MINUTES OF THE CHIDDINGSTONE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 17TH JUNE 2015 AT 8.00PM IN CHIDDINGSTONE VILLAGE HALL

Present:  Cllr R. Streatfeild (Chairman), Cllr Mrs D. James (from 8.40pm), Cllr J. Menges, Cllr Mrs M. Quirk, Cllr Mrs A. Tait, Cllr P. Vicary and Cllr H. Williams

Apologies:  Cllr A. Baker, Cllr/D.Cllr P. Cooke, County Cllr C. Pearman and District Cllr P. Lake

In attendance:  Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk)

Open Session

Report by District Cllr Lake
In the absence of District Cllr Lake, the Clerk gave is report: “I am beginning to find my way around the Council, but SDC is very different to KCC! I seem to have been put on every committee except the Planning Committee. In a way this is good news because I can represent my constituents without having to necessarily toe the planning party line but I realise that the planners have a huge task on their hands and it is vital to ensure that we all get it right. Paddy Cooke will stand in for me on some contentious issues and will be looking after the current application at Somerden. I am keen to hear from any constituent who has issues to raise relating to SDC matters.”

Report by District Cllr Cooke
In the absence of District Cllr Cooke, the Clerk gave his report: “I have spoken to Gavin Missions regarding the Housing Needs Survey for Chiddingstone and he is going to provide me with a timetable. With regard Margaret Hyder Trust we are meeting next week to discuss how we deal with the sad loss of Peter Benton. I had a meeting yesterday regarding the community garden. Step position agreed with all parties. Usage and restrictions to be discussed at the next Village Hall Meeting. Bob and I are analysing the tenders; a report will be sent by Bob in respect of last night meeting. As an update I have been re-selected for the Development Control Committee and the Licensing Committee at Sevenoaks District Council. I have also been appointed to the Bough Beech Reservoir Committee, Becketts Trust and Edenbridge and Westerham Citizen Advice Bureau.”

Closed Session

27.  Apologies for Absence were received from Cllr Baker and Cllr Cooke and their reasons for absence were accepted by members. Apologies for absence were also received from County Cllr Pearman and District Cllr Lake.

28.  Election of Vice-Chairman for year 2015/16
Cllr Williams proposed that Cllr Vicary be elected as Vice-Chairman for the year 2015/16. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs Quirk. There were no other nominations, and members unanimously voted to accept this nomination. Cllr Vicary said that he was willing to stand and was duly elected.

29.  Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and Non-Pecuniary Interest in respect of matters to be discussed
Cllr Streatfeild declared a DPI in item 32(i)(ii) Planning as he is the applicant.
Cllr Streatfeild declared a DPI in item 41(ii) as he is the landowner of the Allotment site.

30.  The Minutes of the Chiddingstone Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 18th May 2015 were approved and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Mrs Quirk, seconded by Cllr Mrs Tait, and all were in favour.

31.  To hear report of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 20th May 2015
Cllr Streatfeild said that there was good interaction at the meeting, not only between members of the Parish Council and residents, between residents and stall-holders but also between the stall-holders themselves, as they were interested to hear about the services being offered locally. Members all agreed that the format worked. Cllr Williams suggested that an open invitation is made to any local group or organisation to have a stall at the meeting next year. Cllr Menges felt that it would also be a good idea to have a speaker.
32. Planning
   i. To consider planning applications received
      i. SE/15/01492/FUL: Five Wells, The Village, Chiddingstone TN8 7AH - demolition of existing dwelling and the erection of a replacement dwelling. Members supported this application.
      ii. SE/15/01578/LBCALT: Hoath House, Chiddingstone Hoath TN8 7DB - installation of a conservation roof light in the West Elevation (Batts Barn). Cllr Streatfeild reported that approval has already been given so no comment required by the Parish Council.
      iii. SE/15/01300/HOUSE: Camp Hill House, Camp Hill, Chiddingstone Causeway TN11 8LE - new four bay garage for the use of Camp Hill House (driveway layout amended). Members agreed to reiterate their comments made to the last application, namely “Chiddingstone Parish Council objects to the bulk and scale of this proposed garage. Members also questioned whether there should be a listed building consent application?”
      iv. SE/15/01710/HOUSE: 7 Dukes Meadow, Chiddingstone Causeway TN11 8LW - erection of a conservatory to the rear. Members supported this application.

