

Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council

Founded in December 1894



Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 15th January 2024 Singleton Village Hall at 7.30pm MINUTES

PRESENT: Cllrs P Barker, Y Barker, Darvill, D Gathern, Herring, Sullivan, Tate, Wiffen.

ALSO PRESENT: Aniko Szocs (Clerk), Paula Cowperthwaite (Deputy Clerk), Cllr S Gathern (ABC), Cllr Hallett (ABC), Cllr Barrett (ABC), Peter New (NHW), 1 member of public (MOP).

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr McClintock, Cllr Blanford (ABC)

2. Declarations of Interest

To hear declarations of interest on this agenda, relating to:

2.1. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Cllr Wiffen – Item 17

2.2. Other Significant Interests

None.

2.3. Other Interests

Cllr Y Barker – 6.1, 6.4, 6.5, 6.7

Cllr Sullivan – 6.1, 6.4, 6.5

Cllr Wiffen – 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6

Cllr P Barker – 6.1, 6.3, 6.7

Cllr D Gathern – 6.1, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The council resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 11th December 2023 as a true record.

Proposed:	Cllr Y Barker	Seconded:	Cllr Tate
Vote In Favour: 8	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

4. Reports from Borough Councillors (maximum of 15 minutes)

4.1. Cllr Bill Barrett – Singleton East Ward

Please see report at Appendix One.

4.2. Cllrs Jessamy Blanford & Alan Pickering – Weald Central Ward

Not present. Please see report at Appendix One.

4.3. Cllr Sally Gathern- Singleton West Ward

Please see report at Appendix One.

A resident has also contacted Cllr Gathern about the condition of some trees near to Great Fishers. A number of trees were removed last year due to ash dieback and there is now a 3 year inspection cycle, but if residents have any concerns in the meantime they can contact Aspire at ABC.

A recent accident on the Bucksford/Tithe Barn Lane junction badly damaged the lamppost. This was then half removed but the remainder is due to be repaired soon.

Cllr Gathern has also reported the deterioration of the wall on the corner of the two footpaths just before the A28 underpass. It is currently deemed safe but will be regularly inspected.

4.4. Cllr Clive Hallett -Washford Ward

Please see report at Appendix One.

5. Reports from County Councillors (maximum of 10 minutes)

5.1. Cllr Charlie Simkins

Not present – please see report at Appendix One.

Cllr Y Barker has spoken with the Chairman of Bethersden Parish Council regarding the Hoad's Wood fly tipping, who reported that Bethersden council “had been campaigning for a long time regarding this. A high court order was obtained and still remains. ABC deny any responsibility, KCC has not stopped it, the EA say their legal team only cope with one offender at a time and they have another somewhere else, the police do not act as it is civil, the MP has written to the authorities. We also cannot believe that unmarked lorries can continue to commit not only fly tipping offences but road traffic marking of vehicles”

It was suggested that a written response is sought from CI Rivett of Kent Police, regarding what the organisation can do when fly tipping takes place on private land, may be more useful than requesting specifics for this particular incident.

5.2. Cllr Dirk Ross

Not present, no report sent.

6. Reports from Committees/Groups

To receive reports from committees

6.1. Planning Committee

Meeting held on 27/12/23 and minutes are available on the website. The next meeting will be held on 22/01/24. There is no further update on the Waste Water Treatment Works. The Chilmington Primary access issue has come to a head with the closure of Mock Lane due to urgent safety repairs. The SID will be placed on Singleton Hill next week to see if the closure has affected traffic numbers in that area. Road closed signage is being moved by parents, and this has been reported to KCC.

A MOP reported that the footpath work that was left in an unsatisfactory state in Colemans Kitchen Wood will be rectified as soon as the weather allows.

Following prolonged communication with KCC highways about Chilmington Green Road traffic and the state of the road caused by usage and type of traffic, a Traffic Regulation Order is now out for a full set of speed limits across the whole Chilmington development of 20 or 30mph zones.

6.2. Singleton Spaces

The Centre was closed over the Christmas period.

There will be a quiz this Saturday.

The Charity Commission accounts will be submitted before the end of the month.

6.3. Environment Committee

No meeting was held.

6.4. Stronger Communities

The Fridge is working well. Usable food waste is now coming in from a number of different sources. There is also a rota of reliable volunteers now in place.

Surveys will be undertaken shortly to help generate evidence to prove how the project is working and to help access funding.

6.5. Staffing Committee

Discussions will be held under the closed session.

6.6. Great Chart Playing Fields

A meeting will be held as soon as possible.

