

**MINUTES OF THE CHIDDINGSTONE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 16TH FEBRUARY 2021 AT 7.30PM REMOTELY VIA ZOOM**

Present: Cllr J. Roper (Chairman), Cllr C. Bishop, Cllr Mrs P. Harris, Cllr P. Myers, Cllr Mrs M. Quirk, Cllr R. Streatfeild, Cllr B. Taylor and Cllr H. Williams

Apologies: Cllr A. Baker and District Cllr Osborne-Jackson

In attendance: Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk). County Cllr P. Lake attended the Open Session only. District Cllr Mrs S. Coleman and members of the public attended some of the meeting.

As previously agreed, the meeting was recorded.

Open Session

Report by District Cllr Mrs Coleman

District Cllr Mrs Coleman reported as follows:

1. The planning application for Triangle Oast was referred to the Development Control Committee but since then there was some discussion between the Planning Officer and the applicant. The applicant has agreed to withdraw the fence and gate from the application. D.Cllr Mrs Coleman said that she has now withdrawn her request for the application to be considered by the Development Control Committee. Cllr Mrs Quirk asked about the addition of the log store at the property and D.Cllr Mrs Coleman said that this aspect has been referred to the Enforcement team.
2. There has been a surge in youth unemployment and SDC is promoting West Kent Partnership's Kickstart Scheme. This initiative is working with local businesses to offer entry-level positions for young people. Kickstart placements are for a period of 6 months and are available through Jobcentres to young people claiming universal credit and at risk of long-term unemployment. The initiative will give businesses a boost in recovery and a chance to make a difference in a young person's life. See <https://kickstartwestkent.co.uk>. The Government restrictions allowing companies to support the programme are very tight and some good companies have been turned down. SDC has asked the Government to change the criteria so that more companies can participate and new advice is going to be sent out in April. Despite the difficulties, there are placements across 48 organisations. If you know anyone who can offer a placement please contact Wendy Wood at SDC.
3. SDC Cabinet has approved a 2.25% increase in the District Council's portion of the council tax for 2021/22, which equates to a £4.95 increase per month for a Band D property.
4. Age UK is struggling with funding after KCC gave funding to another organisation, this is really disappointing and may put the day centres in Edenbridge and other areas at risk. County Cllr Lake undertook to raise this with the Cabinet member for the elderly at KCC to see if anything can be done. He agreed that Age UK does a wonderful job. D.Cllr Mrs Coleman said that Tom Tugendhat MP is also going to get involved.

Report by County Cllr Lake

County Cllr Lake reported as follows:

1. Heavy vehicles carrying waste are crossing the county and dumping material on the lanes between Weald and Fordcombe, comprising of concrete blocks and other waste. The Police have been called on this issue. A farmer in Fordcombe has been given a permit by the Environment Agency to break up waste matter, but the Environment Agency failed to inform KCC or SDC, who are both having a difficult time trying to sort this out.
2. The County Council's portion of council tax will rise by 1.99% and there will also be a 3% increase for social care, residents' council tax will therefore increase by 4.99%.
3. KCC Highways have developed a plan in Sevenoaks Weald to bring vehicle speeds down. Sevenoaks Weald Parish Council offered Highways £30,000 to help fund any changes in speed limit. Hopefully Chiddingstone parish will be next on Highways' schedule for speed reduction. Cllr Roper advised that Whitney Gwillim at Kent Highways has been very helpful so far, and the Parish Council is working with her to see if traffic speeds in Chiddingstone Causeway can be reduced.
4. The Public Rights of Way network is getting well used during the lockdown and footpaths are now extremely muddy. Walkers must be encouraged to keep to the footpaths. KCC is offering footpath gates to landowners for £35, if the landowner is able to install it. Landowners may wish to change their stiles for more user-friendly gates.

See <https://www.kent.gov.uk/environment-waste-and-planning/public-rights-of-way/managing-public-rights-of-way/landowner-responsibilities-and-assistance> or call 03000-417171.

5. KCC is promoting the Helping Hands Scheme to help people who are vulnerable and need urgent support that cannot be met through existing support networks. The scheme can help ensure residents have enough food and supplies, can pick up prescriptions and make sure residents have someone to talk to. See www.kent.gov.uk/kenttogether or call 03000-419292.

County Cllr Lake left the meeting at 7.50pm.

Report by District Cllr Osborne-Jackson

No report as D.Cllr Osborne-Jackson is on compassionate leave.

Closed Session

116. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Baker and members accepted his reason for absence. Apologies for absence were also received from District Cllr Osborne-Jackson who is on compassionate leave.

117. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed

Cllr Streatfeild declared a DPI in item 119(i)(ii) as he is the applicant.

Cllr Taylor declared a DPI in item 119(i)(vi) as he is the applicant.

118. The minutes of the Chiddingstone Parish Council Meeting held on 19th January 2021 were approved. The minutes would be signed at the next open public meeting. Proposed by Cllr Myers, seconded by Cllr Streatfeild and all were in favour.

119. Planning:

i. To consider planning applications received

- i. SE/21/00151/FUL: Store Building, Redleaf Estate Yard, Camp Hill, Chiddingstone Causeway - demolition of an existing storage building and erection of a double car port with log store. Members supported this application.
- ii. SE/21/00180/FUL: Hoath House, Chiddingstone Hoath TN8 7DB - temporary permission for 5 years for 3 non-permanent glamping domes in the grounds of Hoath House. (Cllr Streatfeild declared a DPI in this application as he is the applicant, and he withdrew from the meeting into the waiting room). Members supported this application.
- iii. SE/21/00347/HOUSE: 27 Truggers Cottages, Truggers Lane, Chiddingstone Hoath TN8 7BP - construction of detached timber framed outbuilding. Members agreed to object to this application on the same grounds as previously as it was agreed that the proposal is still contrary to policy despite the removal of the pitched roof. The Planning Committee to discuss and approve the response.
- iv. SE/21/00197/ADV: Commonwork Organic Farms Ltd, Bore Place, Bore Place Road, Chiddingstone TN8 7AR - erection of two unilluminated freestanding entrance signs and direction sign. The Planning Committee to consider their comment after the Clerk has spoken to the applicant.
- v. SE/21/00382/HOUSE: Carberry Cottage, Tonbridge Road, Bough Beech TN8 7AU - rear infill extension, alterations to roof to increase existing bedroom, alterations to fenestration and external materials. Members supported this application.
- vi. SE/21/00398/LBCALT: The Rustles, Ide Hill Road, Bough Beech TN8 7PG - installation of four secondary windows. (Cllr Taylor declared a DPI in this application as he is the applicant, and he withdrew from the meeting into the waiting room). Members supported this application.

District Cllr Mrs Coleman and members of the public left the meeting at 8.00pm.

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

The Clerk reported that the planning enforcement officer at SDC has advised that he has heard from the landowner that planning agents are now involved and he is waiting to hear from them.

iii. Notice at Moat Lane, Cowden

The Clerk reported that a notice has appeared on trees at the Cowden end of Moat Lane, this is in Cowden parish. The Enforcement Officer at SDC is dealing with the matter.

- iv. To report SDC notifications of planning decisions
- SE/20/03398/FUL: Spokeshave Cottage, Hoath Corner, Chiddingstone Hoath - change of use of part of garage barn to provide ancillary residential and tourist accommodation. Application approved.
 - SE/20/02671/LBCALT: Triangle Oast, Hampkins Hill Road, Chiddingstone - demolition and replacement raised terrace and external ladder, installation of new timber fence and gates, new and replacement doors, windows and roof lights, associated internal alterations and landscaping. Listed building consent given.
 - SE/20/03703/WTCA Hoath Hall, Chiddingstone Hoath TN8 7DD - works to trees in a Conservation Area, ten Birches - reduce by 50%. No Objection Lodged

120. Finance

- i. To consider membership renewal to GACC: £10
Cllr Mrs Quirk proposed that this membership be renewed, seconded by Cllr Mrs Harris and all were in favour.
- ii. To approve list of payments
Cllr Mrs Quirk proposed that the list of payments be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Bishop and all were in favour. Cllr Roper and Cllr Myers undertook to authorise the payments online.
- iii. Finance Committee
Members agreed to hold a Finance Committee meeting before the March Parish Council meeting in order to discuss grant applications and the application for CIL funding.

121. Affordable Housing provision in the parish

The Clerk reported as follows:

- i. Site adjacent to Chequers Barn, Bough Beech: Alison Thompson from ERHA said “Chequers Barn is still with the solicitors, negotiating the option agreement; I’m chasing again this week.”
- ii. Site adjacent to Bassetts, Chiddingstone Causeway: Alison Thompson said: “The road safety audit has now been carried out and our consultants have produced the attached report. The results are quite encouraging and the report has been submitted to KCC Highways for comment. Unfortunately the initial comments from KCC Highways to the report are not encouraging and our consultant is currently debating a couple of points with them.”
- iii. Site Opposite The Rock, Chiddingstone Hoath: none.

