

**MINUTES OF THE CHIDDINGSTONE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 19TH JANUARY 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. Streatfeld, Cllr B. Taylor and Cllr H. Williams
Apologies: Cllr A. Baker and District Cllr Osborne-Jackson
In attendance: Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk). District Cllr Mrs S. Coleman 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 update: *Staff shortages*: our frontline refuse services have been under pressure; 20% of staff have been absent due to illness or needing to isolate and festive waste was 300% up on the same period last year. Staff had to be diverted from other areas to help out but there were issues with collections in some areas. Fortunately, the service is operating normally again now. *Business Grants*: officers are processing payments from multiple Business Grant schemes and, as all have different criteria, they can be a bit confusing. Discretionary Grants from the November lockdown have all been paid and officers are now working on applications that have come in during January. *Volunteering*: the Council led volunteering groups have recently seen an increase in the number of approaches for help, although few requests are being made of the Chiddingstone volunteers. Volunteers were on standby to help with foodbank deliveries over the Christmas period as the foodbanks were under strain themselves but all are now running normally again. Help offered by the volunteer groups has now been extended until the end of March and a Volunteer Leads meeting will be held on Friday so that groups can share experiences and be updated on any issues of general concern. *Community Safety*: I have been following up on complaints made about the large number of people coming to the village who are not following the guidance relating to social distancing/picnics etc. and I have been pressing for more police patrols, especially at the weekends. I have been reassured that police are now taking greater enforcement action and are issuing fines. *Direct Community Engagement*: four 'Town Centre Ambassadors' started in the second week of December to work in Edenbridge, Westerham, Sevenoaks and Swanley and have been received positively by both businesses and the public. They will be in post until March 31st and have been installing hand sanitizer stations in the towns and providing additional support to the foodbanks and supermarkets.
2. Appeal on Chiddingstone Hoath track: due to the Covid pandemic, the average turn-around time for Planning Inspectors hearing appeals is running at 37 weeks. I followed up again on the continued delay on determining the appeal for the track in Chiddingstone Hoath and got the following reply from the Planning Inspector: “Unfortunately, we are currently working on appointing an Inspector and arranging a site visit to determine this appeal. You should be aware though that this process is taking longer than would usually be the case though as we are currently engaged in recovering work such as site visits and other public events for cases submitted much before 17 March that had to be postponed during the first Covid-19 emergency restrictions as well as allocating work that has come in during and since that time. It may be a while longer yet before we are in a position to confirm an Inspector and site visit arrangements.”
3. Family Fun Days: due to the pandemic, all Easter Family Fun Days have been cancelled but we are hopeful that some will be able to go ahead in the summer.
4. Event for Town and Parish Councils: normally all Town and Parish Clerks are invited to an annual lunch by the Council but, sadly, this can't go ahead this year. However, an alternative event is going to be offered and members of Town and Parish Councils will now be invited to an online Community Conference, likely to be held at the end of April. Topics such as digital inclusion and community safety will be included.
5. Event for Young Carers: the Council is planning events to support Young Carers. There will be an action day on March 16th, supported by Imago which will help young people into employment. Mentoring sessions will include help with CVs and interview practice. Videos will also be sent out to schools covering citizenship and young adult carers. A Carers Awareness week will also be held in June. If you are aware of any young carers who would benefit from this help please ask them to get in touch with me.”

Cllr Mrs Quirk asked about the timescale for the rollout of Covid-19 vaccinations in this area. D.Cllr Mrs Coleman said that there has been a problem with the number of vaccinations available but hopefully the situation will improve shortly.

Report by District Cllr Osborne-Jackson

No report from D.Cllr Osborne-Jackson, who is on compassionate leave.

District Cllr Mrs Coleman left the meeting at 7.40pm.

Closed Session

- 101. 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.
- 102. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed**
None.
- 103. The minutes of the Chiddingstone Parish Council Meeting held on 8th December 2020** were approved. The minutes would be signed at the next open public meeting. Proposed by Cllr Taylor, seconded by Cllr Streatfeild and all were in favour.
- 104. To approve list of meeting dates for 2021**
The following meeting dates were approved:
- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|--------|
| Tuesday 19 th January | Parish Council | Remotely via Zoom | 7.30pm |
| Tuesday 16 th February | Parish Council | Remotely via Zoom | 7.30pm |
| Tuesday 16 th March | Parish Council | Remotely via Zoom | 7.30pm |
| Tuesday 20 th April | Parish Council | Remotely via Zoom | 7.30pm |
| TBA (awaiting guidance) | Annual Parish Meeting | TBA | 7.30pm |
| Tuesday 18 th May | Annual Parish Council | TBA | 7.30pm |
| Tuesday 15 th June | Parish Council | TBA | 7.30pm |
| Tuesday 20 th July | Parish Council | TBA | 7.30pm |
| Tuesday 21 st September | Parish Council | TBA | 7.30pm |
| Tuesday 19 th October | Parish Council | TBA | 7.30pm |
| Tuesday 16 th November | Parish Council | TBA | 7.30pm |
| Tuesday 14 th December | Parish Council | TBA | 7.30pm |

