

**MINUTES OF THE CHIDDINGSTONE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 17TH JUNE 2020 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

In attendance: Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk). County Cllr P. Lake, District Cllr Mrs S. Coleman and District Cllr J. Osborne-Jackson attended the Open Session only.

Cllr Roper advised that the meeting will be recorded.

Open Session

Report by District Cllr Mrs Coleman

District Cllr Mrs Coleman reported as follows:

- i. Coronavirus mitigation work has been ongoing, although it is now tapering off. District wide, the number of shielded residents receiving food deliveries has fallen to 633 (down from 788) and last week only 16 new requests for support from people self-isolating were serviced by local volunteers. D.Cllr Mrs Coleman said that last month she updated members on SDC's post-Covid recovery planning and now the District Business Advisory Board is up and running, town centre cleaning rotas have been stepped up to complement Covid safety measures implemented by shops and over 90% of government allocated funding for retail and leisure grants has been disbursed. SDC has also received 205 applications to the Council's £1.2m discretionary funding scheme for small organisations who fall outside the government scheme's criteria, these are currently being evaluated.
- ii. The Chiddingstone volunteer group is working well, only 2 or 3 requests are received per week. SDC is helping to get Sevenoaks town centre open again, and help in the villages is there if needed, including free hand sanitisers.
- iii. The litter bins in Chiddingstone are regularly full and although they are emptied every Friday, D.Cllr Mrs Coleman said that she is trying to get them emptied once more during the week.
- iv. Travellers are moving across the district, and landowners are advised to keep their land secured.
- v. D.Cllr Mrs Coleman reported that she has followed up an email about unsavoury behaviour in the parish but little can be done by the district council.
- vi. Cllr Mrs Harris asked if the Age UK exercise class is still running, and D.Cllr Mrs Coleman said that at the moment the classes cannot be held due to social distancing requirements but Age UK is sending out videos to keep people active.

Report by District Cllr Osborne-Jackson

District Cllr Osborne-Jackson reported as follows:

- i. SDC is trying to help the rural high street, and signs and hand sanitisers are available upon request by Town and Parish Councils.
- ii. The Rail Partnership is working with SDC and will publicise local tourist attractions, such as Hever Castle and Penshurst Place.
- iii. D.Cllr Osborne-Jackson said that he continues to be impressed by SDC staff who are working very hard.

Report by County Cllr Lake

County Cllr Lake reported as follows:

- i. KCC is under a huge amount of pressure, and the council is having to find £120m to balance this year's budget. So far the council has received £65m of support from the Government, which leaves a shortfall of £55m. If council tax was raised by 1%, the revenue generated would be £8m so, in order to cover this shortfall by council tax, it would need to be increased by nearly 7%. Council tax is under extreme pressure and KCC is doing its utmost to keep it at the lowest possible level, but it will be difficult.
- ii. C.Cllr Lake has used some of his members fund to help supply fresh vegetables in the food boxes for residents in need and to purchase some Google Chromebooks for children.
- iii. C.Cllr Lake said that he has had a long session with Andrew Scott-Clark, Director of Public Health in Kent. He is keeping the supply of PPE in Kent under control but the pressure for new supplies is still high.

- iv. Track and Trace is gathering pace in Kent and hopefully the rule on social distancing can be reduced from 2m to 1m.
- v. Kent has 510 young asylum seekers under the age of 16, plus 933 care leavers over the age of 16. All are determined to try and stay in the country. KCC has received some funding from Government to help, but not enough to cover the cost of caring for these young people.
- vi. A letter has been received from Stewart Wingate, Chief Executive of Gatwick Airport Ltd. It is sad for employees at Gatwick Airport who might lose their jobs, but the quiet skies in this area has been a bonus for our residents.

County Cllr Lake, District Cllr Mrs Coleman and District Cllr Osborne-Jackson left the meeting at 8pm.