   ii. To report notifications of planning decisions
      • SE/15/00989/HOUSE: 24 Richards Close, Chiddingstone Causeway: erection of a first floor extension to the side and conversion of loft/attic into habitable space. Internal remodelling on the ground floor. Application approved.
      • SE/15/01050/LBCALT: Brookers Farmhouse, Chiddingstone Hoath: Listed Building Consent for the conversion of existing barns and oast house and extension to stables to create one dwelling and ancillary accommodation and construction of new access. Planning was granted under application reference: SE/15/00439/MMA. Application approved.

33. Finance:
   i. To consider request for financial assistance by Chiddingstone Sports Association to help fund their proposal to fit solar panels onto one side of the Sports Pavilion roof
      The Clerk reported that David James has advised that so far the Sports Association has managed to obtain a grant for £1,000 towards the project and have still a few other options to explore. The quote the Sports Association has received for total cost of installation is £5,892.70 plus VAT (Total £7,071.24). The estimated output from the installation will be 4,220kwh per annum. The solar panels would be installed on the part of the Sports Pavilion roof facing the football pitch and won’t therefore be visible from most vantage points. David says that, based on the current feed-in tariff rates effective from 1st April 2015, it is estimated that the installation would pay for itself within 7 years as per the PayBack Calculation schedule. The useful working life of the LG solar panels is quoted as 25 years with negligible annual maintenance costs. The Sports Association has confirmed with SDC Planning Officers that the panels fall within permitted development so no planning permission is required. The Clerk reported that she has received the following advice from KALC: “The General Power of Competence is a power of first resort and assuming all the due diligence is in place then this should be possible. S19 of the 1976 Local Government (Misc. Provisions) Act has been an established power for providing loans to non-profit making bodies on any terms including 0% interest. If the money is a significant amount you should use S111 1972 LGA to employ a solicitor to draw up an agreement.” Cllr Streatfeild suggested that the Sports Association needs to formally write to the Parish Council in order to put forward a case for funding assistance. Clerk to write. Members agreed to wait until further information has been received.
   ii. To approve membership renewal to Society of Local Council Clerks: £93.50
      Cllr Vicary proposed that the membership be renewed, this was seconded by Cllr Streatfeild, and all were in favour.
   iii. To approve payment of cheques
      Cllr Mrs Tait proposed that the list of cheques be approved for payment, this was seconded by Cllr Williams and all were in favour.
   iv. Audit for year ending 31st March 2015: To consider Internal Auditor’s report
      Members reviewed and considered the report by the Internal Auditor and agreed to implement the following recommendations made:
      i. the Cashbook spreadsheet is split between Income and Expenditure.
      ii. a formal Bank Reconciliation statement is prepared at the end of each month.
iii. the annual VAT return is in future made on a Financial Year basis.
iv. changing to a more simple Receipts and Payments basis, with the annual VAT claim as the only debtor item on the Balance Sheet, rather than an Income & Expenditure basis.

34. To report on correspondence received
The Clerk reported that lists of correspondence received have been circulated and drew members’ attention to the following:
i. Item 2: SDC news release: The new Chairman of Sevenoaks District Council, Cllr Philip McGarvey, who represents Farningham, Horton Kirby & South Darenth, took over from outgoing Chairman, Cllr Jill Davison, after being elected on 19th May.

ii. Item 3: ACRK re: proposed event to provide information on how rural affordable housing can be developed as a Community Land Trust so that the local community retain ownership of the land. If there is enough interest in this event, ACRK will invite Wessex Community Land Trust Project to come and talk about this; they have helped create successful schemes in rural communities in the West Country. The homes are mainly rented with some shared ownership and are built and managed by a housing association. This makes the scheme fairly low risk for the community but gives them more involvement and control and they will earn a small income from the ground rent. Once the Community Land Trust has been established it can be used for other projects, for instance, saving a pub or shop.