105. Planning:

i. To consider planning applications received

- i. SE/20/02670/HOUSE and SE/20/02671/LBCALT: Triangle Oast, Hampkins Hill Road, Chiddingstone TN8 7BB - demolition and replacement raised terrace and external ladder, installation of new timber fence and gates, new and replacement doors, window roof lights, associated internal alterations and landscaping. Amendment to show internal layout / circulation of building including relocation of internal staircase, amended height and siting of perimeter fencing. Members objected to this application on the following grounds:

1. The proposed fence would be detrimental to the setting of this property. The property sits in a triangle between three roads within the Chiddingstone Conservation Area. It is an important building in the village and the proposed fencing would damage the visual impact of the property. The Applicant says that the fence would help maintain a clear boundary between the property and the surrounding highways. It is in the nature of this building to sit as it does and this is part of its historical value. There has never been a need to separate off the building from the roads for safety reasons ever since it was converted. A fence as proposed would only ever make a visual distinction, and would completely undermine the particular presence of this important building in the Chiddingstone Conservation Area.

The application still does not mention the addition of stock or wire fencing to keep the pet in. The fencing described in the application would not be sufficient to keep a pet in the confines of the dwelling.

2. The proposed rooflights on the sloping roof between the two roundels constitutes inappropriate development on a listed building in the Conservation Area and the Parish Council objects to this as it would have a negative impact on this important building in the parish.

Members were concerned that a wood store, with roof, has been constructed attached the north side of the building in such a position that it sits between the square barn and the round oast, undermining the important expression of the building type and adding something new and alien to the building. Planning permission would presumably be required for this extraneous structure on a listed building. There is room for wood to be stored beneath the existing and original gallery on the south side.

- ii. SE/20/03703/WTCA: Hoath Hall, Chiddingstone Hoath, TN8 7DD - ten Birch trees, reduce by 50%. Members had no objection to this application.
- iii. SE/20/03784/HOUSE: Polebrook Farm, Bore Place Road, Chiddingstone TN8 7AP - demolition of existing single storey extension consisting of study, office, 2 store rooms and garage. Erection of two storey and single storey extensions, alterations to fenestration and roof. Members had no objection to this application.
- iv. SE/20/03815/FUL: Lockskinners Farmhouse and Granary Cottage, Lockskinners, Chiddingstone TN8 7NA - conversion of existing building from two self-contained residential units to a single family dwelling. Members had no objection to this application.
- v. SE/20/03798/FUL: Hoath Corner Wood, Ryewell Hill, Chiddingstone Hoath - proposed new access for forestry use, including sealing up existing access. Members supported this application.

The Clerk reported that since the last meeting, the Planning Committee has submitted the following comment:

- vi. SE/20/03398/FUL: Spokeshave Cottage, Hoath Corner, Chiddingstone Hoath TN8 7BS - change of use of part of garage barn to provide ancillary residential and tourist accommodation. Members supported this application.

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

The Clerk reported that the enforcement officer has emailed to say “On speaking with the owner of the site before Christmas they again stated that the horses within those stables are their own and that the plan is for the stables to be moved periodically and are not fixed to the ground. They are however gaining their own planning advice from an agent on this and other matters and I am waiting to hear from them.”

iii. To report SDC notifications of planning decisions

- SE/20/02989/FUL: Land South of Puckden, Hoath Corner, Chiddingstone Hoath - proposed conversion of outbuilding into separate unit of residential accommodation. Application approved.
- SE/20/03055/LBCALT: Lockskinners Farmhouse, Lockskinners, Chiddingstone - 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. Application approved.
- SE/20/01171/HOUSE: 1 Eden View, The Village, Chiddingstone - demolition of existing outbuildings and erection of detached garage with workshop. Application approved.
- SE/20/02841/LDCPR: 1 Ryewell Cottages, Ryewell Hill, Chiddingstone Hoath TN8 7BN - Lawful Development Certificate for the erection of a detached outbuilding to comprise a home gym, games room study and shower room within the rear garden. Application refused. Reason: The development proposal would not meet the requirements of Schedule Two, Part 1, Class E of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) as the outbuilding is sited within 2m of a boundary of the curtilage and exceeds 2.5m in height.
- SE/20/03243/HOUSE: 3 The Green, Chiddingstone Hoath - proposed alterations to existing double garage. Application approved.

