

CHART SUTTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held at Chart Sutton Village Hall Monday 26th January 2026 at 7.45pm

Present: Cllr Steven Waring (Chair) Cllr Robert Sagrott Cllr Valerie Underdown
Cllr John Killick Cllr Mike Brown Cllr Wendy Gatward
Cllr Kerry Dreger

Steve Hill – Parish Clerk
Public – 0

25/70 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Anne Dawes.

25/71 Recording of Meeting

The Clerk made an audio recording for the purpose of ensuring accurate minutes. The recording will be deleted as soon as the minutes are approved.

25/72 Councillors Declaration of Interest

None declared.

25/73 Minutes of 8th December 2025 Council Meeting.

The minutes were proposed and resolved that the Chairman signs the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

25/74 Open Public Session

No public in attendance.

25/75 Report from Borough Councillors & County Councillors

None Received.

25/76 Crime Report:

No reported crimes in Chart Sutton. - Two number plate thefts and a stolen car in Boughton Monchelsea.

- A new Police Constable, PC Lee Tallon, has been assigned to Chart Sutton. He will work alongside PC Harry Greenfield in covering the area, and we have been advised that this appointment is on a permanent basis.
- PC Arran Ostridge, who is local to the area, has informed the Clerk that he is able to deliver a presentation on AI and cybercrime. This has been arranged to take place at 11.00am on Monday the 2 March at the Village Hall.

25/77 Climate Change & Biodiversity / Clean and Green Group

Update from Cllr Sagrott – Nothing to report, as there have been no Parish Councils Environment Network (PCEN) meetings this month, next meeting due 2 February.

Update from Cllr Killick on Clean and Green Group – The village green area has been swept and cleared, the grass verges damaged by recent bad weather and lorries along Plough Wents Road have been trimmed and pushed back. It was suggested that a new advert be placed in the April Village News to encourage interest in forming a new, clean and green volunteer workgroup.

Initials

a. **Highways and other matters: HIP update.**

- A HIP Teams meeting took place on 16 January to discuss the outstanding issues.
- Emily reviewed all submitted requests and asked for more precise locations for road markings and signage, using What3Words references. These have now been provided.
- It was agreed that an additional sign will be added to the fingerpost to indicate the direction of the Village Hall, rather than installing a new sign on the existing Chart Hill Road sign.
- KCC confirmed that the “Shop on the Green” sign had been removed as it did not comply with current safety regulations and was considered fly-posting, as no permission had been sought. The sign has since been disposed of by KCC, who advised that no further signage should be installed until the appropriate permissions have been granted and any new signs meet current safety requirements.
- It was agreed the Clerk would contact a senior KCC representative to raise concerns about the growing number of parish roads now in disrepair, requesting a formal review of the condition and safety of several routes that have deteriorated significantly due to prolonged diversion traffic, unsuitable HGV movements, and recent infrastructure closures.

b. **New Defibrillator cabinet and accessories.**

The previous defibrillator cabinet was no longer weatherproof and lacked a functioning heating system, meaning it could not reliably protect the device during cold weather. It was therefore agreed that a replacement cabinet would be provided.

During routine checks, the defibrillator itself was found to be non-operational due to depleted batteries. Replacement batteries were ordered immediately and have now been fitted. The new cabinet will be fitted with an electrical connection to power the internal heater, ensuring the defibrillator remains fully operational throughout the winter months.

Resolution: It was discussed and agreed that a defibrillator is a vital piece of lifesaving equipment that requires ongoing professional maintenance, as units typically have a limited operational lifespan of around 5–8 years.

Resolved: Cllrs agreed that, once fully operational, a company known as Defib Machines, a professional AED service provider, would test and verify the device’s ability to function correctly when required in an emergency. They can also offer onsite training if required.

c. **Salt Bin Amber Lane/Back Lane.**

Resolution: It was discussed and agreed that an additional small salt bin was required due to the accumulation of surface water in that area, which could freeze and create a hazard.

Resolved: Cllrs agreed that Cllr Waring would investigate the cost of providing a suitable salt bin in Amber Lane, as the location has a high probability of freezing water during cold weather.

d. **Local Neighbourhood Plan.**

Update from Cllr Robert Sagrott. - The programme of presentations has gone well: all three meetings were well attended, giving residents a clear understanding of what is being proposed and the chance to ask questions. The agent for the fourth and final shortlisted site (land to the south of Plough Wents Road) has now confirmed that their proposal will not be taken forward.

Initials

A meeting of the Steering Group took place in January to review progress to date, discuss objectives, and agree the timescales for completing the various policies.

A public meeting will be held on 22 February for residents to view the Local Neighbourhood Plan in full. Our planning consultant, Alison Eardley, will deliver a presentation outlining the key elements of the Plan and the three proposed development sites. This session is designed to give residents the space to discuss the merits of the proposed sites openly and constructively. Landowners and developers will not be present, ensuring the conversation focuses solely on community perspectives.

Each presentation has been made available on the Chart Sutton Parish web site under Neighbourhood Plan – Upcoming Public Meetings. <https://www.chartsutton-pc.gov.uk/>

e. **Maidstone Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople consultation.**

Kent Association of Local Councils (Maidstone KALC) has submitted a response to Maidstone Borough Council’s Regulation 18C consultation, which focuses on planning policies and potential sites for Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople accommodation. Regulation 18C forms part of the Local Plan Review process and sets out preferred approaches for meeting the accommodation needs of these communities across the borough between 2023 and 2040.

Maidstone Borough Council opened the consultation from 27 November 2025 to January 2026, inviting comments from residents, parish councils, landowners, and other stakeholders. As part of this process, the public were also able to propose additional sites through a targeted Call for Sites.

Chart Sutton Parish Council supported Maidstone KALC’s recommendations and observations on the draft policies. All contributions from across the Borough will help shape the next stage of the Local Plan Review.

It is important to note that Regulation 18C is not the final version of the plan. Instead, it represents an early opportunity for communities and organisations to influence the direction of policy before Maidstone Borough Council prepares the Regulation 19 submission draft, which will undergo further consultation and independent examination.

f. **Maidstone Big Day Out.**

The Big Day Out will return on the second Saturday of June (13 June), and the ambition for 2026 is to make it even bigger, bolder, and more fun. The idea is simple: when people spend time in their local parks, woodlands, and open spaces, they begin to take pride in them. Where community groups are involved, these events also help grow a wider pool of volunteers who can support future projects and activities.

Groups interested in running an event are warmly encouraged to get involved. To register an activity or find out more, please visit the Big Day Out website: <https://bigdayout.info>

g. Shop on the Green new sign.

Resolution: To provide a Shop on the Green sign, Chart Sutton Parish Council will be required to apply for a licence from Kent County Council (KCC). As part of the application process, the following documentation and information must be provided:

Required Documentation:

- Public Liability Insurance with a minimum cover of £5 million
- Operatives Streetworks Qualification (SWQR) – copies of the front and back of the operative’s card
- Map with plotted plans showing the exact location and extent of the works
- Completed KCC Application Form (the Clerk holds a copy)

Resolved: Councillors agreed that a SWQR-qualified contractor will be required for future parish works. It was therefore agreed that Cllr Waring will undertake the necessary training to achieve SWQR compliance. Once the qualification has been obtained, an application for a licence will be submitted to KCC.

h. Grounds Maintenance – Resolution: Members noted that the 2026 quotation from Landscape Services had been received and that confirmation of acceptance was required.

Resolved: Councillors considered the quotation and agreed that the prices were acceptable, the council will therefore confirm continuation of the contract with Landscape Services for 2026.

i. Football – Bearsted Boys FC have played several matches, with full details to be confirmed for billing purposes. A number of other scheduled fixtures have been postponed due to adverse weather conditions. Concerns have been raised regarding water usage within the pavilion. The water supply must be turned on before and off after each session to ensure the toilets flush correctly. **Users are reminded to follow this procedure to avoid operational issues.**

j. Outreach Post Office Service in Chart Sutton – The Post Office has advised that there is currently no further information available regarding the start date or any additional details for the Outreach service. We will continue to request updates and will share new information with residents as soon as it becomes available.

k. Revised Resilience Plan – Resolution: It was noted that the existing document required an update to the Clerk’s contact details. All other information remains unchanged and is considered accurate.

Resolved: Councillors reviewed the amended document and agreed to the updated version.

l. KCC Grant – The Clerk applied to Kent County Council for a grant to support the purchase of a replacement defibrillator cabinet. The application has been approved, and the council is now awaiting the release of funds.

25/79 Reports from Committees and Representatives on other bodies:

Chairman’s Report – Norton Road has been flooded in two places; ditches have been cleared to improve surface water drainage.

