Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 09th November 2026 at Chilmington Cabin at 7.30pm MINUTES

Councillors Present:	Cllrs P Barker, Y Barker, Gathern, Herring, Mercer, Owens, Sullivan, Tate and Wiffen
Number of Seats	11
Number of Cllrs Present	9
Number of Cllrs Absent	2
Also Present:	Aniko Szocs (Clerk), Paula Cowperthwaite (Deputy Clerk) Catherine Stevens (CEO), Cllr Barrett (ABC), Cllr Blanford (ABC), Cllr S Gathern (ABC), Peter New (NHW) and 1 member of public.

1. **Apologies for Absence**
   Cllr Darvill.
   Cllr Hallett (ABC)

Proposed:	Cllr Wiffen	**Seconded:**	Cllr Herring
Vote In Favour: 9	**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
   None
   2.3. Other Interests
   Cllr Y Barker – Items 7.1, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7
   Cllr Gathern – Items 7.2, 7.3, 7.6, 7.7
   Cllr Tate – Items 7.1, 7.4
   Cllr Sullivan – Items 7.1, 7.6, 7.7
   Cllr Wiffen – Items 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7
   Cllr P Barker – Items 7.1, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6
   Cllr Mercer – Items 7.1, 7.3
   Cllr Herring – Items 7.2, 7.3

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**
   The minutes of the ordinary meeting held on Monday, 12th of October 2026 and extraordinary meeting held on Monday 19th of October were approved as a true record of the meetings.

Proposed:	Cllr Y Barker	**Seconded:**	Cllr Herring
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.

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Peter New (NHW) – several other councils have moved meetings to the same date as this one and Peter New appreciated the chance to speak first, he may also turn up later on other dates.
Peter New has met with the new Ashford Chief Inspector and with Matthew Scott, PCC. He is against the removal of the PCC role as believes that the police shouldn't govern themselves.
Peter New is concerned about the early release of prisoners. There is a helpline phone number available should any residents have concerns about any released prisoners – 808 168 9280.
The NHW 2027 plan will be with the council for the January meeting.

A member of public commended the Operations Manager on the excellent work on the War Memorial ahead of the Remembrance Service.

4. Safeguarding

None

5. Reports from Borough Councillors and other organisations

5.1. Cllr Bill Barrett – Singleton East Ward

Cllr Barrett has met with those involved in getting a management plan in place at Singleton Lake, this should be effective from 1st March 2027.

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

Cllr Blanford reported that there has been no real progress on Local Government Reorganisation for Kent.
The first ABC planning committee under the new planning process will take place next Wednesday.
The CMO are due to meet with the Parish Council next Monday.

5.3. Cllr Sally Gathern- Singleton West Ward

Cllr S Gathern reported that the property on Dragonfly Close has now been occupied by the new owners. The clearance work in and around the pond on Grey Willow Gardens has been completed and looks fantastic. She has written to thank Aspire for the work they have done.
Ongoing vandalism at the bus stop at the bottom of Singleton Hill remains a concern and has been raised with Peter New as a crime matter.
She also raised concerns about missing bins with Cllr Barrett, as they are in his ward.
Cllr S Gathern has been looking into the legislation around cars parking on pavements following a number of complaints. It is very legalistic, but she will continue to pursue the matter.
Although Cllr S Gathern is a big supporter of active travel, she has complained about the new ABC bike racks as it is very difficult to lock a lady's bike to the n shaped frame available, and impossible to lock a bike with a child seat attached.
The flags within her ward, discussed at the last meeting, have now been removed.
Several litter bins around the parish have been removed or vandalised and haven't been replaced. This has been reported to ABC.
Cllr S Gathern has now awarded grant money to the Parish Council lunch club, the compost toilet at the allotments and the SEC energy project.

5.4. Cllr Clive Hallett -Washford Ward

Not present. No report given.

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6. **Reports from County Councillors**

6.1. Cllr Jeremy Eustace – Ashford Rural West

Not present. No report received.

6.2. Cllr Nick Wibberley – Ashford South

Not present. Report below.

I had reports from residents regarding anti-social behaviour in Ashford generally. They were correct to dial 999 and i believe that proves Peter New's messages are getting out there which is great.

KCC held their first water resilience partnership, attended by Southern Water and Southeast Water. They have committed to provide more leak detection teams and a 5-day maximum turnaround for fixing visible leaks.

As winter approaches, feel free to speak to me with any issues regarding roads as there will be a real push to fix potholes early.

Flu vaccinations opened to all eligible residents from 1 October.

7. **Reports from Committees/Groups**

To receive reports from committees

7.1. Planning Committee

7.1.1. To receive reports on planning decisions.

The planning comments and decisions document was shown to the room and can be seen at Appendix One. The committee continue to work through the current changes to the new process.

Cllrs Y Barker, P Barker and Wiffen attended the recent parish forum. The differences of Schedule 1 and 2 planning applications and their processes were discussed and the slides will be shared when they are available.

7.2. Singleton Spaces

The SEC heating system and solar panels are being upgraded, replacing the old solar panels with new ones and replacing the bio fuel boiler with an air source heat pump.

7.3. Environment Committee

No meeting held.

7.4. Finance Committee

To be discussed under other agenda items.

7.5. Devolution Working Group

No meeting held.

7.6. Parish Building

A consultation event took place on 5th November and feedback will be collated by the consultants.

The site has been assessed through topographic and service surveys.

Another discussion took place on the pros and cons of the proposed new building.

7.7. Staffing Committee

To be discussed under other agenda items.

8. **Grant Applications**

None.

9. **Review of Polices**

None.

10. **KSS Air Ambulance**

Item postponed.

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11. Finance

11.1. Items for Payment

The payments list had two updates, the payment to Cleverly & Spencer was for £300, and the venue hire for Chilmington Cabin was £70.
The Parish Council resolved to approve the items for payment in November including the updates above, acknowledged the credit card payments in October, the bank reconciliation and earmarked reserves. The list of items was checked and signed by Cllr P Barker.

Proposed:	Cllr P Barker	**Seconded:**	Cllr Y Barker
Vote In Favour: 9	**Vote Against**: 0	**Abstain**: 0	**MOTION CARRIED**

Method	Items for Approval for Payment	Description	VAT	Total payable
Bacs	Kent Pension	Pension Contribution + correction (577.33)		£4,454.55
Bacs	HMRC	Employer		£4,708.99
Bacs	Salaries	November Salaries		£11,989.73
Bacs	Common Works	RIBA Stage 2, Project Management and Principal Designer mobilisation	£1,408.55	£8,451.30
Bacs	Cleverly and Spencer	War memorial - annual cleaning	£50.00	£250.00
Bacs	Lister Wilder	Chain loop	£10.53	£63.19
Bacs	Singleton Village Hall	Hall Hire - Parish Building Cons		£50.00
Bacs	Uprising	Churchyard maintenance		£720.00
Bacs	Chilmington	Venue Hire – 13 July 9 Nov		£75.00
Bacs	JRB Enterprise	Economy dispenser dog gloves	£50.10	300.30
Bacs	Great Chart Village Hall	Venue Hire- Highways scheme consultation		£75.00
Bacs	ADM	Monthly support contract	£60.93	£365.60
Bacs	Lister Wilder	Chain loop and worksafe delux	£19.97	£119.82
Bacs	Singleton Spaces	Education activities		£1,500.00
DD	Voipfone	Telephone and broadband	£3.00	£18.00
DD	RAC Business	Van - Roadside and at home recovery		£21.33
		SUBTOTAL	**£1,603.08**	
		TOTAL		**£33,479.11**

Comments:

INCOME PAYMENT FOR INFORMATION

DATE OF PAYMENT	PAYMENT METHOD	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
10/23/26	Bacs	£500.00	Grant from Cllr Gathern - Wednesday Lunch Club

Credit card payment items for Information	Description	VAT	Total Paid
Account Numbers:19079376 & 55882568			
Ashford Borough Council	Road Closure- Remembrance Sunday		£90.00
Sainsbury's	Halloween craft activity supply		£19.20
Wickes	Heavy duty rubble sacks	£3.00	£18.00

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Sainsbury's	Fuel for van	£20.00	£120.00
Electric Counter	Tough shell pro white bucklehead	£9.60	£57.60
Electric Counter	36W T8 Tube	£3.00	£18.00
Morrisons	Refreshment-Podcast workshop		£4.34
Sainsbury's	Refreshment- Music workshop		£14.25
Ashford Borough Council	Event registration- Remembrance Sunday		£42.00
Morrisons	Milk- meeting		£0.90
Wickes	Fabric pegs	£1.66	£9.90
Temu	Halloween craft activity supply	£5.58	£27.93
Morrisons	Refreshment - PC meeting		£6.15
SLCC	CEO membership		£316.00
Google Play	Life 360 application		£9.99
Google Play	What3Words		£3.39
	Total:	**£42.84**	**£757.65**

Great Chart with Singleton Parish NEW

Bank - Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 30 September 2026

Confirmed Bank & Investment Balances

Bank Statement Balances

30/09/2026	Metro Bank Current Account	113,807.24	
30/09/2026	Metro Bank Instant Access	3,756.84	
30/09/2026	Metro Bank Credit Card 6934	-100.04	
30/09/2026	Metro Bank Credit Card 8589	-403.18	
30/09/2026	NatWest Current	100.00	
30/09/2026	NatWest Reserve Account	92,339.27	
30/09/2026	Nationwide Business 1 Yr Fixed	204,329.52	
30/09/2026	Dudley	125,725.78	
30/09/2026	Barclays	233,147.23	
30/09/2026		100,000.00	
30/09/2026		5,671.51	
			878,374.17

Receipts not on Bank Statement

	0.00
Closing Balance	**878,374.17**

All Cash & Bank Accounts

1	Metro Bank Current Account	113,807.24
2	Metro Bank Instant Access	3,756.84
3	Metro Bank Credit Card	-503.22
4	NatWest Current Account	100.00
5	NatWest Reserve Account	92,339.27
6	Nationwide Business 95 Day	204,329.52
7	Dudley Building Society	125,725.78
8	Barclays	233,147.23
9	RedWood Bank	100,000.00
10	Barclays Saver Account	5,671.51
	Other Cash & Bank Balances	0.00
	Total Cash & Bank Balances	**878,374.17**

Earmarked Reserves

	Account	Opening Balance	Income	Expenditure	Closing Balance
305	Contingency Reserves	115,000.00	0.00	0.00	115,000.00
320	EMR - Cuckoo Park	124,185.87	0.00	0.00	124,185.87
321	EMR - The Viewing Point	32,288.00	0.00	0.00	32,288.00
330	EMR-PFA Play Park	20,000.00	0.00	0.00	20,000.00
340	Yellow Land Play Equipment	18,000.00	0.00	0.00	18,000.00
350	Parish Building	15,000.00	0.00	0.00	15,000.00
		324,473.87	**0.00**	**0.00**	**324,473.87**

11.2. Parish Building

Three quotes for a cost consultant were shown to the room. The Parish Council resolved to appoint Appleyard & Trew.

Proposed:	Cllr Wiffen	**Seconded:**	Cllr Y Barker
Vote In Favour: 6	**Vote Against**: 1	**Abstain**: 2	**MOTION CARRIED**

12. Great Chart Playing Fields

The transfer of the three land parcels that make up the Great Chart Playing Fields has finally been transferred into Parish Council ownership.

13. Operations Manager

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

14. Community Engagement Officer

The Community Engagement Officer report was shown to the room and can be seen at Appendix Three.

15. 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 seen at Appendix Four.

16. Correspondence

None.

17. Items for Information or Agenda for Next Meeting

None.

18. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next scheduled Council Meeting will be held on Monday, **14th December 2026** at **Great Chart Village Hall** starting at 7.30 pm.

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.

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1. **Staffing**

1.1. To receive update on staffing matters.

The Clerk has tendered her resignation.
Education costs must be repaid, with the matter to be discussed by the Finance committee.

The Parish Council resolved a last working date of 31/12/2026 for the Clerk.

Proposed:	Cllr P Barker	**Seconded:**	Cllr Herring
Vote In Favour: 9	**Vote Against**: 0	**Abstain**: 0	**MOTION CARRIED**

The Parish Council agreed that the Deputy Clerk would become Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer as of 4th January 2027, and that recruitment would take place to fill the Deputy Clerk vacancy.

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

The Parish Council agreed that the staffing committee will conduct staff review activities.

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

The meeting ended at 21:15pm

Signed as a true record by:

Cllr Wiffen _____

Date: _____

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