- iv. To hear update regarding paper and online planning applications
 The Clerk reported that SDC have said that they will send the Parish Council paper copies of planning applications but the validation team are working from home and are in the office 2 or 3 days a week. They will copy the plans – but not the hefty documents – and send out but there will be a delay in receiving them. The new system will reviewed in February. Town and Parish Councils are concerned about paperless planning, due to the difficulty in measuring and viewing plans online and also when open public meetings are being held it will not be possible to view plans in meetings without a laptop, projector and screen.

106. Finance

- i. To hear report of Finance Committee meeting held on 18th January 2021
 Cllr Roper reported that the Finance Committee met last night to discuss the 2020-21 actual versus budget figures and the draft budget. The Committee also discussed possible projects for the next financial year, including the Bough Beech car parking area and possible speed reduction measures that may require funding in Chiddingstone Causeway. There is still £1,800 in the grants budget for this year, and Clerk to seek applications for discussion at the March Parish Council meeting.
- ii. To discuss the 2020/21 Actual & Year End Forecast, and the 2021/22 Budget
 The Finance Committee were happy that the budget vs expenditure for this current year is on track.
- iii. 2020-21 Earmarked Reserves
 The Finance Committee agreed to recommend to the Parish Council that a new reserve is created called Speed Reduction Measures and £10,000 should be transferred to this reserve from the Other Projects Reserve. Members agreed. Proposed by Cllr Bishop, seconded by Cllr Williams and all were in favour.

Project	Earmarked Reserve at 1 Apr 20	Transfer to Reserves	Transfer from Reserves	Earmarked Reserve at 31 Mar 21
	£	£	£	£
1 Bough Beech Car Park	0.00			0.00
2 Play Area	5,000.00			5,000.00
3 PWLB Repayments	3,000.00			3,000.00
4 Election costs	300.00	100.00		400.00
5 Other Projects	17,155.00		-10,000.00	7,155.00
6 Chiddingstone Car Park	5,000.00			5,000.00
7 CIL	7,572.27	11,688.86		19,261.13
8 Speed Reduction Measures	0.00	10,000.00		10,000.00
TOTAL	38,027.27	11,788.86	-10,000.00	49,816.13

- iv. Finance Regulations
 The Finance Committee agreed to recommend to the Parish Council that the following change be approved:
- 4 Quotations for Work Required
- a Any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value between £2,500 and £50,000 shall be procured on the following basis:
- a specification of the goods, materials, services and the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - quotes are to be requested from three sources;
 - quotes are to be sent to the Proper Officer by a stated date and time;
 - quotes are then to be assessed and reported to the appropriate meeting of Council or Committee.
- b Neither the Council, nor any committee, is bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote.
- 5 Tenders
- a Any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of £50,000 shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender as summarised below.

- b Any formal tender process shall comprise the following steps:
 - i. a public notice of intention to place a contract to be placed on parish noticeboards;
 - ii. a specification of the goods, materials, services and the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - iii. tenders are to be sent, in a sealed marked envelope, to the Proper Officer by a stated date and time;
 - iv. tenders submitted are to be opened, after the stated closing date and time, by the Proper Officer and at least one member of the Council;
 - v. tenders are then to be assessed and reported to the appropriate meeting of Council or Committee.
- c Neither the Council, nor any committee, is bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote. Members unanimously approved the amendments.
- v. To set the level of the 2021/22 Precept
Cllr Roper reported that the Finance Committee’s recommendation to the Parish Council is that there should be a zero percent increase in the Parish Council’s portion of council tax next year. The tax base has reduced from 604.75 to 602.21 and therefore the precept would need to be reduced in order to keep council tax flat. The Finance Committee recommended that the precept be reduced from £41,500 to £41,325. The precept for 2021/22 to be set at £41,325 proposed by Cllr Williams, seconded by Cllr Mrs Harris and at vote all members were unanimously in favour.
- vi. To approve list of payments
Cllr Williams proposed that the list of payments be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs Quirk and all were in favour. Cllr Roper and Cllr Myers undertook to authorise the payments online.