Closed Session

- 16. Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr Baker and members accepted his reason for absence.
- 17. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed**
Cllr Streatfeild declared a DPI in item 20(i)(ii) as he is the applicant for this planning application.
Cllr Mrs Quirk declared a NPI in item 20(i)(v) as she is related to the applicant.
- 18. The minutes of the Chiddingstone Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 13th May 2020** were approved. The minutes would be signed at the next open public meeting. Proposed by Cllr Mrs Harris, seconded by Cllr Myers and all were in favour.
- 19. To hear update regarding the volunteer effort in the parish**
See Open Session above.
- 20. Planning:**
 - i. To consider planning applications received
 - i. SE/20/01220/HOUSE: Waterlake, Tonbridge Road, Bough Beech TN8 7AJ - demolish existing car port, greenhouse, store, gardeners room and brick garden wall, conversion and extension of existing garage / tractor shed, new greenhouse, tractor shed and walled garden. Members had no objection to this application.
 - ii. SE/20/01304/FUL: Hoath House, Chiddingstone Hoath TN8 7DB - temporary provision of 3 glamping pods and a semi-permanent marquee for weddings and events at Hoath House for 5 years. Cllr Streatfeild reiterated his DPI in this application and advised that he has spoken to his neighbours on both sides and explained that they should be better protected from noise due to the lay of the land and the distance from the marquee. He then moved into the waiting room. Members discussed the application and agreed to support it providing there is compliance to the Noise Management Plan. Cllr Streatfeild rejoined the meeting.
 - iii. SE/20/01183/HOUSE and SE/20/01184/LBCALT: Oakenden Farmhouse, Oakenden Lane, Chiddingstone Hoath TN8 7DE - addition of garden room (4.35w x 4.9 long) to NE corner of Oakenden Farmhouse. Lowering of floor in proposed kitchen area. Removal of window and brick wall beneath window to make entrance into garden room. Amendments to address PROW SR541 and SR441 and consent is given for the two planning conditions recommended by the PROW officer. Also further information for Conservation Officer including photographs and details of materials. The Clerk reported that this application has now been withdrawn, and therefore it was not discussed.
 - iv. SE/20/01526/MMA: Redleaf Estate Yard, Camp Hill, Chiddingstone Causeway - amendment to SE/19/00701/FUL to vary condition 2 to replace approved drawings for plots 1 & 2 due to proximity of plot 1 to existing garage on land at 6 Camp Hill. Members supported this application.
 - v. SE/20/01557/FUL: Scotland Barn, Watstock Farm, Wellers Town Road, Chiddingstone Hoath TN8 7BH - barn conversion to a six bed dwelling and associated curtilage and parking. Revised drawings which allow for the addition of roof lights to be set within the roof plan of the proposed new dwelling. Cllr Mrs Quirk reiterated her NPI in this application and she moved to the waiting room.

Members felt that this application would be unintrusive and the design is attractive. There was concern that the provision of a 6 bed dwelling is against SDC policy which shows a need for smaller units. However, it was felt that it would not be possible to easily convert this barn into two smaller units and members considered their comments to similar proposals in the parish. Two proposals were supported and one proposal was objected to but for reasons other than size. Members supported this application subject to it satisfying planning policy.

