



Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 08th June 2026 Singleton Village Hall at 7.30pm **MINUTES**

Councillors Present:	Cllrs P Barker, Y Barker, Gathern (left at Item 7.1), Herring, Mercer, Sullivan, Wiffen
Number of Seats	11 (1 vacancy)
Number of Cllrs Present	7
Number of Cllrs Absent	3
Also Present:	Aniko Szocs (Clerk), Paula Cowperthwaite (Deputy Clerk), Catherine Stevens (CEO), Cllr Barrett (ABC), Cllr Wibberley (KCC) and 12 members of public.

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllrs Darvill, McClintock and Tate.

Cllr Blanford (ABC), Cllr Sally Gathern, Cllr Eustace (KCC).

The Parish Council resolved to accept the apologies for absence.

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

2. Declarations of Interest

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

2.1. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None

2.2. Other Significant Interests

Cllr Wiffen – Item 10.1

2.3. Other Interests

Cllr Y Barker – Items 6.1, 6.5, 6.6

Cllr Gathern – Items 6.2, 6.3

Cllr Sullivan – Items 6.1, 6.6

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

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

Cllr Mercer – Items 6.1, 6.3

Cllr Herring – Items 6.2, 6.3

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The council resolved to approve the minutes of the 11th May 2026 as a true record of the meeting.

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

4. Reports from Borough Councillors and other organisations

4.1. Cllr Bill Barrett – Singleton East Ward

In the last 12 months there has only been one fixed penalty notice issued at Singleton Lake. Cllr Barrett doesn't feel that this is good enough for an area covered by PSPO based on reports he is receiving from residents.

4.2. Cllrs Jessamy Blanford – Weald Central Ward

Not present. No report given.

4.3. Cllr Sally Gathern - Singleton West Ward

Not present. No report given.

4.4. Cllr Clive Hallett - Washford Ward

Not present. No report given.

5. Reports from County Councillors

5.1. Cllr Jeremy Eustace – Ashford Rural West

Not present. No report given.

5.2. Cllr Nick Wibberley – Ashford South

Cllr Wibberley is looking into improved lighting around the zebra crossing on Cuckoo Lane.

6. Reports from Committees/Groups

To receive reports from committees

6.1. Planning Committee

6.1.1. To receive reports on planning decisions.

A meeting was held last week and the minutes are on the website.

6.2. Singleton Spaces

The AGM will be held on 19th June at midday and everyone is welcome.

6.3. Environment Committee

A meeting was held and the minutes are on the website. Cllrs Mercer, Wiffen and Barker are due to carry out the next allotment inspection. The Tree Trail is due to be extended imminently.

6.4. Finance Committee

A meeting was held and the minutes are available on the website.

6.5. Devolution Working Group

A meeting to due to be held next week.

6.6. Parish Building

The Clerk and Chairman had a meeting with planning consultant. It was recommended that pre application advice is sought from ABC. It was noted that a letter of complaint has been received regarding the proposed building and the lack of consultation about it. However, the response will state that there are no definitive plans for the building at this stage, but extensive consultation will be carried out when appropriate.

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

Cllr Barrett walked the 'safe walking route' to Chilmington Secondary School on Sunday. It was 4.8km and took over an hour. Parts were dark and foreboding, others included fast cars and grass verges. It was not generally a suitable route for an unaccompanied 11-year-old. At present there are no public transport options available. The next intake of pupils is due to start in September which will increase the number of cars dropping off pupils.

A public campaign to launch a bus into Chilmington is proposed. A 5,000 strong petition would trigger a debate about the situation at KCC.

It was noted that the school was built before the housing development was ready to fill the school places. KCC knew they would be attracting children from outside the catchment area to start with and with Hodsons now in administration the bus route needs to be instigated as soon as possible.

A parent who attended the previous appeal meetings stated the route is not safe, and that the school have not supported their own students.
Cllr Barrett will arrange a further meeting within one month at Singleton Village Hall for all parents and interested parties.

NHW – Peter New noted a theft of mowers from Pluckley where the police were slow to report to him and he was unable to get a timely message out.
He raised the issue of supplying water to vulnerable people during periods of shortage – they need to be registered to receive this water.
He noted that there had been damage to the rescue equipment around Singleton Lake, and that he has publicised this senseless act.
He also noted that new residents on the Chilmington development are slowing down due to the administration situation.
There is a consultation due in June, for 12 weeks, in relation to fire service cover for the Ashford area.

7. Planning

7.1. Highway Improvement Plan

The Council agreed to include the request for double yellow lines in the Highway Improvement Plan and will be guided by KCC Highways on their installation should the scheme be approved.

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

8. Review of Policies

To approve policies and procedures

8.1. CCTV Policy

The Parish Council resolved to accept the policy.

Proposed:	Cllr P Barker	Seconded:	Cllr Sullivan
Vote In Favour: 6	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

8.2. Document Retention Policy

The Parish Council resolved to accept the policy.

Proposed:	Cllr Wiffen	Seconded:	Cllr P Barker
Vote In Favour: 6	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

8.3. Lone Working Policy

It was requested that reference is made to using Life360, and that under Section 3, if a person withdraws from a situation that is unsafe, that it is reported to help avoid a recurrence. It was also suggested that risk training is provided to help individuals assess levels of risk.

With the addition of these changes, the Parish Council resolved to accept the policy.

Proposed:	Cllr Sullivan	Seconded:	Cllr P Barker
Vote In Favour: 6	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

9. Grant applications

None

10. Finance

10.1. Items for Payment

The Parish Council resolved to agree the items for payment in June. The list of items was checked and signed.

Proposed:	Cllr Sullivan	Seconded:	Cllr Herring
Vote In Favour: 6	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 1	MOTION CARRIED

The Parish Council resolved to acknowledge the bank reconciliation and earmarked reserves.

Proposed:	Cllr P Barker	Seconded:	Cllr Y Barker
Vote In Favour: 6	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		£4,523.76
Bacs	Salaries	June Salaries		£11,744.43
Bacs	Singleton Spaces	Education Activities		£1,500.00
Bacs	Uprising	Churchyard maintenance		£360.00
Bacs	University of Birmingham	Module fee		£1,165.00
Bacs	JRB	Dispenser Refill Waste Bags	£50.10	£300.60
Bacs	ADM	Monthly support	£61.23	£367.40
Bacs	Procurement Services Digital	Printer charges	£11.52	£69.11
Bacs	Zurich	Insurance schedule update		£153.14
Bacs	Tuckwells	Mower maintenance	£25.58	£153.45
Bacs	Tuckwells	Ride-on mower check	£65.95	£395.68
Bacs	Tuckwells	Mower parts	£23.02	£138.07
Bacs	Great Chart Village Hall	Venue Hire- First Aid Course		£96.00
Bacs	Cllr Wiffen	Expense claim		£271.02
Bacs	Lister Wilder	Jerry can	£6.20	£37.20
Bacs	Vision ICT	Annual fee	£52.90	£317.40
DD	Three	Broadband and Mobile phones	£13.78	£82.68
DD	RAC Business	Van recovery insurance		£21.33
Comments:		SUBTOTAL	£310.28	
		TOTAL		£25,462.36

DATE OF PAYMENT	PAYMENT METHOD	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
05/27/26	Bacs	£8,699.37	S106 towards compost toilet

Credit card payment items for Information	Description	VAT	Total Paid
Account Numbers:19079376 & 55882568			
Chart Fencing	Fence post	£4.27	£25.60
Wickes	Hardwood Plywood (Wood to create trees for celebrating the community event)	£14.40	£86.40
Amazon	Dymo Tag refills	£2.78	£16.68

Wickes	Fence paint to decorate trees	£1.92	£11.47
Fixings Warehouse	Bungee cords and screw eyes	£2.58	£15.44
Sainsbury's	Van fuel	£16.67	£100.00
Halfords	Cleaning products for van	£5.44	£32.64
B&Q	Hooks	£4.02	£24.09
Fixings Warehouse	Steel washers and screw button	£1.44	£8.64
Sainsbury's	Unleaded petrol- grass cutting		£24.58
Google Play	What3Words application		£3.49
Sainsbury's	Refreshments for BBQ		£15.50
Sainsbury's	Van fuel	£21.67	£130.00
Amazon	A5 printer paper	£2.41	£14.48
Amazon	A4 printer paper	£3.00	£17.99
Purple Guide	The Purple Guide subscription- running safe events		£12.00
Morrisons	Refreshments		£8.35
Voipfone	Telephone line	£3.00	£18.00
Tesco	Team building event		£5.75
Aldi	Team building event	£0.91	£47.22
Sainsbury's	Refreshments		£1.25
Sainsbury's	Refreshments		£2.70
Home Bargains	Team building event	£0.66	£3.98
Asda	Annual Meeting of the electors- refreshment	£3.54	£71.08
Google Play	Life360		£9.99
Morrisons	Refreshments		£0.85
Total:		£88.71	£708.17

10.2. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025-2026

10.2.1. Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2025-2026

The Council considered Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 and approved responses of 'Yes' to Assertions 1 to 8 and 'No' to Assertion 9, as the Parish Council does not act as sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.

Proposed:	Cllr P Barker	Seconded:	Cllr Mercer
Vote In Favour: 6	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

10.2.2. Section 2 – Account Statements 2025-2026

The Council considered Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2025/26 and approved the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026.

Proposed:	Cllr Y Barker	Seconded:	Cllr Herring
Vote In Favour: 6	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

10.2.3. Internal Audit

The Council received and noted the Internal Auditor's report and recommendations for 2025/26 and confirmed that the actions arising had been noted and appropriate action taken, as advised in the report.

Proposed:	Cllr P Barker	Seconded:	Cllr Wiffen
Vote In Favour: 6	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

11. Community Engagement Officer

The Community Engagement Officer gave an update, and her report can be read at Appendix One.