6.7. Kent Association of Local Councils- Ashford Area Committee

Cllr P Barker explained that the networking with other councils, and access to police and planning colleagues for asking questions is valuable. The current chair is due to

step down in March and a replacement is being sought. The minutes are now available for the latest meeting in January.

6.8. Neighbourhood Watch

Following the last council meeting, Peter New spoke with Adele Tyrer about random speed checks in the areas raised, and she has agreed to carry these out.

He also raised the behaviour in and around the Singleton Village Hall car park at school pick up time with regards to car parking.

He noted his disappointment with the current communications of Kent Police.

A Christmas period of targeting potential drunk drivers also uncovered drug suppliers and dangerous weapons.

Peter New presented his Personal Action Plan for 2024. This has been circulated to all councillors and is available on the website. It included his 10 point plan of how he will work and he will report on his progress at the end of the year.

Public Participation: There will be 15 minutes of the meeting to hear public questions and comments.

Chilmington issues were raised under Item 6.1.

War memorial – the wheels are in motion to transfer finances from the trust to the parish council. Work can then be carried out to improve the area before the 80th D Day celebrations.

Cllr Tate asked if the springs can be tightened on the gates repaired at Great Chart Play Park as they don't close properly. The post on the gate into the field also moves so needs to be set properly.

Cllr Darvill noted that he recently rang 999 to report children using catapults on Hoxton Close and 2 police units turned up to deal with the situation.

7. Planning Decisions

These were shown to the room and read out. Please see Appendix Two.

8. Policies and Procedures

To review and approve updates on the following policies.

8.1. Health and Safety Policy

No comments were made. The parish council resolved to adopt the Health and Safety Policy.

Proposed:	Cllr P Barker	Seconded:	Cllr Wiffen
Vote In Favour: 8	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

8.2. Lone Working Policy and Risk assessment

No comments were made although it was suggested that it is thoroughly reviewed in one year.

The parish council resolved to adopt the Lone Working Policy and Risk Assessment.

Proposed:	Cllr Darvill	Seconded:	Cllr Tate
Vote In Favour: 8	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

8.3. Grant Application policy

It was suggested that two lots of contact details to be included i.e. email and phone number, that the two contacts should not be related where possible, and that their position in the organisation should also be listed on the application form.

The parish council resolved to adopt the grant application policy.

Proposed:	Cllr Tate	Seconded:	Cllr P Barker
Vote In Favour: 8	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

9. Communities Prepared

A list of training sessions and dates were shown to the room. However, there was concern that if the parish council takes on responsibility for emergency responses, then it will become the expectation, and there may also be liability consequences.

The parish council resolved not to attend any of the training sessions.

Proposed:	Cllr D Gathern	Seconded:	Cllr Darvill
Vote In Favour: 7	Vote Against: 1	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

10. Parish Council Building

The Parish Council appointed Cllrs P Barker, Y Barker, Gathern, Tate and Sullivan as members of the working group to lead the project and draw up a feasibility study.

11. Finance

11.1. Items for Payment

Items for payment were shown to the room. It was noted that the items relating to reimbursements to the Steward were returned to the council.

The parish council resolved to agree the items for payment in January and acknowledge the bank reconciliation.

Proposed:	Cllr Wiffen	Seconded:	Cllr Tate
Vote In Favour: 8	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

Method	Items for Approval for Payment in January 2024	Description	Total Payable	VAT
Bacs	HMRC	Employer contribution	£1,980.06	
Bacs	Salary	January Salaries	£5,965.82	
Bacs	Kent Pension Fund	January Contribution	£1,679.20	
Bacs	Society of Local Councils	Training- Leadership Skills, 4 webinar sessions	£216.00	£36.00
Bacs	Ashford Volunteer Centre	DBS Check for Parish Steward	£60.00	
Bacs	Great Chart Village Hall	Venue hire for meetings and Pop-up Café 2024	£288.00	
Bacs	Reimburse Parish Steward	Garden kneeling foam	£5.41	£0.90
Bacs	Reimburse Parish Steward	Mobile phone belt pouch	£14.97	£2.50
Bacs	ADM	Monthly Support contract	£311.90	£51.98
Bacs	PMVA Training	1 Day L3 First Aid Course	£480.00	£80.00
Bacs	Reimburse Deputy Clerk	24 Inch display monitor for home working	£99.00	£16.50
Bacs	Singleton Spaces	Education activities December	£1,500.00	
Bacs	Singleton Village Hall	Venue hire for meetings in 2024	£180.00	
Bacs	KCS Procurement Services	Photocopier rental	£127.51	£21.25
Bacs	Kingsnorth Parish Council	Play park inspection Nov&Dec	£150.00	
Bacs	Shoptek	Fruit and veg display	£333.60	£55.60
Total:			£13,391.47	£264.73