- vi. SE/20/01581/HOUSE: The Winery, Hampkins Hill Road, Chiddingstone TN8 7BB - construction of a small plunge pool within the garden, replacement decking with landscaping works. Members agreed to have a site visit, Clerk to arrange.
- vii. SE/20/01542/HOUSE and SE/20/01543/LBCALT: Triangle Oast, Hampkins Hill Road, Chiddingstone TN8 7BB - demolition and replace existing raised terrace and staircase, internal alterations, replacement of windows, small extension, relocation of oil tank and alterations to fenestration. Cllr Mrs Quirk undertook to look at the application in more detail and report to members via email.
- viii. SE/20/01648/AGRNOT: Commonwork Organic Farms Ltd, Bore Place, Chiddingstone TN8 7AR - steel framed lean-to. The Clerk reported that this application has not been received yet. Cllr Mrs Quirk reported that since the last meeting, the Planning Committee considered the following application:
- ix. SE/20/01165/HOUSE: Horseshoes Cottage, Tonbridge Road, Bough Beech TN8 7AT - demolition of an existing shed structure and replacement with a smaller garden room structure. Members had no objection to this application.
- ii. To report SDC notifications of planning decisions
- SE/20/00579/LBCALT: Lockskinners Farmhouse, Chiddingstone - internal demolition work/ alterations, removal of modern chimney, demolition of modern garden wall. Application approved.
 - SE/20/01080/HOUSE and SE/20/00993/LBCALT: Lockskinners Farmhouse, Chiddingstone - proposed adjustments to fenestration by removing later modern fabric. Application approved.
 - SE/20/00755/HOUSE: Mayhill House, Chiddingstone Hoath - extension to existing bedroom dormer window. Application approved.
 - SE/ 20/00754/HOUSE: Mayhill House, Chiddingstone Hoath - demolition of existing single storey garage, construction of new garage. Application approved.
 - SE/20/00907/HOUSE: Camphill House, Camp Hill, Chiddingstone Causeway - demolition of existing squash court ancillary to Camphill House and construction of a replacement ancillary garage/workshop and studio. Application approved.
- iii. To hear update on SDC Draft Local Plan
- The Clerk reported that SDC has been granted permission to bring a judicial review against the Planning Inspector's decision to reject the draft Local Plan. The High Court issued a notification on Tuesday 2nd June granting permission for the review. The Honourable Mr Justice Swift concluded all grounds for the Council's claim are arguable and permission for judicial review was granted, clearing the first hurdle of the process. On 2nd March 2020, the Planning Inspector wrote the final report on the examination of the Sevenoaks District Local Plan. It concluded the Plan was not legally compliant in respect of the Duty to Co-operate. However, the Council strongly rejected this conclusion, which only surfaced after the first round of the Local Plan hearings in October, seven months after the Council had submitted the Plan and supporting evidence to the Inspector. Within the Local Plan submission, there were more than 800 pages of evidence setting out how the Council had worked with its neighbours during the production of the Plan. The neighbouring councils and other organisations involved in the development of the Plan supported the Council's evidence and approach on this matter. In April, the Council began Judicial Review proceedings to overturn the Inspector's decision. The High Court decision followed the news that the three MPs who represent the Sevenoaks District wrote to Robert Jenrick MP, the Secretary of State for Local Government, on Monday (1st June). Laura Trott MP, Tom Tugendhat MP and Gareth Johnson MP urged the Minister to use his powers to reconsider the Planning Inspectorate's reasons for rejecting the draft Local Plan.
- iv. To hear update regarding the new positioning of a mobile home at Grove Close, Hampkins Hill
- The Clerk reported that the positioning of a new mobile home at this property was investigated by enforcement officers at SDC and they found that there was no breach of planning policy.

The mobile home is to be used by an elderly family member following various health issues and the owners of Grove Close will be moving that family member into the mobile home within the next few weeks. That family member will have access to the main property and therefore the mobile home is being used as an extra bedroom and would be classed as ancillary accommodation and not a separate unit that would require planning permission. The owner of the property is in the process of landscaping the garden.

21. To discuss work to woodland in Chiddingstone Hoath

Cllr Bishop reported that, as Tree Warden, he has spoken to the various parties involved including the Forestry Commission. The land in question has a tree felling licence dated 2015. Unfortunately, tree felling licenses are not available to view online, and due to lockdown measures, staffing is restricted and the office is shut. Cllr Bishop said that the landowner is replacing hedgerows and he is planning to plant additional woodland. Cllr Bishop said that he has no concerns unless there are conditions imposed as part of the felling licence or if the licence has expired, which he won't know until the office is open.

22. Licensing

The Clerk reported that Neverworld has announced that it will not be holding a festival this year, and all tickets purchased will be valid if the event is held in 2021.

