

**MINUTES OF THE CHIDDINGSTONE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 8TH DECEMBER 2020 AT 7.30PM REMOTELY VIA ZOOM**

Present: Cllr J. Roper (Chairman), Cllr C. Bishop, Cllr Mrs P. Harris, Cllr Mrs M. Quirk, Cllr R. Streatfeild (from 8.30pm), and Cllr H. Williams
Apologies: Cllr A. Baker, Cllr P. Myers, Cllr B. Taylor and District Cllr Osborne-Jackson
In attendance: Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk) and District Cllr Mrs S. Coleman. County Cllr P. Lake attended the Open Session only.

As previously agreed the meeting was recorded.

Open Session

Report by District Cllr Mrs Coleman

District Cllr Mrs Coleman reported as follows:

1. Covid-19 positive cases in Kent up to 4th December have risen, apart from in Thanet, and all districts in Kent, apart from Sevenoaks, are above the UK average. Pembury Hospital is full, and the programme of vaccination has started. SDC has welcomed a team of 'Town Centre Ambassadors' to provide support and advice to businesses and visitors in town centres throughout the District during the current Coronavirus pandemic. Locally, the volunteers are working again, but only two families are seeking help. D.Cllr Mrs Coleman said that she is glad to be able to offer these families much needed assistance.
2. The SDC Local Plan – the Judicial Review was lost and SDC is considering an appeal. Massive costs were incurred in the preparation of the plan, and SDC feel that an appeal is warranted because the judge did not answer the question of what SDC did wrong. The Local Plan is already out of date so a lot more work is required.
3. Appeal on the track in Chiddingstone Hoath: The Officer has advised D.Cllr Mrs Coleman that the appeal on the track was part of the planning inspectorate trial BETA appeal system. As a result, officers are not informed of who the inspector is and thus it makes it very difficult to get updates. They have not even received notice that a site visit has taken place (although it may have occurred). Emma Gore submitted her appeal statement in August but, unfortunately, it is a case of waiting for the decision to arrive and PINs are running with some delays at present.
4. Planning application at New Tyehurst Farm: D.Cllr Mrs Coleman said that she reported concerns about the way this site has been marketed to the Planning Officer, and was advised that commentary surrounding the exercise does not provide formal evidence when assessing planning applications so she is unable to give this significant weight. D.Cllr Mrs Coleman said that, based on her experience of the Development Control Committee, sworn legal statements would be taken into account. However, the Planning Officer is not currently satisfied with the level of marketing details provided both in the public domain and in other information the agent has sent to her. The agent has agreed to provide further information relating to the marketing inclusive of value, details of those who have enquired, nature of enquiry and other information. Policy EMP5 is relevant here but it is difficult as it does not protect a specific use, it only states that if the site is proposed to change from a use that provides employment then 6 months of marketing needs to be provided. The added difficulty is currently the site benefits from an unconditional commercial use and so this is not an ideal situation as for example hours of operation are not conditioned. The Planning Officer has said that, given this, and taking into account the appeal decision which effectively would find the current proposal Green Belt compliant and compliant with the policies relating to the AONB, the marketing exercise is the key consideration in regard to policy compliance.

Report by County Cllr Lake

County Cllr Lake reported as follows:

1. He is continuing to push Michael Payne through Tom Tugendhat MP on the speed limit on the B2027 through Chiddingstone Causeway. The email received from Michael Payne states that the road is not used by vulnerable users and there are no junctions, which is incorrect. C.Cllr Lake said that he will continue to pressure KCC
2. C.Cllr Lake said that he attended a remote meeting of the Joint Transportation Board today, there was no mention of Chiddingstone, but there has sadly been another suicide on the bridge over the A21. Highways have agreed to install a barrier on the bridge.

3. At KCC there is much talk about budget setting for the coming year. KCC has had financial support from Central Government, but it's not enough. It is vital that KCC is able to protect the young and old, who cannot fend for themselves, but some painful cuts are inevitable. Members of the Council have already taken a reduction in their allowance, and it is difficult to see anyone getting a salary rise in the next financial year other than perhaps the lowest paid and those who have worked tirelessly for the NHS.
4. The EU transition period ends on 31st December. Kent's position as the gateway to Europe means that the UK's preparations for the end of the transition period relies to a great extent on Kent's readiness. KCC is continuing to review and refine their own preparations against a revolving landscape. At the same time there are winter pressures and Covid-19 to cope with. KCC is setting up an enhanced County Emergency Centre to try to ensure continuity of services ranging from Traffic Management at Eurotunnel and the Port of Dover to prioritising freight such as vaccines. KCC is also seeking emergency powers to enforce against anti-socially parked HGV's and heavy vehicles trying to cross the County on minor roads to avoid the queues on designated routes to the ports.
5. C.Cllr Lake said that he is sure we will come through this troubled period especially as we now have a vaccine. C.Cllr Lake wished everyone a very Happy Christmas and a better New Year than the one just gone.