Initials

Councillors Report

- Drains in Amber Lane are blocked causing floods
- Waste bins removed from BT Pole by Bus Stop in Amber Lane – Clerk to check with MBC
- Bin in Playing field also stolen – will be replaced by Parish Council
- Several Potholes reported in Chart Sutton – some have been marked with white paint.

KALC – No meeting took place as it was cancelled.

Clerk Report – Provided a separate document to Cllrs and provided an update on previous actions.

25/80 Correspondence/Consultations

- Request to display JIGSAW Project Poster on WEB Page and Notice Board – **No objections.**

25/81 Financial Resolutions

- a. Financial statement and bank reconciliation was received and approved by councillors. Bank reconciliation statement signed by Cllr Steven Waring and Cllr Mike Brown.**

Balances as of 31 December 2025:

Unity Trust Current Account:	£	811.58
Unity Trust Savings Account:	£	61,360.98
UTB Total Balance:	£	62,172.56

- b. To authorise payments made out of meeting and at meeting.**

Payments made out of meeting:

UTB Ref:	Details	Amount	VAT*	Total	Auth
135	EDF - pavilion electric supply	18.48		18.48	DD
136	Castle Water - pavilion water supply	9.26	1.85	11.11	DD
137	S Hill - Clerks salary December 2025	982.74		982.74	SO
138	Defib Store – Cabinet Inv 54989	539.00	107.80	646.80	SW & JS
139	Defib Store – Batteries Inv 54989	65.00	13.00	78.00	SW & JS
140	Unity Trust Bank Charges	6.00		6.00	DD
141	Hugo Fox – monthly website fee	19.99	4.00	23.99	DD
142	BT Monthly Broadband	30.18	6.04	36.22	DD
143	EDF – Pavilion electric supply	18.48		18.48	DD
144	Castle Water - Pavilion	9.47	1.90	11.37	DD
145	HMRC SDDS - STAFF	703.20		703.20	DD
TOTAL		2401.80	134.59	2536.39	

* VAT to be reclaimed.

Payments for authorising at meeting:

UTB Ref:	Details	Amount	VAT*	Total	Auth
146	MBC Cleaning IN 2703168	70.02	14.00	84.02	SW & RS
147	MBC Cleaning IN 2702621(August not paid)	70.02	14.00	84.02	SW & RS
148	NPOWER UNMETERED INV 14676877	64.34	3.22	67.56	SW & RS
149	Forvis Mazars External Audit Inv 2633084	420.00	84.00	504.00	SW & RS
150	Clerks Expenses December/Jan 2026	24.11	2.83	26.94	SW & RS
TOTAL		648.49	118.05	766.54	

* VAT to be reclaimed

Initials

c. **To note income received since last meeting on 8th December**

- *Unity Trust - bank interest Q3* £360.98
- *Wayleave Payment - Village Hall* £ 18.94
- *Warford Computers - Village News Advert* £ 90.00

d. **To review and confirm estimated budget statement for 2026 – 27**

Resolution: It is estimated that expenditure for 2026/27 will exceed anticipated income, resulting in a projected shortfall of approximately £2,625.

Resolved: That the Council notes this position and confirms it is content to operate at this level, recognising that current reserves remain sufficient and appropriate for the Council's risk profile.

e. **Confirmation of Internal Auditor:**

The previous internal auditor has agreed to carry out the audit for Chart Sutton. The Clerk is currently awaiting confirmation of the audit date, expected to be scheduled for April or May.

f. **To consider other financial considerations and purchases:**

- Annual Defibrillator Maintenance

Resolution: To consider entering into an annual maintenance agreement to ensure the defibrillator remains in full working order, at a cost of £182.50 per annum plus VAT.

Resolved: Councillors agreed to proceed with this purchase for one year and review.

- Replacement Waste Bin – Recreation Field

Resolution: To consider replacing the waste bin stolen from the recreation field.

Resolved: Cllr Waring will obtain cost information and report back.

25/82 Closed Session - Staff

The Clerk has now completed his probationary period.

Resolution: Councillors were asked to consider whether the Clerk had met the required standards and to confirm if the probationary period had been successfully completed.

Resolved: Councillors agreed that the Clerk had satisfactorily completed his probationary period and was confirmed in the role.

25/83 Items for the Next Meeting

- Cllrs to suggest items for next meeting agenda.

25/84 Date of Next Meeting – Monday 9 March 2026

With no further business the meeting was closed at 10.29pm

Steven Waring

9th March 2026

Signed..... Chairman

Date.....

Initials