



Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 11th May 2026 at Great Chart Village Hall at 7.00pm **MINUTES**

Councillors Present:	Cllrs P Barker, Y Barker, Darvill (from Item 3), Gathern, Herring, McClintock, Mercer (from Item 6.1), Sullivan, Tate, Wiffen
Number of Seats	11 (1 vacancy)
Number of Cllrs Present	10
Number of Cllrs Absent	2
Also Present:	Aniko Szocs (Clerk), Paula Cowperthwaite (Deputy Clerk), Catherine Stevens (CEO), Cllr Blanford (ABC), Cllr S Gathern (ABC) and three members of public.

1. Election of:

1.1. Chair, and signing of the Declaration of Office

The Parish Council resolved to appoint Cllr Wiffen as the Chairman.

Proposed:	Cllr Sullivan	Seconded:	Cllr P Barker
Vote In Favour: 7	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

1.2. Vice chair(s), and signing of the Declaration of Office

The Parish Council resolved to appoint Cllr P Barker and Cllr Sullivan as joint Vice Chairs.

Proposed:	Cllr Y Barker	Seconded:	Cllr Gathern
Vote In Favour: 7	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

2. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Hallett (ABC), Cllr Wibberley (KCC), Cllr Eustace (KCC), Peter New (NHW)

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

3. Declarations of Interest

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

3.1. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None

3.2. Other Significant Interests

None

3.3. Other Interests

Cllr McClintock – Items 6.2, 11.2

Cllr Darvill – Item 6.4

Cllr Herring – Item 6.3

Cllr Mercer – Items 6.1, 6.3

Cllr P Barker – Items 6.1, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 11.2

Cllr Wiffen – Items 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 6.7, 11.2, 6.8.1

Cllr Sullivan – Items 6.1, 6.6, 6.7

Cllr Tate – Item 6.1, 6.4, 11.2

Cllr Gathern – Items 6.2, 6.3, 6.7, 6.8.1
 Cllr Y Barker – Items 6.1, 6.3, 6.5, 6.6, 6.7, 11.2

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The council resolved to approve the minutes of the 13th April 2026 as a true record of the meeting.

Proposed:	Cllr Tate	Seconded:	Cllr Sullivan
Vote In Favour: 9	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

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

The Gormley Stones have been sold back to the artist. A KCC cabinet member authorised the sale and this was taken forward as an officer decision. The valuations used for the sale will not be released and no formal decision log exists. Cllr Y Barker will submit an FOI for further information.

5. Safeguarding

None

6. Reports from Committees/Groups

To receive reports from committees

6.1. Planning Committee

6.1.1. To receive reports on planning decisions.

The report was shown to the room and can be seen at Appendix One.

6.1.2. To acknowledge that Hodson development has left Chilmington Green

It was noted that they Hodsons have left construction on the Chilmington Development, but that CG3 has remained and is linked to the CMO, and CG4 is still active as the landowner of Possingham Farm.

It was noted that the CMO have declined an invite to the Big Lunch.

6.1.3. To review and agree on proposed walking route to Chilmington Green

A discussion took place on the suitability of the area as part of the safe route to Chilmington secondary school, and that other shorter and safer areas could be made safer instead.

The Parish Council resolved not to object to the proposal, but to state that the provision is inadequate, although still an improvement on the current situation. A request will also be made that the pathway is built further into the verge to avoid walking in such close proximity to vehicles travelling 40mph.

Proposed:	Cllr P Barker	Seconded:	Cllr Wiffen
Vote In Favour: 9	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 1	MOTION CARRIED

6.2. Singleton Spaces

A Trustees meeting will be held later this week.

6.3. Environment Committee

A meeting was held last week, and the minutes are on the website. Further trees have been identified to add to the tree trail.

6.4. Finance Committee

A meeting was held and the minutes are on the website. The Year End has been closed, and the grant applications will be discussed as separate agenda items.

6.5. Devolution Working Group

No meeting held.

6.6. Parish Building

This item was deferred to the next meeting once costings have been researched.

6.7. Staffing Committee

To be discussed under agenda item 6.8

6.8. Community Engagement Officer

6.8.1. To confirm 6 month probation review

The CEO has passed her probation review and will continue in post.

6.8.2. To acknowledge written report

The report was shown to the room and can be seen at Appendix Two.

7. Grant Applications

To consider and approve grant applications

7.1. Ashford United Church

The Parish Council resolved to approve the application.

Proposed:	Cllr Y Barker	Seconded:	Cllr McClintock
Vote In Favour: 9	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 1	MOTION CARRIED

7.2. DreamDragons

The Parish Council resolved to approve the application provided that 1) other trained users are also able to access the lighting, and 2) should the group leave the village hall, then the lighting would remain at the hall.

Proposed:	Cllr P Barker	Seconded:	Cllr Sullivan
Vote In Favour: 9	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 1	MOTION CARRIED

7.3. Grow19

The Parish Council resolved to approve the application for £6K rather than the requested £8K as previous month's rent cannot be retrospectively funded. As in similar previous applications, the rent money will be paid directly to Singleton Village Hall.

Proposed:	Cllr Gathern	Seconded:	Cllr Tate
Vote In Favour: 8	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 2	MOTION CARRIED

8. Review of Policies

To approve policies and procedures (if applicable)

8.1. Standing Orders 2026

It was noted that 12E is to be removed, but the current 12F references 12E so will also need to be updated. Under 15.B.X.V the planning committee needs to be mentioned within the brackets. 4C has been added.

With these changes the Parish Council resolved to approve the Standing Orders for 2026.

Proposed:	Cllr Wiffen	Seconded:	Cllr Sullivan
Vote In Favour: 10	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

8.2. Statement of Internal Control

The Parish Council resolved to approve the Statement of Internal Control.

Proposed:	Cllr McClintock	Seconded:	Cllr Wiffen
Vote In Favour: 10	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

8.3. Risk Assessment and Management Policy

The Parish Council resolved to approve the Risk Assessment and Management Policy.

Proposed:	Cllr Y Barker	Seconded:	Cllr Gathern
Vote In Favour: 10	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

8.4. Code of Conduct

The Parish Council resolved to approve the Code of Conduct.

Proposed:	Cllr Gathern	Seconded:	Cllr P Barker
Vote In Favour: 10	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

8.5. Action Plan

It was requested that wording around community and environmental projects also includes reference to the CEO. Digital Inclusion and Youth Voice projects should also be included.

The Parish Council resolved to approve the Action Plan with the suggested changes.

Proposed:	Cllr P Barker	Seconded:	Cllr Wiffen
Vote In Favour: 10	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

9. Election of Members for the following Committees and Working Groups

Finance Committee Cllrs P Barker, Darvill, Wiffen, McClintock and Tate	Complaints Committee Cllrs Darvill, Y Barker, Gathern, Tate
Staffing Committee Cllrs Sullivan, Wiffen, Y Barker, Gathern and McClintock	Planning Committee Cllr Y Barker, P Barker, Sullivan, Mercer, Tate
Environment Committee Cllr P Barker, Gathern, Wiffen, Herring, Mercer	Devolution Working Group Cllr P Barker, Wiffen, Herring, Y Barker
	Stronger Communities Working Group TBC

10. Review and Appoint of PC Representatives to Outside Organisations

Toke and Streeter Almshouses Cllr P Barker	Great Chart Playing Fields Association Cllr Gathern
Great Chart Village Hall Cllr Gathern	Bean Fund Cllr Wiffen
Singleton Village Hall Cllr Herring	KALC (Ashford) Forum Cllrs P Barker, Y Barker
Barrow and Spade Cllrs P Barker, Mercer	Singleton Spaces Cllr Herring

11. Finance

11.1. Items for Payment

A further payment was added to the list below to Helping Hands for £499.91. With this added, the Parish Council resolved to approve the items for payment in May and acknowledged the credit card payments for April. The list of items was checked and signed.

It was noted that the bank reconciliation and earmarked reserves will be presented at the next meeting due to year end administration processes.