Cllr Roper said that he, Cllr Mrs Quirk, C.Cllr Lake and the Clerk attended a zoom meeting with Kent Highways regarding the speed of vehicles along the B2027 through Chiddingstone Causeway. He said that he was encouraged that the request to meet came from KCC, and the conversation was also encouraging in that KCC has agreed to carry out a desk-top exercise and a speed survey before the end of January. It is hoped that the speed limit can be reduced to 30mph. KCC say that if traffic speed is too high, they will not be able to reduce the speed limit to 30mph without implementing some traffic calming measures, either physical or psychological – such as speed indication devices. Cllr Bishop said that speed cameras would reduce the speeding as drivers won't want to risk a fine and points on their licence, and this would raise revenue. Cllr Mrs Quirk asked who paid for the speed indication devices in Penshurst? C.Cllr Lake said that KCC paid for them and he is expecting KCC to pay for any speed reduction measures in Chiddingstone Causeway too. He added that Sevenoaks Weald Parish Council has offered to contribute funding on a like-for-like basis up to £30,000 to KCC in an effort to get their speed limit reduced.

Report by District Cllr Osborne-Jackson

In the absence of District Cllr Osborne-Jackson, the Clerk read his report:

"I hope Members are keeping well. Cllr Roper, Cllr Mrs Quirk, the Clerk and I attended a meeting with Richard Morris (who is Chief Officer for planning at SDC) to discuss Grove Close and I feel the meeting was beneficial. I thank everyone for attending. SDC has been providing a brilliant service and I am very proud of the hard working staff. I had a 1-2-1 with Sarah Robson, Chief Officer for Communities, and raised the graffiti tag "Owl" which keeps appearing across the District. I discussed the rural businesses with Sarah and I'm pleased SDC will advertise support for rural businesses on their social media channels. Tom Tugendhat has been supporting the rural communities in brilliant newspaper articles and Cllr. Peter Fleming, Leader of SDC, has raised concerns around Tier 3 to the key contacts. I wish all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year."

County Cllr Lake left the meeting at 7.50pm.

Closed Session

86. **Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr A. Baker, Cllr Myers and Cllr Taylor and members accepted their reasons for absence. Cllr Streatfeild apologised for late arrival. Apologies for absence were also received from District Cllr Osborne-Jackson.
87. **Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed**
None.
88. **The minutes of the Chiddingstone Parish Council Meeting held on 17th November 2020** were approved with the correction of the KCC Highways Officer's name to Whitney Gwillim. The minutes would be signed at the next open public meeting. Proposed by Cllr Mrs Harris, seconded by Cllr Williams and all were in favour.

89. Planning:

i. To consider planning applications received

- i. SE/20/03055/LBCALT: Lockskinners Farmhouse, Chiddingstone TN8 7NA - structural remedial work to timber frame, removal of modern timber first floor and replacement with new timber floor, removal of modern plaster board between rafters, replacement with insulation, fibre board and lime plaster infilled. Ground floor trial pit and removal of modern brick / blockwall and replacement with oak frame wall. Members supported this application.
- ii. SE/20/01171/HOUSE: 1 Eden View, The Village, Chiddingstone TN8 7AG - demolition of existing outbuildings and erection of detached garage with workshop (amended plans). Members supported this application.
- iii. SE/20/03242/HOUSE: 3 The Green, Chiddingstone Hoath TN9 7BU - proposed alterations to existing double garage. Members supported this application.

ii. To hear update regarding the development on land at Grove Close, Hampkins Hill Road

Cllr Roper reported that he, Cllr Mrs Quirk, District Cllr Osborne-Jackson and the Clerk had a zoom meeting with Richard Morris, Chief Planning Officer and Deputy Chief Executive at SDC. SDC will investigate where the boundary of agricultural use and residential use lies, and therefore whether the siting of the mobile home is correct. The stables, which do not require planning approval if they are not permanently sited, must be moveable or it is assessed that there is a degree of permanence. If the landowners wish to carry out a commercial enterprise on the land, ie a livery stable, then planning permission may be required for the stables as the structures would be part and parcel of the use. Cllr Roper added that the applicant is obtaining independent planning advice regarding the location of the mobile home. Cllr Bishop said that if there is electricity connected to the stables, then he considered that they could be deemed a permanent rather than a temporary structure.