Payment for Information

Payment Date	To	Description	Total paid	VAT (if applicable)
Bacs	Medical World Ltd	Defib batteries and pads	£491.35	
Bacs	MHarrington Tree Surgery & Hedge cutting	Tree work on the Viewing Point	£4,850.00	

Income				
Method	From	Description	Total received	VAT (if applicable)
Bacs	HMRC	VAT Return	£ 29,253.40	
Total:			£29,253.40	

Credit card payment items for Information	Description	Total paid	VAT
Account Number:19079376			
Halfords	3-in-1 Oil	£4.99	£ 0.83
Halfords	Wiper for van and WD40	£44.96	£ 7.49
Travis Perkins	Dust pan and cleaning products	£82.00	£ 13.67
TooledUp	Heavy duty wheelbarrow	£131.90	
Account Number: 24056805			
GiffGaff	Mobile broadband	£10.00	
Sainsbury's Supermarket	Mince Hi event refreshments	£79.28	
Lily's Social Kitchen	December Pop-Up Café	£18.20	
GiffGaff	Mobile Phone top up	£10.00	
GiffGaff	Mobile Phone top up	£10.00	
Ladders4Sale	Three step ladder	£32.99	
Morrisons	Refreshments	£11.90	
Amazon	Unknown	-£6.75	
Amazon	Refund	£6.75	
Lily's Social Kitchen	Working lunch	£35.00	
GiffGaff	Mobile Phone top up	£6.00	£1.00
Amazon	Maintenance log book	£4.54	£0.76
Amazon	Copy paper *5 ream	£18.45	£3.08
Total:		£500.21	£26.83

Great Chart with Singleton Parish NEW

Bank - Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 1 November 2023

Confirmed Bank & Investment Balances

Bank Statement Balances

30/11/2023	Metro Bank Current Account	20,497.85
30/11/2023	Metro Bank Instant Access	154,807.96
01/11/2023	Metro Bank Credit Card 6934	4.25
01/11/2023	Metro Bank Credit Card 8589	-313.93
30/11/2023	NatWest Current	100.00
30/11/2023	NatWest Reserve Account	196,346.88
31/03/2023	Nationwide Business 1 Yr Fixed	178,411.84

549,854.85

Receipts not on Bank Statement

0.00

Closing Balance

549,854.85

All Cash & Bank Accounts

1	Metro Bank Current Account	20,497.85
2	Metro Bank Instant Access	154,807.96
3	Metro Bank Credit Card	-309.68
4	NatWest Current Account	100.00
5	NatWest Reserve Account	196,346.88
6	Nationwide Business 1 Yr Fixed	178,411.84
7	Dudley Building Society	110,000.00
	Other Cash & Bank Balances	0.00
Total Cash & Bank Balances		659,854.85

12.Clerk’s Report and Update on Issues not Listed Elsewhere on the Agenda

The Clerk’s Report was shown to the room and summarised. Please see Appendix Three.

13.Events attended.

Cllr P Barker – KALC, Planning Committee, Pop Up Cafe

14.Correspondence

All relevant correspondence has been circulated.

15.Items for Information or Agenda for Next Meeting

None.

16.Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next scheduled Council Meeting will be held on **Monday, 12th February 2024 starting at 7.30pm at Great Chart Village Hall**

Closed session

To Resolve that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

It was moved by the Chair that in pursuance of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the following item on the grounds that it is exempt information as defined in the Act.

17.Staffing

Following the departure of the recently appointed Steward, it was proposed that any replacement will be recruited to a 37.5 hours per week role. There will be recruitment training provided for members involved in appointing staff.

The council resolved to appoint a full time parish steward.

Proposed:	Cllr D Gathern	Seconded:	Cllr Darvill
Vote In Favour: 7	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 1	MOTION CARRIED

The meeting ended at 21:15pm.

Signed as a true record by:

Cllr Wiffen_____

Date:_____

Appendix One – Councillor Reports

Cllr Bill Barrett – Singleton East Ward

Firstly let me wish all my Parish Councillor colleagues a happy new year and I hope your festive break was enjoyable. It's always nice to relax after a hard year so I hope you had a nice time.

In regards the Ward and my Portfolio Holder work obviously the Xmas period is always quiet and there have been no resident enquiries coming my way. But I have walked both the lake complex and the Singleton Centre complex.