23. Finance

- i. Cllr Roper reported that a Finance Committee meeting was held on Tuesday 9th June and members discussed the Year End Accounts and Annual Audit in detail. The Committee recommended:
 - i. The Parish Council approves the accounts and the Annual Audit Return.
 - ii. If acceptable with everyone, Cllr Mrs Quirk and Cllr Williams are removed as signatories on the bank accounts, and Cllr Bishop and Cllr Myers are added as they are members of the Finance Committee. Members agreed.
 - iii. The 2020-21 Budget is amended to reflect the salary increase for the Clerk as this was approved after the Budget was approved. Members agreed.
- ii. To approve 2019/20 Year End Accounts
Cllr Streatfeild proposed that the Year End Accounts be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Mrs Harris and all were in favour.
- iii. To review the effectiveness of the Parish Council's Internal Control Procedures
Members reviewed the Internal Control Procedures and agreed that they remain effective. Proposed by Cllr Myers, seconded by Cllr Williams and all were in favour.
- iv. Audit for year ending 31st March 2020
 - a. To consider and agree Annual Governance Statement 2019/20
Cllr Roper read the statements as set out on the Annual Governance Statement and members responded as appropriate. Proposed by Cllr Williams, seconded by Cllr Streatfeild and all were in favour.
 - b. To consider and approve Accounting Statements 2019/20
Cllr Myers proposed that the Statement of Accounts be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Mrs Harris and all were in favour.
- v. To discuss the Internal Audit report 2020
The Clerk reported that the Internal Audit was carried out on Tuesday 26th May and the report states that the books and records are in good order, and the systems for control of the Parish Council's finances are working well. There are no recommendations for change. Members thanked the Clerk for keeping the accounts in good order.
- vi. To consider 2020/21 Earmarked Reserves
Members agreed to move £100 from the General Reserve into the Election Earmarked Reserve. The Clerk reported that she has asked the Internal Auditor whether he considers the amount held in the General Reserve at year-end is at the right level compared to the amount held in Earmarked Reserves.
- vii. To approve the draft Chiddingstone Parish Council Grant Funding Policy and application form
Members discussed the draft policy and Cllr Streatfeild proposed that it be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Mrs Quirk and all were in favour.

viii. To consider grant applications received

The Clerk reported that Stonewall Park Cricket Club has advised that it will contact SDC regarding grants as the Parish Council suggested, but will come back to the Parish Council if that route is unsuccessful. The club has raised some funds from subscriptions but the year will be tight financially due to lack of fund raising events and essential costs.

ix. To approve membership renewal to Aviation Environment Federation: £36

Members approved this membership renewal.

x. To approve membership renewal to Society Local Council Clerks: £113.50

Members approved this membership renewal

xi. To approve list of payments

Cllr Mrs Harris proposed that the list of payments be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Williams and all were in favour. Cllr Roper and Cllr Streatfeild undertook to authorise the payments online.

24. Affordable Housing provision in the parish

The Clerk reported as follows:

- i. Site adjacent to Chequers Barn – ERHA and the landowner have agreed heads of terms regarding the land option agreement. One matter that needs to be resolved is the current access used by the adjacent property. The owners currently reverse out on to the access road/public footpath which would not be acceptable to Kent Highways if the road was to be used by a further eleven properties. The landowner has offered a new access and some additional land and is waiting to hear back from the adjoining residents.
- ii. Site adjacent to Bassetts – ERHA has contacted the agents acting for the Trading Estate in respect of the visibility splays required across the frontage. In principle they are agreeable to discuss further. Clerk to discuss the possibility of an extension of the 30mph speed limit zone to include the frontage of this site with County Cllr Lake.
- iii. Site Opposite The Rock – none.

25. Aviation

Cllr Streatfeild reported that NATS is trying to rearrange flight routes, which is being resisted by most airports, and GACC is seeking public scrutiny of these proposals which will include the proposed expansion at Gatwick Airport and the number of additional air traffic movements per hour. If the new routes go ahead, the flight path would be a concentrated, narrow route over Speldhurst, Penshurst and Chiddingstone village.

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

i. Bulk Refuse Freighter and Parish Litter Pick

The Clerk reported that the Bulk Refuse Freighter visit planned for 13th June had to be cancelled. The next date should be on Saturday 12th September. The school had hoped to hold a parish litter pick for all school children and their families, but this has also had to be cancelled.

ii. Summer Family Fun play events

The summer family fun play event due to be held on Friday 7th August has had to be cancelled.

iii. Community Garden – to discuss maintenance of the fence to the rear

Cllr Mrs Harris, Cllr Bishop and Cllr Williams undertook to inspect the fence and make a recommendation to the next Parish Council meeting, obtaining three quotes if required.

27. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda

None.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday 21st July 2020 at 7.30pm via zoom.

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm