

Little Chart Parish Council (LCPC)

Minutes of Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held remotely on Zoom on Tuesday 14th July 2020, beginning at 6.45pm

Unique Minute No 78/	Business	Record	Action (by whom, & within what timescale)
1	Note of Persons Present	Cllrs Brasier (Chairman), Rivolta, Diebel, Beck, 2 members of the public, Kent County Councillor Simkins, Ashford Borough Cllr Clair Bell, Mr Clive Stanley (Webmaster), Mr Sharpe (Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer RFO). The meeting was noted as quorate.	
2	Apologies	Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) Katherine Richards, Ashford Police Station.	
3	Declarations of Interest	The Chairman asked Parish Councillors to declare any interests in the business on the agenda. After some debate Cllr Beck stated he did not have an interest in the Planning matter 20/0689 4 <i>The Street Little Chart TN27 0QD</i> . Cllr Diebel also stated he did not have an interest in this matter. The Chairman asked the advice of the Clerk, who stated that he considered that on the information available to him Cllr Beck could be held to have an 'Other Significant Interest (OSI)' in the matter. He then advised that Cllr Diebel probably did not have a Pecuniary or OSI in that matter.	
4	Minutes of last meeting	The draft minutes of the Parish Council Meeting (no 77) on 10 th March 2020 were read & agreed as a true record; proposed A Diebel, seconded C Beck. Chairman Cllr Brasier agreed to transmit the 'wet signature' documents to the Clerk the following day.	Clerk to place paper copy in Minutes Book after signature, & ensure website is updated by 24.7.20
5	Matters Arising	None	
6	County Councillor Report	KCC Cllr Charlie Simkins gave an oral report and invited questions from the Parish Council and the members of the public present. The recent traffic accident at The Swan in Little Chart in the early hours of 4 th July was 'an horrendous incident', causing major damage to the building, considerable distress to occupants in the pub and nearby, and ruining plans for a re-opening due following the change in the COVID-19 emergency trading restrictions. He had already been in contact with the licensee at the premises the previous Thursday (9 th July), and had sought an opinion by email from the Schemes Engineer at Kent County Council Highways regarding prevention measures. A Police Traffic Accident report should be coming to him in due course to reveal further facts, partly disclosed in news bulletins.	
At 18:56 Parish Councillor Jane Ladds joined the Zoom meeting.			
6 (ctd)		Cllr Beck stated he has started a petition for improved prevention measures within the village, and both Cllr Simkins and Cllr Bell were able to advise on the procedure within Kent County Council's Constitution for presenting such petitions: (for reference https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/S94135/PetitionScheme.pdf). One member of the public who lives very near the crash site pointed out that a list of major traffic incidents had been compiled and given to the Parish Council at their November 2019 meeting. The Chairman mentioned the Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) which he and other Councillors were engaged with, asking Kent Highways Scheme Managers for costings and options. He averred that the Parish Council was willing to devote some of its funds to help bring about a sustainable solution. Cllr Simkins closed his remarks by mentioning the Public Health role Kent County Council has been playing since early March due to the COVID-19 outbreak, and gave an indication that operational and financial matters had	