iii. Item 4: KALC: all orders for Defibrillators must be at the KALC office by 15th June. Cost: £695 + VAT for defibrillator, plus £450 + VAT for cabinet. (Total: £1,374 inc. VAT). Clerk to contact The Rock Inn to discuss whether it would be possible to install an external defibrillator there.

iv. Item 8: Kent Police is asking local residents to take part in the biggest ever survey into rural crime and anti-social Behaviour (ASB) to find out how they can better serve rural communities. The National Rural Crime Network (NRCN) has launched the survey to give people who work or live in rural areas the chance to share their views on policing in their community, and the impact crime and ASB has on them and their neighbours. The results will help shape the future of crime prevention and rural policing. The rural crime survey is open until Wednesday 24 June.

v. Item 11: Clive Pearman: monthly report, copied to all members.

vi. Item 15: KCC Press Releases: (i) KCC’s Cabinet agreed to help parents and carers with more than two 11 to 16 year-olds by providing extra Young Persons’ Travel Passes free-of-charge. More information on the pass, which will cost £250, is available at: www.kent.gov.uk/youngpersonstravelpass. The cost of the Kent 16+ Travel Card will be frozen at £400 per year. (ii) Across the county there are estimated to be around 129,000 ex-service personnel. How well have they adapted as a civilian? How do they contribute to the local community, and do they feel well supported within the local community? These are questions being asked by the Kent and Medway Civilian Military Partnership Board. Visit www.kent.gov.uk/armedforces to take part from Friday, June 5. (iii) More than 150,000 people in Kent regularly look after a relative or friend. For a list of events being run for carers during the week, visit www.kccmediashub.net and search www.carersweek.org/events-near-you for more events taking place near you. (iv) Fostering Fortnight is a perfect way to celebrate fantastic foster carers and highlight the need for more people to consider changing the life of a young person in the most amazing way by welcoming them into their own home and family. If you are interested in finding out more about fostering, visit www.kentfostering.co.uk. (v) The Kent Sheds project tackles mental health and wellbeing by encouraging people to make friends, share skills and support their local community through shed-based venues, is being celebrated with a view to encouraging even more to set up across Kent. For more information about Kent Sheds, go to www.kentsheds.org.uk.

vii. Item 16: GACC: “The Airport Commission’s final recommendation on whether a new runway should be built at Heathrow or at Gatwick is expected sometime later this month or early July (although this may be delayed by the need to process the responses to the air quality consultation). If they recommend a new runway at Heathrow we will be relieved but will need to stay on guard in case the decision is challenged. If they recommend a new runway at Gatwick the debate will not be over. With your support, GACC will do all we can to persuade the Government not to go ahead. If necessary we will take the battle to Parliament and to a public inquiry. We are delighted that all the local Members of Parliament are unanimously opposed to a second Gatwick runway. One only has to recall that in 2003 the Government announced that a new runway would be built at Stansted by 2011 or 2012 to realise that determined opposition can succeed. Without being pessimistic we are starting to do some contingency planning.”
“We would be grateful if you could let us know any local events due to take place between mid-July and the end of the year at which GACC might take a stand. We are thinking of the possibility of a mass anti-runway rally on Saturday 12 September – please ask your members to pencil that date into their diaries. Thank you for all your support.”

viii. Item 20: KCC news release: KCC has set out a series of non-negotiable “red lines” to protect fares and services for Kent’s rail commuters during talks over the future of the county’s ‘Metro’ lines. KCC on Tuesday discussed a proposal by Transport for London (TfL) to transfer the south-east London Metro train services from Southeastern to TfL’s franchise operator, London Overground Railway.

ix. Item 21: Press Release: “Tom Tugendhat MBE MP, Member of Parliament for Tonbridge, Edenbridge and Malling, has increased the pressure on Gatwick Airport to address the impact of noise on communities in West Kent. In the House of Commons, Tom questioned the Secretary of State for Transport, the Rt Hon Patrick McLoughlin MP, on the steps the Department are taking to tackle the effects of changing flightpaths on local residents and businesses. Tom Tugendhat MBE MP said: “I have made clear to the Secretary of State the devastating impact caused by the change in flightpaths on the approach to Gatwick Airport. Since elected, I have met with many groups and been inundated with messages from residents about the effect on our communities; be it cancelling events, impacting on tourism or causing misery for residents.” The flightpath from Gatwick has been narrowed recently between Tonbridge and Edenbridge, causing a concentrated area of noise over the homes of local residents from 4am until 1am the next day. The Secretary of State responded by saying that he is committed to working with local community representatives as well as Gatwick Airport affiliates to reduce aircraft noise. Working alongside MPs from Kent, Surrey, Sussex and London, Tom will continue to put pressure on Gatwick Airport and the Department for Transport to improve the lives of residents in the South East.”