Proposed:	Cllr Wiffen	Seconded:	Cllr P Barker
Vote In Favour: 10	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

Method	Items for Approval for Payment	Description	VAT	Total payable
Bacs	Kent Pension	Pension Contribution		£3,766.09
Bacs	HMRC	Employer		£4,588.97
Bacs	Salaries	May Salaries		£11,893.95
Bacs	ADM	Monthly support contract	£61.23	£367.40
Bacs	PMVA Training Ltd	3 Day First aid training	£240.00	£1,440.00
Bacs	Iona McBain	Music on 7th March 2026		£100.00
Bacs	Zurich	Insurance Renewal		£5,500.84
Bacs	Singleton Spaces	Education activities		£1,500.00
Bacs	Micheldever Tyre Services Protyre Victoria Road	Van MOT	£127.59	£815.51
Bacs	Integrating Solutions LTD	Photo Copier	£539.00	£3,234.00
Bacs	Zurich	Building Insurance -SEC		£2,090.61
Bacs	Lister Wilder	Harness	£25.00	£149.99
Bacs	Lister Wilder	Ear Defenders	£5.72	£34.20
Bacs	MKM	Equipment for the steward	£22.29	£133.72
Bacs	MKM	Equipment for the steward	£9.10	£54.60
Bacs	MKM	Dewalt Jigsaw cutter	£46.85	£281.10
Bacs	KCS Education	Stationery	£12.37	£74.23
Bacs	Chilmington Management Organisation	Venue Hire: Parish meeting 13th April		£35.00
Bacs	Mower Plant Service Limited	Honda mower	£82.50	£495.00
Comments:		SUBTOTAL	£1,110.42	
		TOTAL		£36,555.21

PREVIOUS PAYMENT FOR INFORMATION

DATE OF PAYMENT	PAYMENT METHOD	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
08/04/26	Bacs	£243.36	Branded water bottle

11.2. Budget Line

The Parish Council resolved to approve the distribution of the designated budget to groups for the 2026-2027 financial year.

Proposed:	Cllr McClintock	Seconded:	Cllr Wiffen
Vote In Favour: 10	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

11.3. Banking Arrangements

Cllr Darvill updated the Parish Council on the plan to move money to various building societies to maximise interest earned on reserves money.

11.4. Insurance

The Parish Council resolved to approve the insurance renewal.

Proposed:	Cllr Wiffen	Seconded:	Cllr Darvill
Vote In Favour: 10	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

11.5. Parish Assets

It was noted that the Parish Stewards inspect all assets weekly, and maintenance is scheduled where needed.

11.6. Music Lab

A brief description of the recent workshop and the ones proposed was given. It was agreed that those who have already taken part should not be able to access further courses. The Parish Council resolved to approve the workshops. The Clerk will seek further financial assistance towards this project.

Proposed:	Cllr Wiffen	Seconded:	Cllr P Barker
Vote In Favour: 10	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

11.7. Horse Structure

Following a recent letter from KCC, a discussion took place on the current state of the structure. It was decided that the cost of making it safe, and to continue to maintain it would be too great a cost for the Parish Council. Cllr Y Barker counter proposed that the wooden people stay within the community.

The Parish Council resolved not to take on ownership of the horse structure. Cllr Y Barker wished to be named as voting against this decision.

Proposed:	Cllr Darvill	Seconded:	Cllr Gathern
Vote In Favour: 6	Vote Against: 1 YB	Abstain: 3	MOTION CARRIED

12. Reports from Borough Councillors and other organisations

12.1. Cllr Bill Barrett – Singleton East Ward

Not present. No report received.

12.2. Cllrs Jessamy Blanford – Weald Central Ward

Cllr Blanford is keeping abreast of Chilmington progress and the WWTW. Nothing else to report.

12.3. Cllr Sally Gathern- Singleton West Ward

Cllr S Gathern has attended another Active Travel steering group meeting. KCC representatives will join the next meeting.

Cllr S Gathern recently watched the People's Emergency Briefing film about climate change. She has asked ABC to show it at the Ashford Cinema as she feels it is very important that as many people as possible view the film. Cllr S Gathern attended the Mayors curry night raising funds for MND and Alzheimer's charities.

Cllr S Gathern has reported a fly tipped fridge freezer in Goldwell Lane. She also asked Cllr Blanford to follow up on her reports that the public bin next to the allotments is broken as it still hasn't been repaired.