iii. To report SDC notifications of planning decisions

- SE/20/02972/AGRNOT: Field West of Kilnwood, Coopers Corner, Ide Hill TN14 6LB - agricultural building for general purpose use and grain storage. Planning Permission Required.
- SE/20/01809/HOUSE: 27 Truggers Cottages, Truggers Lane, Chiddingstone Hoath - construction of detached timber framed outbuilding. Application refused. Reasons:
 - 1) The proposed outbuilding, by virtue of its siting and design, would become a visually prominent feature which would neither conserve nor enhance the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, contrary to policies EN1 and EN5 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan and LO8 of the Core Strategy.
 - 2) The proposed outbuilding, due to its siting, height and bulk, would have an overbearing impact upon neighbouring amenity causing harm to neighbouring outlook, contrary to policy EN2 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan.

Cllr Mrs Quirk reported that she received a request from the applicant to meet on site to try to come to some compromise on a new planning application in light of objections made by the neighbours and the Parish Council. Cllr Streatfeild, Cllr Mrs Quirk and the Clerk attended a site visit and discussed options with both the applicant and the neighbours. The applicant is not keen to compromise much, but she has offered to exchange the pitched roof for a flat roof. The neighbours have said that they may find that an appropriate compromise would be to lower the site, but this is not acceptable to the applicant because there is a large amount of concrete on the site of the proposed new outbuilding. Cllr Mrs Quirk added that there is an area of the site, to the side of the house, where the outbuilding could be located which would satisfy the Parish Council's and the neighbours' concerns. The applicant would need to remove a raised terrace. Cllr Mrs Quirk said that she read the Planning Officer's report, which is not completely accurate. It states that the outbuilding would be sited on an area of sunken ground behind an existing mature laurel hedge. This is incorrect as the ground is elevated, not sunken, and the laurel hedge is thin. The report also states that the location is in part of the side garden of the application site, but this is also incorrect as the location is at the front of the existing dwelling. The site plans are conflicting, one shows a straight boundary and one shows a boundary that goes off at an angle, this has not been clarified. This is not a planning issue but a neighbourly issue. Members agreed that it was a useful exercise to meet the applicant and the neighbours again, but as no compromise could be reached to the satisfaction of all parties, the Parish Council would not take this any further.

- iv. To discuss whether to go paperless on planning applications
The Clerk reported that SDC has asked if Town and Parish Councils are willing to go paperless as all applications are now submitted online. SDC print the paper applications for the parishes, but they are happy for parishes to go paperless in a phased way. Cllr Mrs Quirk said that she still likes paper plans, which are particularly useful for large complicated applications and paper plans are useful to show parishioners. Cllr Roper said that some plans are reduced down and are not clear to view online. It was agreed to ask to continue to receive paper plans for now.

90. Finance

- i. To hear details of the next PWLB payment due on 16th December
The Clerk reported that the next Public Works Loan payment will be paid by direct debit on 16th December £3,169.60.
- ii. To approve list of payments
Cllr Williams proposed that the list of payments be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Bishop and all were in favour. Cllr Roper and Cllr Myers to authorise the payments online.
- iii. Emptying Chiddingstone village litter bins
The Clerk reported that the litter bins are currently emptied once a week, on a Friday. There have been reports that the litter bins are overflowing. SDC has said that the cost to do an extra empty each week for 5 litter bins will be £9 per week or £117 plus VAT per quarter. At the moment, the litter bins are full of takeaway cups from the tearooms and in the summer the bins get full with ice-cream wrappers. Members asked the Clerk to speak to the owners of the tearoom to see if they can provide a bin for their customers.

Cllr Streatfeild joined the meeting at 8.30pm.

91. Affordable Housing provision in the parish

The Clerk reported as follows:

- i. Site adjacent to Chequers Barn, Bough Beech: Alison Thompson from ERHA said “Heads of Terms have been agreed with the landowner and solicitors instructed to prepare the option agreement. Once signed this will allow ERHA to commission all the necessary surveys etc to prepare a planning application.”
- ii. Site adjacent to Bassetts, Chiddingstone Causeway: Alison Thompson said: “I have a meeting with my Director on Friday to discuss the outcome of the pre-app with KCC Highways to discuss the risk and cost implications of achieving satisfactory visibility splays. He’s re-running the financial appraisal to see what scope there is. Savills (on behalf of the Redleaf Trust) have issued a deadline of 14 December to proceed to exchange of contracts on the site, so a decision will need to be made shortly.” Clerk to contact ERHA to see if there is anything that the Parish Council can do.
- iii. Site Opposite The Rock, Chiddingstone Hoath: none.
- iv. ACRK – free virtual workshop on Delivering Affordable Housing on Friday 27th November from 12.30pm to 1.30pm. The Clerk, Cllr Roper and Cllr Mrs Quirk attended this event. It was agreed that this was an interesting and useful taster event for information gathering for parishes who are just embarking on an affordable housing scheme.