Both are still in need of further work and repair and whilst I still wait for a meeting with Robert Martine of the management company at the centre, I have arranged a Lake walkabout for the end of January to try to instigate further vegetation clearances before the nesting period, but also to seek a firm plan on how we will repair the wooden walkway on the Lakemead side of the lake.

In regards my Portfolio Holder work, again the Xmas period is quiet, but now we are in the new year the two main priorities are to accelerate the On Street Purchase (OSP) program. And to also seek to get the New Build program going again, even though we have the nightmare that is Stodmarsh which has now delayed our build program for 2.5 years. We currently have around 200 people on the Temporary Accommodation list and around 1500 on the Waiting List.

Cllrs Jessamy Blanford & Alan Pickering – Weald Central Ward

I have written to Stevensons Bros regarding the wooden horse asking for a commitment for its refurbishment. However, we have to bear in mind that in the past they have done the work for free. That might not be the case this time.

I have also been chasing up the Hoad's Wood issue.

Cllr Sally Gatherer - Singleton West Ward

I trust you all had a good Christmas and wish you a very happy New Year. The main news this month is that Aspire have started the work along the SUDs that run from Garton Way down to The Bulrushes. I'd like to thank Aspire for putting up with my nagging to do this, and to also thank those residents who raised this issue with me for their patience.

I have also reported the litter along these SUDs as there seems to be a lot of it. Litter is a perennial problem but it does help to report it so action can be taken.

Walking around Singleton, I also noticed that the wall by the underpass is broken. I reported this to KCC and they sent a steward to have a look. The steward decided that the wall is not currently dangerous but will keep an eye on it in case it deteriorates further.

During the recent storms I noticed a few trees swaying significantly in Buxford Meadow and also a tree which appears to have fallen. I have asked Aspire to investigate.

Back in June, I did a walkabout of the area with members of the Parish Council and experts from the Bumblebee Conservation Trust. I'm delighted to say that, in mid-December, we received the report giving us ideas of small changes we can make to the management of our green spaces in order to improve biodiversity in our ward and support pollinators. I'd like to thank the Parish Council for their work and support for this project.

Beyond these ward-focussed issues, I have been busy looking into ways the council can improve its environmental credentials and tackle climate change. I am particularly interested in improving the environmental standards of our housing and transport. I have been especially impressed with ideas implemented in Nottingham for travel. Whilst it's clearly a very different area to Ashford, initiatives there could, I'm sure, be adapted to improve transport and travel systems here.

Cllr Clive Hallett - Washford Ward

The issue of car parking in Hoxton Close and plans for extending the car park at Singleton Village Hall remain a point of concern for the residents of Windsor Court and I welcomed the opportunity we had to discuss this with fellow Borough and Parish Councillors on 28th November.

A couple of points which came out of these discussions were:

The need for a traffic survey to understand the impact of parking in Hoxton Close adjacent to the Village Hall and Great Chart Primary School

Whether Planning Permission would be required for extending the existing car park at Singleton Village Hall to the adjacent green space, or whether options under consideration can proceed without the need for this to be undertaken.

I would welcome the opportunity for a follow-up meeting on this.

Cllr Charlie Simkins

I was alerted to the waste problems at Hoads Wood following the article in Kent on Line last week end. This is in private land and subject to an investigation by the Environment Agency with support from Natural England, the Forestry Commission, Kent County Council and Kent Rural Police Task Force.

With regard to The Street in Great Chart I am looking forward to the traffic surveys due to be carried out in March.

Appendix Two

Planning Comments

December

Planning application number [PA/2023/1870](#)

The Church Of St Mary The Virgin, The Street, Great Chart, TN23 3AY

Construction of new path (overlaid over existing historic path) from an existing entrance to the site along Ashford Road to the South Porch; alterations to internal floor levels to the South Porch to improve drainage; installation of new surface water drain at threshold; alterations to existing timber gates.

It was noted that the works to the building are all acceptable. The path will also need to be installed by someone with appropriate skills to lay it without heavy machinery.

The committee resolved to support the application, however there is a concern that the gradient is too high for wheelchair/pushchair users when travelling down towards the road. There is also concern that users will still cross from the bottom of the path directly over to the village hall.

Planning application number [PA/2023/2135](#)

12 Waterside Terrace, Ninn Lane, Great Chart, TN23 3DD

Detached annexe in rear garden.

The committee resolved to comment on the application as more information is needed on the materials being used for the building itself other than the cladding. The committee also had concerns about the layout of the kitchen with a hob directly next to the door, and how the building will be accessed.

The committee would like to see a condition added that only immediate family can occupy the building.