12.4. Cllr Clive Hallett - Washford Ward

Not present. Report below.

My apologies once more for being unable to attend your monthly meeting.

Apart from Ashford Borough items likely to be covered separately by my fellow Borough Councillors, please see some items below.

Dirt Bikes in Joy Woods and Adjacent Roads - I have received an email from a resident who together with his neighbours are being "plagued by noise and aggression" from riders of dirt bikes in Washford in roads and woods adjacent to Knoll Lane. Whilst these woods are not in Singleton South, they are used by many local residents, and I thought worthwhile bringing to your attention.

I have reported this to CSU and Peter New and our local PC Matt Potticary rang me with the following feedback to residents:

- He has been aware of the problem, since we contacted him previously back in September;

- Please encourage residents to report incidents as they are taking place - if police are in the immediate vicinity and able to respond they will.
- If it is at all possible to provide descriptions, bike number plates etc, this can assist in following up after the event
- They are dealing with similar issues on the Stanhope Estate, recently confiscating bikes, and the problem would appear now to have spilled over to Washford.

This was also echoed in a response from Peter New, emphasising the importance of raising such incidents with the police promptly.

Council Officers were contacted previously regarding installing barriers at key points to prevent motorbike access, but we were informed that this is not possible. I am following up on the suggestion of installing CCTV cameras to try and identify the individuals and bikes being used. (I note that mobile cameras have been in use for traffic recently).

Ashford Almshouses - In addition to the above, I have represented Ashford Borough Council as a Trustee on recent meetings of The Ashford Almshouses Charity and the Ashford Parish Charity and we are conducting interviews tomorrow for a property that has come available.

Internal Drainage Board - I am one of the Councillors who are on the Internal Drainage Board and will be part of the Internal Audit Team reviewing this year's audit at the end of the month.

Ashford Allotment Society AGM, 19th May - Finally I am participating in the discussions between the Ashford Allotment Society and ABC on a proposed application for the AAS to take over the management of the 10 sites currently falling under the auspices of ABC. This will be voted upon at the AGM.

13. Reports from County Councillors

13.1. Cllr Jeremy Eustace – Ashford Rural West

Not present. No report given.

13.2. Cllr Nick Wibberley – Ashford South

Not present. Report below.

Chilmington School access case – This is with Peter Osborne who is the cabinet member for highways and also the director for transport so hopefully will have positive news soon.

In the process of donating £1500 to Great Chart Cricket Club

Reporting more potholes this weekend.

I have a balance of approx. £4500 left in grant funding

14. Clerk's Report and Update on Issues not Listed Elsewhere on the Agenda

The report was shown to the room and can be seen at Appendix Three. It was reported that reports from staff and residents for the apprentice Bea have all been very positive.

15. Correspondence

A letter from Singleton and Great Chart Pre School thanking the Parish Council for the grant funding for the new garden house.

16. Items for Information or Agenda for Next Meeting

None

17. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next scheduled Council Meeting will be held on Monday, 8th June 2026 at **Singleton Village Hall** starting at 7.30 pm. The Annual Meeting of the Electors will be held on **Monday 18th May 2026** starting at 7.00 pm at **Great Chart Village Hall**

The meeting ended at 21:45pm.

Signed as a true record by:

Cllr Wiffen _____

Date: _____

Planning Comments

April

PA/2026/0607

Chatsworth, Singleton Road, Great Chart, TN23 3BA

Single storey rear extension with roof lantern and changes to first floor fenestration on the rear elevation; following demolition of the existing conservatory and removal of raised decking

There were no planning related concerns, and the committee resolved to support the application.

Planning Decisions

April

PA/2025/2340

24, Bull Bridge Way, Chilmington Green, TN23 8AH

Single-storey rear extension

PC: Support

ABC: Approve

PA/2026/0038

62 Swaffer Way, Singleton, Ashford, TN23 5JE

Lawful development certificate (Proposed) Loft conversion

PC: Support

ABC: Development is Lawful

Appendix Two

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICER REPORT

MAY 2026



Work Undertaken in April 2026

I attended my first Ashford Dementia Forum at Age UK in Farrow Court to discuss making Ashford 'Dementia Friendly'. Later, Cllr Liz Wright and I visited Singleton Shopping Centre, asking the shops there to join in the mission to become dementia friendly; all agreed pending head office approval. I've also planned a Coffee, Chat, and Craft event on 20th May at Grow19 café for Dementia Awareness Week, with donations supporting Age UK Ashford's work with people affected by dementia.

