

**Little Chart Parish Council (LCPC)***Minutes of Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held remotely on Zoom on Tuesday 8th September 2020, beginning at 7.32pm*

<b>Unique Minute No 79/</b>	<b>Business</b>	<b>Record</b>	<b>Action (by whom, &amp; within what timescale)</b>
1	Note of Persons Present	Cllrs Brasier (Chairman), Ladds, Rivolta, Beck, Ashford Borough Cllr Clair Bell, Mr Sharpe (Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer RFO). The meeting was noted as quorate.	
2	Apologies	Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) Kyle Farnfield, Ashford Police Station.	
3	Declarations of Interest	The Chairman asked Parish Councillors to declare any interests in the business on the agenda. No declarations were made.	
4	Minutes of last meeting	The draft minutes of the Parish Council Meeting (no 78) on 14 <sup>th</sup> July 2020 and the Extraordinary Meeting ( no EX1) on 30 <sup>th</sup> July were read & agreed as a true record; proposed R Brasier, seconded S Rivolta.	Clerk to place paper copies in Minutes Book after signature, & ensure website is updated by 16 <sup>th</sup> September.
5	Matters Arising	None	
<i>At 7.33 pm Kent County Councillor Charlie Simkins joined the meeting.</i>			
6	Borough Councillor Report	Ashford Borough Councillor (ABC) Clair Bell had no formal report to present, but was able to commend to the Council the swift action taken by ABC Planning Enforcement to obtain a Court Order preventing an unsafe highway access point being created on Swan Lane towards Hothfield a few hundred metres SE of Rooting Street. This appears to have forestalled a planned illegal encampment.	
<i>At 7.38 pm Parish Councillor Alex Diebel joined the meeting.</i>			
7	PCSO's report	Kyle Farnfield PCSO 46061547 of Community Safety Unit Ashford Police Station Kent Police East Division had been invited to the meeting, and apologised, as it is not possible for him to join Zoom meetings since they are not catered for within the Kent Police computer system. On request he sent a one-page report for presentation to the meeting. This was available on-screen to participants, and the Council discussed its contents.	Clerk to email report to Councillors (Parish, Borough and County) in attendance for perusal and future reference, by 21st September.
8	County Councillor Report	KCC Cllr Simkins began by referring to the Little Chart Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) (Item 10 on the Agenda, which the Chairman agreed could be brought forward). Parish Councillors discussed the lack of response from KCC Highways Schemes since the end of July, and voiced some disquiet that the site visits by staff had taken place without Parish Council involvement and with no subsequent update. KCC Cllr Simkins was conscious that the ambitious 'timeline' set out by the Parish Council for agreeing design improvements has suffered from 'slippage'. He noted that the schools' return and other pressures specifically on the Schemes section has led to a re-ordering of priorities. He also stated his intention to meet/communicate with Schemes staff later in the week and press the case for the Little Chart HIP to maintain momentum. After due consideration, the Council RESOLVED to send a formal email to the Schemes staff already in contact to request the draft design proposals and estimate the degree of slippage in the timeline. Cllr Simkins then highlighted the effects on KCC's budget that the COVID-19 pandemic has had, and informed Councillors that a Full meeting to revise the budget would be held online on Thursday 10 <sup>th</sup> September. Despite the UK Government financial support, he anticipated problems of re-allocation of funds (for example Divisional Members' Grants) in the short term, and many pressures on spending ahead of the setting of the 2021/22 budget which should occur in early 2021.	Clerk to draft and circulate to Parish Councillors for approval a formal document in these terms, by 21 <sup>st</sup> September.

At 7.52pm Cllr Diebel left the meeting due to technical problems with the Zoom connection on his device. He could neither hear nor be heard.

8 (ctd)		Cllr Simkins also referred to the great concerns within Kent County Council around the issue of child migrants, for which it has specific responsibility. Since Clair Bell also happens to be the Kent County Council Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Public Health, at Cllr Simkins' request she was able to inform the Parish Council of the details of the recent changes to the allocation system – the UK Government having accepted KCC's point that it has reached crisis point in accommodating unaccompanied migrants presenting as under 18 within the county. KCC Cllr Bell was able to offer informed reassurance to Councillors that the balance between 'vulnerable migrants' and 'citizen children' is being struck, even in the current extraordinary circumstances.	
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At 7.58 pm Cllr Ladds left the meeting and returned within a short time. The meeting remained quorate throughout.