107. Affordable Housing provision in the parish

The Clerk reported as follows:

- i. Site adjacent to Chequers Barn, Bough Beech: Alison Thompson from ERHA said “solicitors have been instructed to prepare the Land Option Agreement. However because the land is owned by a Pension Trust, it took a little time to formalise the instruction. I am hoping that we can now move forward and agree the Option, which will allow us to commission the surveys and reports required for a planning application.”
- ii. Site adjacent to Bassetts, Chiddingstone Causeway: Alison Thompson said: “As I think I mentioned, we were to be given a deadline to exchange contracts on the site but we felt that until we could resolve the matter of the visibility splays, we could not proceed with the land acquisition. English Rural agreed yesterday to commission a road safety audit and ask our Highways Consultant to produce a report for discussion with KCC. The aim is to get an agreement to use the guidance of Manual for Streets, with reduced visibility splays, that can be achieved using the Trading Estate land. We have been given up to six months grace to achieve this and will be instructing our consultant today.”
- iii. Site Opposite The Rock, Chiddingstone Hoath: none.
- iv. The Clerk reported that SDC has emailed as follows: “We know there are not enough affordable homes to help all local people in housing need. This is especially true in our rural areas. I am therefore pleased to advise a new resource is available, which should help us deliver new affordable homes. *A Kent Guide to Developing Homes in Rural Communities – The New Rural Housing Protocol*, is being launched on 19th February from 12.30 to 1.30pm.” The Clerk reported that she is booked onto this event and Cllr Mrs Quirk also undertook to attend.

108. Rights of Way

- i. It was noted that The Redleaf Trust has applied to deposit a statement under section 31(6) of the Highways Act 1980 and/or section 15A(1) of the Commons Act 2006. If approved, this will allow the landowner to protect land against the establishment of any further public rights of way and/or registration of the land as a village green. Members considered the implications of this notice.
- ii. The Clerk reported that an email has been received from a local farmer regarding the number of walkers coming to the parish and walking the footpaths. The paths are now extremely muddy and walkers don’t keep to the designated paths, but trample on the crops. There will be a cost implication for reinstatement. Members agreed that there has been an increase in walkers. Clerk to forward email onto Kent PROW as requested.

109. Highways

- i. To discuss the speed limit on B2027 through Chiddingstone Causeway
None.
- ii. To discuss the litter bins in Chiddingstone village
The Clerk reported that she spoke to the owner of The Tulip Tree who has been emptying the litter bin outside the shop. SDC does empty the bins once a week, on a Friday, but they have been suffering from staff shortages lately and maybe the emptying of the litter bins were impacted. Cllr Roper said that there has been an increase in litter on the lanes. Cllr Taylor said that he is hosting a litter pick on the first Saturday on the month for twelve months and his company has all the equipment. He has identified the right wildlife camera which could be purchased and placed at flytipping hotspots, and CCTV warning signs will also be required. Landowner's permission for the camera and sign will be needed. Cllr Taylor said that he will ask BBRAT for funding towards the cameras, and undertook to prepare a proposal for the cameras and signs. Item to be discussed at the February Parish Council meeting. Cllr Taylor said that there is no cohesive arrangement for reporting incidences of fly tipping. Members of the public need to be advised on how to report this properly. Cllr Taylor to liaise with the Clerk regarding the parish magazine.
- iii. To discuss the replacement of the wooden fingerpost opposite the junction to Camp Hill
This item is still on hold.

110. Aviation

Cllr Streatfeild reported that there is a Gatcom meeting tomorrow and a zoom meeting on 28th January at 7pm with GACC for Town and Parish Councils across the area to receive an update on aviation issues. It is anticipated that the HWCAAG will merge into GACC as the level of Parish Council interest in day to day issues is not high, but there are a lot of issues that need attention and GACC is a good organisation to take this forward. Cllr Roper, Cllr Mrs Harris, Cllr Bishop and the Clerk will attend the online event on 28th January, as well as Cllr Streatfeild who is giving a report at the meeting.