122. To discuss the Sports Field in Chiddingstone Causeway

Cllr Roper reported that he emailed the landowner and received the following response from Charlotte Pearson-Wood at Batcheller Monkhouse: “On the issue of the Section 31(6) Highways Act 1980 Notices, as I am sure you have noticed the amount of people walking on the estate has increased dramatically over the last 12 months. The local people are blessed with beautiful walking on the footpaths around the estate but it has come to our attention that a lot of people outside the parish drive in to walk in this area. We are noticing more and more people straying away from footpaths and have had to give a number of written warnings to various people. Our concerns are (i) for the safety and security of the people walking on the estate but also our tenant farmers. We very often have forestry works, shooting and other farming operations taking place which mean that if you are off the footpath you are not safe (ii) to ensure that no paths (other than existing public footpaths) are established by usage over time. Secondly, the Cricket Ground has been owned by the family for a very long time. In early 2019 its ownership was transferred to Lafone Properties Limited, a family-owned company. An arrangement has been, and still is, in place with the local Stoolball Club as to the use of the Ground. It has been occupied by the Stoolball Club for many years. They manage and maintain the Ground. The family have no intention to alter this arrangement.”

Members discussed and agreed how to move forward on this matter. Cllr Roper undertook to respond to Charlotte Pearson-Wood.

123. Rights of Way

The Clerk reported that another local farmer has been very concerned about crops being ruined by walkers not staying on the public rights of way. Members agreed that this is a national issue.

124. Highways

- i. To discuss the speed limit on B2027 through Chiddingstone Causeway including traffic surveys and associated costs
The Clerk reported that KCC is ready to carry out the traffic surveys in Chiddingstone Causeway, but the Parish Council has asked that the surveys are delayed until lockdown has lifted
This will give a more representative result. KCC has agreed to 30 minute analysis intervals, rather than 60 minutes, this means that data is grouped into blocks of 30 minutes rather than an hour. This will show spikes for rush hour and school drop off/pick up times. KCC has estimated that there would be a cost of £9000 for the speed limit change including making a Traffic Regulation Order and the implementation of signing and road markings to accompany it. Should additional traffic calming measures be required the cost could go up significantly. KCC will fund the surveys but they have said that they will need to identify a funding source for the speed limit change and any traffic calming measures should they proceed to that stage. Members agreed in principle that the Parish Council will consider contributing towards a scheme upon receipt of an acceptable proposal.
- ii. To discuss the speed limit on Camp Hill, Chiddingstone Causeway
Cllr Roper reported that residents of Camp Hill and Charcott have raised concern about the speed of vehicles on Camp Hill, which currently has a 60mph speed limit. Members agreed to tackle the speed limit on the B2027 through Chiddingstone Causeway first and if that is reduced then work with Leigh Parish Council on a speed restriction on Camp Hill. Cllr Bishop asked that consideration be given in future to the speed limit through Wellers Town.
- iii. To discuss the replacement of the wooden fingerpost opposite the junction to Camp Hill
This is on hold pending the result of the discussion regarding sight lines at the Bassetts site.
- iv. To discuss the proposal to install wildlife cameras and CCTV notices in the parish and associated costs
Cllr Taylor's report had been circulated to all members prior to the meeting. Cllr Streatfeild proposed that the Parish Council proceed as per Cllr Taylor's recommendation with the Parish Council funding the complete cost of the purchase of wildlife cameras and CCTV warning signs which will be in the region of £600. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs Harris and all were in favour. Cllr Taylor suggested that he speaks to Mark Ansdell at SDC to discuss the installation of the wildlife cameras.
- v. To discuss a report of flytipping in Chiddingstone village
Cllr Roper advised that a report has been received of a Christmas tree left outside a house, which is not classed as flytipping. Cllr Roper undertook to respond.

125. To discuss the proposal to create a car parking area in Bough Beech

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council's application to SDC for CIL funding did not get through to stage two and therefore will not be discussed by the CIL Spending Board. The reasons for this are:

- There were a large number of applications which were deemed to have a greater priority
- Insufficient evidence was provided to demonstrate that the project had strong social, environmental or economic justification for the scheme
- Insufficient evidence was provided to demonstrate a strong link between new development and the scheme
- Insufficient evidence was provided to demonstrate partnership working
- The scheme did not form part of a planned, local, economic or community strategy to address the need for local infrastructure
- Insufficient evidence was provided to demonstrate clear public benefit for the scheme.