92. Rights of Way

To hear update regarding SR540 in Chiddingstone Hoath in particular the slippery footpath surface
See Open Session above.

93. Highways

To discuss the speed limit on B2027 through Chiddingstone Causeway
See Open Session above.

94. Defibrillators

The Clerk reported that the new defibrillators will be installed on Wednesday 16th December in Chiddingstone Causeway and at The Rock in Chiddingstone Hoath.

95. To discuss the replacement of the wooden fingerpost opposite the junction to Camp Hill

None.

96. Aviation

Cllr Streatfeild reported that he will attend a GACC meeting on Thursday when he will receive an update. The Chairs of the Gatwick Noise Management Board, GATCOM and NATMAG have come together to respond to CAGNE and to set out how they intend to manage CAGNE's issues, concerns and correspondence going forward. Gatwick Airport Ltd has said that as the situation is so devastating for their business due to Covid-19, they are going to do nothing on noise abatement as they say that noise has abated due to the current situation. This is not acceptable to the community groups.

97. To discuss correspondence received

- i. Item 2: KALC: forwarding KCC's member briefing on the environment for November. "Every two years we survey Kent residents to find out their attitudes to the environment. The results of the 2020 survey are now in and show that Kent's residents continue to place a high value on our natural environment. 76% of those surveyed say that Kent's natural and historic countryside and environment are extremely or very important to them, with appreciation rising with age. 65% reported said that they visit Kent's natural environment once a week or more and 77% thought it was in an excellent or good condition.
- ii. Item 4: KCC - "Kent County Council is encouraging individuals who are interested in becoming a Kent County Councillor to participate in our Virtual Event. This will be held on Wednesday 9 December 2020 on Microsoft Teams. You will have the opportunity to hear from existing County Councillors and Officers who support elected Members; as well as the chance to ask any further questions you may have."
- iii. Item 5: Kent Police: "Matthew Scott, Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner, has today launched his 2020 Annual Policing Survey. The survey is run every year and gives residents the opportunity to have their say on what Kent Police's priorities should be and how safe they feel amongst other topics, such as finances. The results are used to shape the priorities in the PCC's Police and Crime Plan, which he holds the Chief Constable to account for delivering. The survey asks about the deployment of extra police officers, with Kent gaining a share of the Government's 20,000 uplift." The survey runs from 1 December until 5 January at www.makingkentsafer.co.uk."
- iv. Kent Police monthly report: Leigh & Chiddingstone: Regular patrols have been conducted around Leigh and Chiddingstone, and regular hot spots were targeted. Patrols attended after a report of poaching was raised, unfortunately nothing was found at scene but enquiries were completed to try and find the offenders. We attended several calls for fraud, so it is still important to stay vigilant around anything you may think could be fraud. We have received reports of possible drug dealing in Leigh, due to this report we will be increasing the patrols in the area. We would like to encourage residents to continue to report such behaviour, and where possible to add descriptions of offenders."

98. To adopt the KALC Community Award Scheme 2021

Cllr Roper proposed that the Parish Council adopt the 2021 KALC Community Awards Scheme, this was seconded by Cllr Williams and all were in favour. Clerk to advertise for nominations in the Parish magazine and item to be considered at the January Parish Council meeting.

99. To consider how the following Parish Projects are progressing:

- i. Community Garden
The Clerk reported that the steps down to the Chiding Stone have been covered with chicken wire in order to make them less slippery. The contractor said that a couple of the steps, which are made of sleepers, are rotten and wobbly, he has improved them but at some stage they may need to be replaced.
- ii. Rural Swathe Cutting Contract
The Clerk reported that the third cut will be done early in the new year.

100. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda

1. Cllr Mrs Harris reported that an email has been received from a Chiddingstone resident regarding the untidiness of the area beside the village hall driveway. Cllr Streatfeild undertook to speak to the resident.

2. Cllr Streatfeild reported that Chiddingstone Castle has organised a sponsored walk from Chiddingstone Castle to The Rock on Boxing Day. Tickets are available and all proceeds will be split between Chiddingstone Castle and The Rock.

The Chairman wished everyone a Happy Christmas.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday 19th January 2021 at 7.30pm via zoom.

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm

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