Planning Decisions

December

PA/2023/1967

10 The Singleton Centre, Hoxton Close, Singleton, TN23 5GR

Single storey extension to the existing building and refurbishment with new entrance for dentist surgery.

ABC: Refuse. PC: Support

PA/2023/1959

(Land west of), Chilmington Green Road, Great Chart with Singleton, Ashford, TN23 3DL

Construction of an electricity sub-station within Main AAP Phase 2, Land Parcel B2 at Chilmington Green, Ashford.

ABC: Approve. PC: Support

PA/2023/2004

Land to the South of Chart Road, Ashford

Outline planning application (All Matters Reserved) for up to 760 sqm of Class B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage and distribution) floorspace

ABC: Withdrawn. PC: Object

PA/2023/1990

120, Lakemead, Singleton, TN23 4XZ

Single-storey side extension

ABC: Approve. PC: Object

PA/2023/2109

Langley Lodge, Daniels Water, Great Chart, Ashford Kent TN26 1JU

Excavation of a 150m2 wildlife pond to specification to promote natural breeding of Great Crested Newts in the area

ABC: Approve. PC: Support

PA/2023/2135

12 Waterside Terrace, Ninn Lane, Great Chart, TN23 3DD

Detached annexe in rear garden

ABC: Approve. PC: Comment

Appendix Three

Clerk's Report – January 2024



Events: From January the venue and timing of the **Pop-up Café** is changing. The first session will be held at Lily's Café, Singleton Village Hall starting from 10.00 am till noon.

Storm damage: A resident has contacted the parish council to report the damage to their fence. The resident asked the council to pay for the damage caused. The insurance company has been contacted and a claim case opened. The insurance company has requested further information on maintenance and inspection of the trees, which has been provided. I will update the council as soon as there is more information available.



Great Chart Play Park: The two entrances to the play area now have hard surface, providing safe access all year around. The gates have been aligned and the surface under a play equipment completely replaced.

Local Councils Award Scheme – Quality Gold: The application for the gold award has been submitted, a panel will review the application and confirm on the 5th of April 2024 if the council achieved the Gold Award.

Newsletter: The latest edition of the parish newsletter is being printed as we speak and hopefully will be distributed to all households before the end of January. The newsletter is packed with useful information and interesting reports from local groups and clubs. Thank you to Paula for producing another great edition.

Training:

Please regularly check the Kent Association of Local Councils website for updates on training. If there is anything you feel would improve your role as a councillor, please book a place using their Eventbrite website. When booking a place at an event, please do not forget to select payment by

invoice and the invoice to be sent to the clerk. If you have issues with accessing the website please email Laura Dyer at manager@kentalc.gov.uk and she will be able to assist you.

Tabling a motion for Parish council meetings: If you would like to request an agenda item, please send a motion at least seven clear days before the meeting via theclerk@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk with the wording you would like to appear on the agenda. Please note, if the motion's wording is not clear, it could be rejected, or you could be requested to resubmit the motion with better wording.

Community Heroes:

The number of Community Heroes are growing slowly but there is always room for more 😊. As always, if you can, please promote the scheme with your friends and family. More information can be found on the parish council's [website](#). We are also looking for volunteers to help with the **Community Fridge**. If you know anyone who might be interested, please ask them to contact us for further information.

National Association of Local Councils: If you haven't already please subscribe to [NALC's newsletter](#). It has up to date information relating to the sector as well as news about the latest events.

Reporting: It is very important that if you see a fault, it is reported to the relevant authority immediately so works can be arranged. It is often confusing to know who to report to so if in doubt you can check the Parish Council [website](#) where all the information you need to know is available. Did you know you can use What3Words to pinpoint the exact location of a fault? You can either access it via [the website](#) or download the app to your smartphone.

Social Media: Please keep liking and sharing our posts on social media so it can reach a wider audience. If you are on Facebook or Instagram ensure you give us a like and follow us 😊

Social Media engagement report for December 2023:

Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council

1.2K likes • 1.4K followers

Page overview

Followers: 1,439

Create a post

Last 28 days

Post reach

5,192

Post engagement

1,040

New Page likes

3

New followers

5


See Details

Top post

See all

Last 28 days

Boost this post to reach up to 1367 more people with every £42 that you spend.



Users of the footpath between Hoxton Close, Strouts Road and Normandy Way may have noticed M Harrington Tree Surgery & Hedge Cutting...

Published by Hootsuite • 14 December 2023 at 12:05

Post impressions

1,292

Post reach

1,256

Post engagement

239

See insights

Boost post

Audience

1,439 Facebook followers

Age and gender