The response said that the Parish Council's application was strong on the following grounds:

- Sufficient evidence was provided to show other sources of funding
- Good evidence was provided to show that the scheme will be delivered
- Evidence was provided to show that all necessary permissions are in place
- Evidence was provided to show that the scheme has local support.

Members agreed that the Finance Committee would discuss how to proceed and to make a recommendation to the March Parish Council meeting.

126. Aviation

Cllr Streatfeild undertook to prepare a draft response to the Night Flight consultation for review by the Aviation Working Group,

127. To discuss correspondence received

i. Item 2: KALC: upcoming events:

- An introduction to planning, Wednesday 17th February 2pm.
- The Dynamic Councillor, Tuesday 23rd February, 10am
- Introduction to Chairmanship for Local Councils, Saturday 27th February 9.45am
- Delivery the Green Agenda for Local Councils, Tuesday 2nd March 10am
- Beyond Facebook – Making the most of the other Social Media Platforms, Tuesday 11th March 2pm

ii. Item 3: KALC: KCC launched a consultation on Vision Zero: The Road Safety Strategy for Kent 2020–2026 see <https://kccconsultations.inconsult.uk/consult.ti/visionzero/consultationHome>

The consultation closes at 23:59 on 15 March 2021. As set out on the KCC website, they are consulting on their draft five year Road Safety Strategy for Kent and their 30 year vision. 'Vision Zero' aims for zero, or as close as possible, fatalities on Kent's roads each year by 2050. To achieve Vision Zero, KCC propose adopting the 'Safe Systems' approach, which is rooted in the belief that every traffic death reflects a failure in the system, and that none are acceptable. The goal of Safe Systems is to ensure that these mistakes do not lead to a crash or, if a crash does occur, it is sufficiently controlled to not cause a death or a life-changing injury. KCC say that the success of this strategy will depend upon engagement with Kent's communities to work together towards safer roads, towns and villages. KCC has organised two free workshops on Zoom on Wednesday 24th February and Wednesday 3rd March both at 2pm. Cllr Roper and the Clerk are attending the event on the 3rd March.

iii. Item 5: KCC: Flytipping Duty of Care Campaign: "The 13 councils of Kent are working in partnership to tackle flytipping and waste crime. Flytipping is a crime with serious consequences and serious penalties, and is dealt with by the district or borough councils. Residents can continue to dispose of waste either by:

- Going direct to their local household waste recycling centre.
- Booking a bulky waste collection from their local district council for a small charge.
- Hire a waste contractor to dispose of their waste. Before doing so they should ask for a waste carrier licence, where the waste will be disposed and a receipt/invoice.

Each year Kent's household waste sites receive approximately 185,000 tonnes of waste at a cost of approximately £10 million to the taxpayer. KCC is increasing its investment in waste and is working on plans to open a new HWRC serving the Tonbridge and Malling area."

iv. Item 7: Census Engagement Manager - North West Kent Office for National Statistics regarding the Census Day which is Sunday 21st March 2021.

v. Item 10: SDC News Release: "Homeowners and landlords are being reminded of the benefits of bringing their empty properties back into use as part of National Empty Homes Week. In an attempt to help empty homeowners potentially save thousands of pounds and improve communities affected by empty properties, SDC is backing the national campaign which will run from Monday 15th February. Empty homes can attract vandalism, fly-tipping and other acts of criminal activity. These problems can often be detrimental to adjoining nearby properties. Neglected properties can cause decreased property values and can discourage investment to the local area. Since the launch of the 'No Use Empty' scheme run by KCC, over 6,000 properties in Kent have been brought back into use and over £32 million has been given in financial support across Kent. Homeowners are able to apply for loan assistance of up to £25,000 per property to carry out renovation and reconstruction work in order to bring an empty property back into use."

vi. Item 13: Kent Police: Oakenden Lane, Chiddingstone - on Tuesday 9th February between 3:00am and 5:07am, somebody has broken into two vehicles as well as breaking into an outbuilding.

128. To hear a report and discuss Parish Projects:

None.

129. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda

- i. Cllr Streatfeild reported that there is some builder's rubble in the Community Garden. Clerk to arrange for it to be removed.
- ii. Cllr Roper reported that current Government advice is that Town and Parish Council meetings should be held in person after 7th May, but this is subject to change depending upon further advice.
- iii. Cllr Bishop reported that there is surface water running down the High Street in Chiddingstone and forming a large puddle outside The Old Rectory. The Clerk advised that she has reported this to KCC and asked to meet the drainage engineer there to discuss.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday 16th March 2021 at 7.30pm via zoom.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.

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