I met with a resident from Chilmington to discuss how the parish council can better engage with local residents. We plan another meeting soon, including other residents and the Chilmington Management Organisation.

This month, the da BASE music workshop took place. Six young people worked together to create their own song including lyrics and a video. We were thrilled with the quality of their work. Everyone enjoyed themselves and learned new skills. One parent shared, *'My daughter had a great time, became much more confident and really enjoyed learning new skills. The staff were wonderful and friendly. I'd highly recommend it and hope my daughter can continue exploring in this area.'* This feedback highlighted how valuable these workshops are, and we hope to run more later in the year.

I was invited to attend a meeting with the Singleton Community Church leadership team. We explored how we could collaborate, given our mutual aim to support and connect with residents. I explained that our Residents Needs Survey has launched (with 40 responses so far) and that I would share results once ready. Ani, Paula, and I have been actively promoting the survey by speaking directly with residents, which has increased participation. We'll continue these efforts over the coming months.

I met with Cllr Sally Gatherer to further develop our idea of holding an interactive session at the Big Lunch on 12th July, reading *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* to children. Since this is the Year of Reading, we felt it's crucial to encourage children to read. I've contacted Ashford Library, which is likely to get involved as well.

I also invited the Headcorn Community Liaison Officer to visit our parish. Ani and I discussed our recent work, then I gave him a tour. He was impressed and said he would take some ideas back to Headcorn.

Lastly, I completed a three-day first aid course alongside other parish council staff and councillors. Our accreditation lasts for three years – a very useful tool to have.

Going forward....

In the next few weeks and months, work will concentrate on inclusive events and understanding residents' needs.

On 28th - 29th May, 'Our Community - From the Heart' will be hosted in recognition of National Creativity Day. Residents are invited to decorate wooden hearts to be displayed on the community tree as a symbol of unity.

From 1st June to 7th June, Volunteers Week will be observed. Several local volunteers have been asked to provide a piece about their roles and motivations, which will be shared via our social media channels. This initiative aims to recognise and celebrate the valuable contributions made by these individuals.

On 13th June, coinciding with the basketball tournament, a Father's Day Event will take place at Cuckoo Park; further details will be provided in due course.

A community day is scheduled for 30th July at Singleton Lake. Confirmed attendees include Friends of Singleton Lake, Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, the Environment Agency, KCC Wardens, Ashford Borough Council, and Neighbourhood Watch. Flora, the Singleton Giant, will also make an appearance. Responses from additional partners are pending. This event is intended to highlight the significance of Singleton Lake and to how we need to respect and look after it.

Parish Councillors are encouraged to support these upcoming events, which present valuable opportunities to engage with residents.

As always, residents and parish councillors are encouraged to get in touch with thoughts, ideas or questions – community input remains at the heart of everything we do.

Clerk's Report – May



Welcome to the May meeting.

Apprentice

Bea is scheduled to attend a brush cutter course that will boost her confidence and provide valuable practice throughout the summer. She has participated in several study days, receiving positive feedback from assessors. Additionally, Bea completed a first aid course. Her progress so far has been impressive.

Upcoming Events:

We have several events coming up over the next few months. These are advertised on our social media channels. Please share and like our posts to help us reach a wider audience. If you would like to help at any of these events just let us know.

- Basketball training and end of tournament (ongoing) This has been very well received and nearly 20 young people are taking part in the training.
- On 28th & 29 May we will be celebrating creativity.

Printer: I am pleased to report it that the new Sharp printer has been installed.

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:

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](#).

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 like and share our posts on social media so it can reach a wider audience. If you are on Facebook, Instagram or Tik Tok ensure you give us a like and follow us 😊

Social Media Engagement Report

Between February 2026 - April 2026