8 (ctd)		The Chairman then thanked both visiting Councillors for their reports, and with his permission they left the meeting at 8pm.	
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9	Financial report	<p>The RFO reported on the Parish Council's finances &amp; budget for 2020/21. Three spreadsheets were circulated by email in advance of the meeting and these were also made available by screen-sharing. They consisted of Receipts &amp; Payments 2020/21, updated Budget Sheet version 3 and Earmarked Reserves. It then RESOLVED to approve the previous payment of the cheques for:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="411 853 1222 1227"> <tr> <td data-bbox="411 853 683 920">Keith Tait, Folkestone</td> <td data-bbox="683 853 954 920">Tree Work, Forstal</td> <td data-bbox="954 853 1222 920">£780.00 inc VAT</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="411 920 683 1025">Information Commissioner, Stockport</td> <td data-bbox="683 920 954 1025">Registration Fee</td> <td data-bbox="954 920 1222 1025">£40.00 no VAT</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="411 1025 683 1131">Trevor May Construction Ltd, Challock</td> <td data-bbox="683 1025 954 1131">Replacement padlocks for MUGA</td> <td data-bbox="954 1025 1222 1131">£63.60 inc VAT</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="411 1131 683 1227">Village Hall Management Committee</td> <td data-bbox="683 1131 954 1227">Grant in Aid</td> <td data-bbox="954 1131 1222 1227">£400.00 no VAT</td> </tr> </table> <p>proposed R Brasier, seconded J Ladds. The bank reconciliation is £29,020.41. The Council then APPROVED the payment on invoice of the following item:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="411 1361 1222 1435"> <tr> <td data-bbox="411 1361 683 1435">Clive Stanley, Higham</td> <td data-bbox="683 1361 954 1435">Webmaster Services Jun-Aug</td> <td data-bbox="954 1361 1222 1435">£91.00 no VAT</td> </tr> </table> <p>It proceeded to examine the Budget and Reserves with a view to funding the HIP, and in particular any 'pre-works consultancy fees' which KCC Highways Schemes section has warned they may levy.</p>	Keith Tait, Folkestone	Tree Work, Forstal	£780.00 inc VAT	Information Commissioner, Stockport	Registration Fee	£40.00 no VAT	Trevor May Construction Ltd, Challock	Replacement padlocks for MUGA	£63.60 inc VAT	Village Hall Management Committee	Grant in Aid	£400.00 no VAT	Clive Stanley, Higham	Webmaster Services Jun-Aug	£91.00 no VAT	
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10	Planning	<p>The matters <b>20/01041/AS</b> Thatch, Ram Lane, Little Chart, Ashford, Kent, TN27 0PU <i>Erection of 2.2m oak horizontal boarded fence and an oak horizontal boarded gate</i> and <b>20/00177/TC</b> (same location) <i>Tree Work in a Conservation Area Turkey Oak at far (North) end of garden, canopy reduction</i> were discussed, and the Tree Work Drawing and other information were shared on-screen. After due consideration, the Council RESOLVED to support the applications.</p>	Clerk to indicate 'support' for both matters on the Planning Portal, before 10 <sup>th</sup> September.
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11	Protection of 'The Plantation' in the centre of the village from traffic damage	The Council noted that a written Quotation had been obtained from a local fencing materials supplier for 33 free-standing wooden bollards, and discussed the method of transport to site and of installation. After due consideration it offered thanks to Cllr Diebel for his efforts so far, and RESOLVED to authorise the purchase of materials AND obtain a further quote/quotes for installation to an	Clerk to communicate with suppliers / installers and Cllr Diebel, and inform other Councillors by email.
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<b>11 (ctd)</b>		agreed specification, with the works to be carried out within a lead time of 4-5 weeks Proposed C Beck, seconded S Rivolta.	
<b>12</b>	Government Support for Superfast Broadband	The Chairman reported that he had been approached by residents unhappy with broadband provision in Little Chart. The Clerk reported on the information available from the BT Openreach web portal, on the provisioning offered by other network providers such as Trooli, and on Kent County Council's involvement in the UK Government's Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) programme. Councillors then discussed the lack of Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC) in three areas of the parish; the apparent improvement in speeds and service since Openreach had provided FTTC in The Street; and the desirability of local upgrade to Fibre to the Property (FTTP) cabling, allowing residents, and particularly businesses, to access GFast and UltraFast speeds of 330Mbps/1Gbps.	<b>Clerk</b> to investigate further the Parish Council's role as a public body in registering for upgrades within the parish; administering the voucher scheme; and documenting gaps in provision; (without incurring expenditure), by November meeting.
<b>13</b>	Tree Works on Parish Council-owned land	The Council examined the 3 written quotes obtained and selected a suitable contractor. The work is based on the previous Tree Inspection from January, subject to variation at a site meeting with Councillors 3 or 4 weeks prior to commencement, and divided into 2 phases, one per financial year. It RESOLVED to enter into contractual arrangements, proposed, R Brasier seconded J Ladds	<b>Clerk</b> to offer contract to selected firm and confirm arrangements for carrying it out, by 20 <sup>th</sup> September.
<b>14</b>	Multi Use Games Area operation under COVID-19 restrictions	The Clerk informed the Council of communications from its insurers about the new risks presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council reviewed the adequacy of the signage at the MUGA and the Community Garden behind the Village Hall.	<b>R Brasier</b> to send / email the completed Risk Assessments to Clerk for filing. <b>Clerk</b> to notify UK Power Networks of MUGA bird deterrent damage, by 18 <sup>th</sup> September.
<b>15</b>	Forum for exchange of information	Councillors asked for the draft Highways formal email (Item 8 above) to be circulated to all members of the HIP Committee.	
<b>16</b>	Date of next meeting.	November 10 <sup>th</sup> 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.	<b>Clerk</b> to prepare agendas, arrange Zoom facilities and circulate papers, by Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> November.

The Zoom meeting was closed by the Clerk as host at 9.09 pm.