		deviated significantly from the norm, leading to forthcoming debates and consultations about KCC's budgets and activities.																
7	Borough Councillor Report and Webmaster Report	<p>Cllr Bell reported orally on the Public Health aspects of Ashford Borough Council (ABC)'s activities during the COVID-19 emergency restrictions, and stated that the whole country is working on a medium-term recovery plan. Winter will be a concern. 'Shielding' of extremely vulnerable residents will draw to a close by the end of July. ABC has put measures in to encourage shops to open across the Borough. It introduced contactless card payment for its parking systems, and Council officers are working at or from home – a successful "springboard for lots more digital working". ABC's finances are likely to show a £3.8 million shortfall, offset by grants from the UK Government. The MOJO site off M20 Junction 10A at Sevington is intended to be a holding area for goods vehicles under Brexit plans. The over-riding aim is to keep the motorway flowing, and for this reason it is not likely to be permanent, and may not even be used. A question from Parish Councillor Beck was whether the recent sale of Manston Airport had influenced the rapid turn of events at the MOJO site, and it was agreed that it had. Cllr Bell stated that the Manston site might have held 4 to 5 thousand lorries, the Ashford site would be expected to have a capacity of 2 to 2½ thousand.</p> <p>The Chairman then thanked both visiting Councillors for their reports, and invited them to observe the rest of the meeting.</p> <p>At this point the Chairman accepted a short oral report from Clive Stanley, the Parish Council's Webmaster. He stated he was keen to keep in touch and help with any issues, but he was considering withdrawing from providing these services generally over the next few months, and will work with his successor to aid continuity. More formal notice will follow later in the year. Parish Councillor Ladds asked if the petition mentioned in Item 6 could be incorporated somehow in the Parish Council website. The Webmaster advised against this, for reasons of practicality. He recommended that public awareness of the petition and the wording could be raised using the website.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Mr Stanley for attending the Parish Council's inaugural Zoom meeting, and invited him to observe the rest of the proceedings.</p>																
8	Financial report	<p>A. The RFO reported on the Parish Council's finances & budget for 2020/21. The account balances were noted as £20,276.80 in the bank statements dated 1st July 2020, and the reconciliation, with 5 outstanding cheques as below, is £19,427.55. It then RESOLVED to approve the previous payment of the cheques for:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Lionel Robbins, Sittingbourne</td> <td>Internal Audit 2019-20</td> <td>£75.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Clive Stanley, Higham</td> <td>Webmaster 4th March to 26 June</td> <td>£70.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>KM Media Group Ltd, Aylesford</td> <td>Public Notices re easement Forstal Cottage</td> <td>£239.76</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HMRC Bradford</td> <td>Income Tax for Clerk</td> <td>£65.80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Michael Sharpe, Ashford</td> <td>Clerk / RFO Salary and Expenses</td> <td>£398.69</td> </tr> </table> <p>proposed R Brasier, seconded A Diebel.</p> <p>B. The RFO also reported on the separate Bank Account for the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), which had lain unused for over 3</p>	Lionel Robbins, Sittingbourne	Internal Audit 2019-20	£75.00	Clive Stanley, Higham	Webmaster 4th March to 26 June	£70.00	KM Media Group Ltd, Aylesford	Public Notices re easement Forstal Cottage	£239.76	HMRC Bradford	Income Tax for Clerk	£65.80	Michael Sharpe, Ashford	Clerk / RFO Salary and Expenses	£398.69	<p>Clerk to arrange for signatories' letter to go to bank, by 31st July</p>
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		years with a balance of £0.01. The Council RESOLVED to close this account and use the main account for all MUGA income and outgoings, as had apparently been the case since March 2017. Proposed A Diebel, seconded R Brasier	
9	Annual Governance and Audit Review (AGAR) 2019/2020	A. The Council considered the Internal Audit Report 2019-20 from Lionel Robbins and agreed to accept it. Proposed R Brasier, seconded A Diebel B. The Council considered its status under the 2019/2020 scheme to be that of an exempt authority on the basis of its small precept (under £25,000) and resolved that the Certificate of Exemption from External Audit should be duly signed. Proposed R Brasier, seconded by A Diebel C. The Council considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 Proposed R Brasier, seconded A Diebel D. The Council considered and approved the Accounting Statements 2019/2020 Proposed R Brasier, seconded A Diebel E. The Council resolved that the Publication of the Dates for Public Inspection of Accounting Records should be made, those dates to be Monday 20 th July to Friday 28 th August 2020. Proposed R Brasier, seconded A Diebel	R Brasier to transmit the 'wet signature' documents to the Clerk by 15 th July Clerk to scan all signed documents, email Certificate of Exemption to PKF Littlejohn, and ask Webmaster to upload all to website, by 17 th July. Clerk to place Notice on Notice Board by 17 th July and service requests for Public Inspection until end August, adhering to COVID-19 restrictions.
10	Planning	A. 20/0689 4 The Street Little Chart TN27 0QD <i>Proposed two storey side and rear extension; replacement single storey rear extension; dormers to front/rear and rooflight tunnels to facilitate loft conversion.</i> The Council noted that the consultation period for this application had expired the previous Friday 11 th July.	
At this point the Clerk, being the host of the Zoom meeting, placed Cllr Beck's connection in the 'Waiting Room' following the discussion of his OSI at item 3 above.			
10A	(continued)	It therefore discussed the matter on an information basis. It ratified the form of words (examined using the Screen Share facility on Zoom) sent to the Planning Portal by general agreement before the consultation closure date. It also considered the possibility that the applicant's Supporting Statement on the ABC Planning Portal disclosed an intention to effect a change of use to a 'care home'. B. The Council then discussed 20/0791 1 Bannister Houses The Street Little Chart TN27 0QF <i>Proposed First Floor Rear Extension.</i>	
10B	(continued)	The discussion continued briefly and the Council RESOLVED to support the application	Clerk to indicate support on the Planning Portal, before 20 th July.
11	Highways Improvement Plan	The Chairman indicated that discussion of this topic had taken place at Item 6 above. He accepted the points made by Councillors and the members of the public, and noted that Cllr Simkins' planned meeting next week with Kent Highways might make it possible to get action.	
After several attempts, the Clerk opened Cllr Beck's connection to the participants' area of the Zoom meeting. Cllr Beck protested at his treatment, and stated that he had no pecuniary interest in the Item 10A application. He also asked if he had missed Item 11. Several comments were then made by Councillors and a member of the public about the application in Item 10A.			
12	Multi Use Games Area operation under COVID-19 restrictions	This item was introduced but not discussed.	

13	Clerk/RFO's Contract of Employment	The Chairman asked the Council to ratify the increase from 2 hours per week to 3 hours per week, retrospective from 5 th April 2020, to better reflect the workload of the post. RESOLVED to accept, proposed A Diebel, seconded J Ladds	R Brasier to transmit the 'wet signature' documents to the Clerk by 15 th July Clerk to scan and file signed copy of Contract
14	Forum for exchange of information	The Councillors brought forth no 'Other Business' apart from a question as to the progress of the Easement on the Forstal. The Clerk reported that correspondence was awaited from the Council's contracted Solicitor, expecting finalisation.	Clerk to update Councillors by email as appropriate.
15	Date of next meeting.	The Council agreed September 8 th and November 10 th , January 12 th and March 9 th subject to amendment as circumstances allow. Remote meetings using the Little Chart Parish Council Zoom account may be arranged where accommodation for physical meetings appears problematic.	Clerk to prepare agendas, arrange Zoom facilities and circulate papers, by Wednesday 2 nd September.

At 7.46pm the Clerk suffered an Internet outage, and after several attempts he rejoined the meeting, firstly by telephone and then using Zoom. The Councillors and member of the public continued to use Zoom during this period to practise this method of communication. In particular, Cllr Beck read out a letter from a local resident regarding the accident at The Swan and possible traffic calming measures. A timeline to promote action by 30th September was discussed. A special meeting in October/November was also floated. The group also agreed that a remote meeting on Zoom should be arranged in future

The Zoom meeting was closed by the Clerk as host at 8.15 pm.