111. To discuss correspondence received

- i. Item 2: SDC - Jenny Godfrey, Community Projects & Funding Officer at SDC regarding a pilot project SDC has to help with recovery of both the voluntary and business sector in Sevenoaks District.
- ii. Item 3: KCC - The Sustainable Business and Communities Service at KCC and Royal Haskoning DVH are developing an Adaptation Programme and Implementation Plan for the county on climate change.
- iii. Item 4: Southeast Communities Rail Partnership - Sharon Gray, Community Rail Development Officer:
 - (i) the governments new cycling and walking strategy 'Gear Change' is now available.
 - (ii) dates for the Tonbridge, Redhill, Reigate line 2021 meetings are 2nd February, 18th May and 14th September, either on Zoom or in Edenbridge.
 - (iii) there has been an art project planned for Penshurst Station.
- iv. Item 5: The Tree Council – funds are still available to schools and community groups to undertake tree, orchard and hedge planting projects from November 2020 to March 2021. The Tree Council will now fund 100% of the cost, excluding VAT, of applications between £300 and £1500. Projects must be completed by 31st March 2021.
- v. Item 6: SDC News Release: An illegal waste carrier has been ordered to pay £437 by Sevenoaks Magistrates' Court following a joint operation by the Council and Police.
- vi. Item 9: Invitation to zoom public meeting event held by Edenbridge new Health and Wellbeing Centre on either Wednesday 27th January at 11am or Friday 29th January at 7.30pm. Tom Tugendhat MP will host two virtual meetings on MS Teams. Members of the project board will be able to give an update on the project and answer any questions.
- vii. Item 10: GACC: "The next meeting of Gatwick's Consultative Committee, GATCOM, will take place on 21 January. GACC plans to raise the issues detailed below.
 1. Night Flights - we will be arguing that there is no reason to "roll over" the current night flight restrictions for a further two years and that night flights at Gatwick (and elsewhere) should be banned.
 2. Noise Action Plan - following the review of Gatwick's slow progress in delivering its Noise Action Plan commitments we will be seeking to agree a deadline by which NAP activity should be brought up to date or the deficiencies referred to government for regulatory action.

3. We will be seeking to ensure that GACC's views on how Gatwick should build back better are properly addressed by GATCOM.
4. If there is an appropriate opportunity we will feedback that the new Noise Management Board's progress to date has been excessively slow and that its draft work programme largely fails to accommodate the views of community and environmental groups, and indeed councils. “
- viii. Item 11: KALC upcoming events:
- The Dynamic Councillor – Thursday 21st January 2021 – 6.30 pm
 - Getting in Front of the Camera – Thursday 28th January 2021 – 10.00 am
 - Using Facebook to Enhance your Councils Communications – Thursday 11th February 2021 – 10.00 am
 - The Dynamic Councillor – Tuesday 23rd February 2021 – 10.00 am
 - Delivery the Green Agenda for Local Councils – Tuesday 2nd March 2021 – 10.00 am
 - Beyond Facebook – Making the most of the other Social Media Platforms – Tuesday 11th March 2021 – 2.00 pm
- ix. Item 12: GACC: Parish Councils’ briefing on Gatwick Issues: “The skies around Gatwick and nationally are still quiet, but traffic levels are expected to start to increase rapidly as quarantine arrangements ease and the vaccine programme gets underway. GACC has been exceptionally busy on a range of local and national aviation issues over the summer, autumn and so far through winter. These include liaising with government on Gatwick's growth proposals, contributing to national campaigns on night flights and climate change, engaging with GATCOM, the airport's statutory consultative committee, on ways to build Gatwick back better and inputting to the Noise Management Board's work plan. Local Council input and support is essential if we are to have the best chance of protecting our communities from the adverse environmental impacts of Gatwick’s operations. We must also consider promoting the need for investment which increases the diversity and resilience of the region's economy and helps create jobs that are genuinely sustainable. We would therefore welcome the opportunity to brief local councils on key initiatives, particularly night flights and the airport's growth plans, and to hear your views on them and other issues of concern, and have arranged a Zoom briefing and discussion session for 19.00 on 28 January 2021. The meeting will include briefings from GACC Committee members Richard Streatfeild and Charles Lloyd. We hope it will form the first in a series of regular briefings for councils. The meeting is open to GACC members and other councillors with an interest in Gatwick matters.” Cllr Roper, Cllr Mrs Harris, Cllr Bishop and the Clerk are booked onto the event.

112. To discuss nominations for the KALC Community Award 2021

Members discussed the nominations and agreed who the recipient of this year’s award will be.

113. To hear update about the www.chiddingstone.org website

The Clerk reported that she is working with Vision ICT on the new website. Members agreed to display an online library of old photographs of the parish. If the photographs are over 50 years old there are no copyright issues, but the owner of the photograph must give permission. It was agreed that the Clerk will put a mention in the parish magazine asking for contributions.

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

- i. Community Garden
None.
- ii. Rural Swathe Cutting Contract
The Clerk reported that the third cut will be done shortly.

115. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda

It was agreed to discuss the cost of wildlife cameras and CCTV notices.

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

The meeting closed at 9pm.