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

The Clerk’s Report was shown to the room and can be read at Appendix Two.

13. Correspondence

- The letter referred to in Item 6.6.

14. Items for Information or Agenda for Next Meeting

To receive items of information from members and/or for inclusion on next agenda.

- An update on any outstanding s106 monies
- Resilience planning (September)

15. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next scheduled Council Meeting will be held on Monday, **13th July 2026** at **Chilmington Cabin** starting at 7.30 pm.

The meeting ended at 21:15pm.

Signed as a true record by:

Cllr Wiffen _____

Date: _____

Appendix One

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICER REPORT



JUNE 2026

I am pleased to report that at the beginning of May I successfully passed my six-month probation. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Councillors, the Clerk and Deputy Clerk, and the Stewards for their support, assistance and encouragement since I joined the Council in November. I am very grateful and look forward to working together going forward.

Work Undertaken in May 2026

Hedgehog Awareness Week took place at the beginning of May. As part of this, Sonic the Hedgehog joined us one afternoon where we visited Great Chart Preschool and engaged with children and parents outside Great Chart Primary School. Sonic proved very popular and was extremely well received. We were able to distribute information about hedgehog care and our hedgehog highways initiative, alongside providing colouring and craft activities. This was a positive and engaging way to raise awareness within the community.

I was invited to John Wesley CEM Primary School to observe one of their playtimes in action. The school has recently been awarded Platinum Status by OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning). The visit was very positive, and there are hopefully opportunities to develop joint working in the future.

During May, I also organised a team-building event involving Parish Councillors, the Clerk and Deputy Clerk, and one of our Stewards. This provided a valuable opportunity for informal engagement and strengthening working relationships outside of formal meetings.

I attended a Mature Drivers Course delivered by Kent County Council for residents aged 55 and over. I attended to assess its potential value for our parish, particularly as estimates suggest that around one third of our residents fall within this age group. I believe this could be a beneficial initiative locally and have contacted KCC to explore the possibility of delivering the course within the parish. I am currently awaiting a response.

As part of Dementia Awareness Week, I hosted a Coffee, Chat and Craft morning at Grow19 Café. Attendees were able to socialise in an informal setting, take part in forget-me-not themed crafts, and access information about dementia. The event was well attended and raised £35, which was donated to Age UK Ashford to support their work with those living with dementia.

To coincide with National Creativity Day, two community events were organised where residents were invited to decorate wooden hearts. These were displayed on the beautifully crafted trees created by Stuart and Bea. One of the events included a BBQ, which was well received, and both events were well attended. One of the trees is now on display in the foyer of Singleton Village Hall for the wider community to enjoy.

Going forward....

Volunteers' Week runs from 1st to 7th June. To mark the occasion, I have invited parish volunteers to share short features on our social media. We are lucky to have such a dedicated group who give their time and energy to support the community. Please visit our social media to learn more about the valuable work they do.

During June, I have a meeting scheduled with the Customer Services Development Librarian from Ashford Library to discuss potential partnership working. I will also be attending the next Ashford Dementia Forum meeting.

In addition, we will be hosting our **'Get in the Game for Dad'** event on Saturday 13th June at Cuckoo Park. This will include a basketball tournament, marking the culmination of six weeks of training for local young people, alongside Father's Day themed craft activities. Councillors and residents are warmly encouraged to attend and support the event.

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 how we need to respect and look after it.

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 – June



Welcome to the June meeting.

Apprentice

Bea had her first assessment on Tuesday, 02nd June which was carried out by the Deputy Sector Lead for Horticulture and went well. During the assessment Bea was required to mow a section and identify plants. It is wonderful to see how much progress she has made and how much she has learned in such a short time.

Events:

Although you have already received an events update from the CEO, I would like to briefly highlight a few additional activities we are running or supporting:

Bikeability: This course will help adults build confidence when cycling. It will run over several sessions, including sessions on e-bikes.

Sustainability Awareness: This free course will take place on 25 June at Singleton Environment Centre. Participants will receive a certificate at the end of the course.

First Aid Course: The first session was held on 29 May. Although attendance was low, we hope to run the course again. It is a free one-day course, and participants receive a certificate on completion.

All of these courses are delivered by the Kent County Council Response Team and are designed to build confidence and support pathways into employment.

We also have a number of events coming up:

- **12 June:** Basketball tournament and craft activity at Cuckoo Park
- **13 July:** The Big Lunch event

These events are a valuable way to engage with the community. Since the pop-up café ended, they also provide a good opportunity to speak with residents. Please save the dates, follow us on social media for updates, and come along to support them.

Training:

Please check the Kent Association of Local Councils website regularly for training updates. If you identify a course that would support you in your role as a councillor, please book via their Eventbrite page. When making a booking, select payment by invoice and ask for the invoice to be sent to the Clerk. If you have any difficulty accessing the website, please email Laura Dyer at manager@kentalc.gov.uk for assistance.

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 😊

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