REPORT

Downs North Ward Member’s report July 2020

WIDER SITUATION:

1. COVID-19 - As at 26th June the UK COVID-19 infection rate continued to fall. With the relaxing of restrictions in the coming weeks we all need to take the responsibility to socially distance and respect those that are having to continue to shield.
2. COVID-19 - In the wake/continuing COVID-19 situation ABC have awarded 32 applicants with discretionary grants totally £231,000, helping Ashford’s small businesses to continue to operate in this difficult time. Apply at: <https://www.ashford.gov.uk/discretionary-grants>
3. COVID-19 - For everyone’s information - please do pass on to those in the community who are shielding - support boxes will still be sent out until the end of July to those on the “shielding list”.
4. PLANNING - Plans to shift some planning powers from councils to the Housing Secretary have been put on hold. This would only have affected “major Developments”
5. PLANING - Change to operating rules to allow on-street drinking and dining under new business and planning bill will give local authorities the ability to set their own conditions.

ISSUES/RISKS:

1. PLANNING issues relating to “transparency” and “consistency” have been raised with me by residents and Cllrs. Many points relate directly to the applications in the area covered by Bowerland Lane, Glebe Farmhouse and Glebe Orchard. Where each of these applications have their own issues and actions the wider point on “transparency” and “consistency” in how planning policy is applied requires, in my opinion, closer review. I do observe that ABC feel they are doing a good job (which generally I feel they do) and yet, on the ground the lived reality is something different. I have been in contact with the Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny committee to air these concerns and asked for feedback on when a review was last conducted on the ABC planning process, tools and procedures. I await feedback.
2. FLY TIPPING and SPEEDING - In recent weeks reports to me of speeding and fly tipping across our Ward have increased. Where the two may not be directly related they both require investment of time and resource to address from either the Borough or County Council. To better understand how prioritisation works on these two matters I have requested information on HOW data is captured, by WHO and WHAT action/process the data subjected to. My working assumption is, “if it is not reported via the correct channels, then it didn’t happen”. Increasingly I have had requests to report on behalf of residents. Where this *may* address the symptom in the short term, the lack of data volume means in the mid to long term our area does not have a large enough share of mind to attract the attention needed to effect real change. I will keep the Parish Council updated on this matter as my investigation progresses.
3. HAWKINS ROUGH - I was contacted in June by the new Officer assigned to this case. He has assured me this is a priority matter that he is actively engaged with.

7/15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 6th August at 7pm.

Meeting Closed at 20.59pm.