x. Item 22: Chiddingstone Village Hall Management Committee: Agenda for committee meeting on Monday 6th July at 7.30pm in Chiddingstone Village Hall. Cllr Cooke can attend.

xi. Item 23: Eden Valley Museum Trust: “Unfortunately we have been struggling with covering opening hours at the museum due in part to the retiring of some of our long term volunteers. We are searching for volunteers to take on one session per month so that we are able to continue providing access to our wonderful museum. If you are willing to take on stewarding the museum for just one morning or afternoon a month it would be a great help to us. Please get in touch on 01732 868102 or curator@evmt.org.uk. ‘Lost Diary of a Local Farmer 1822 – 1823’: We would like to invite all of our members to attend this brand new exhibition’s official opening event on 7th July at 6.30pm. After this members evening the exhibition will open to the public on 8th July at 2pm.”

xii. Item 24: Letter and ‘discussion paper’ on the Closed Churchyard from Nigel Lucas. Copied to all members. Members agreed that Cllr Vicary is the liaison between the Parish Council and the Parochial Church Council. Cllr Vicary said that the maintenance is under control. The PCC might wish the level of maintenance to be higher but the Parish Council cannot spend a greater amount on the closed churchyard out of the precept. Cllr Streatfeild said that legislation is clear in that it is not for the PCC to dictate the level of maintenance of the closed churchyard, it is the Parish Council’s decision. There are two items that need to be done, firstly work to the mausoleum railings that has been costed but not carried out, and the safety of the headstones needs to be checked annually. The Parish Council has a three-year maintenance contract in place, this expires at the end of 2015. The Clerk will seek new quotes for the 2016-2019 period. Members agreed to meet in the churchyard prior to the September Parish Council meeting to look at the level of maintenance and what additional work might be required.

xiii. Item 25: Edenbridge Town Council: The next Eden Valley Tourism Forum is on Tuesday 23rd June between 10am and 12.30pm at Hever Castle Golf Club.


Courses & events: 10 October 10.30am-2pm: Commonwork Autumn Day and 17 October 10am-4pm: Bake Bread.
35. Aviation
   i. To hear report of the High Weald Councils Aviation Action Group
      Cllr Streatfeild reported that the group met on 2nd June and discussed procedures for voting. The Air Quality consultation required a response in a very short timeframe and it was necessary for Cllr Streatfeild to submit a draft response, pending discussion and approval by the group. The Airports Commission will announce soon what their recommendation is for additional runway capacity in the South-East. GACC has prepared a draft press release which has been sent to all group chairmen for comments. The Gatwick Co-ordination Group MPs feel that the Airports Commission will choose one of the Heathrow options, but the MPs for areas around Heathrow think that the choice will be Gatwick. GON is progressing with the judicial review process and Martin Barraud had a meeting with the QC recently, who believes that he will receive notice of the hearing any day. It might need to go to appeal, but the QC is confident of success, and has agreed a cap on his fees.
   ii. To agree voting procedures for the HWCAAG representative and approve delegated power if necessary
      Cllr Streatfeild reported that HWCAAG agreed the following motion, for approval by all Town and Parish Councils: “Each full member Town and Parish Council to form an aviation sub-committee of at least three members with the delegated authority to approve HWCAAG letters, responses and statements in line with the HWCAAG policy in order to allow HWCAAG to respond appropriately when a deadline falls inside the normal timeframe of council meetings. Associate and ‘cc’ member councils do not have a vote.” Cllr Vicary proposed that this motion be approved by Chiddingstone Parish Council, seconded by Cllr Mrs James and all were in favour. The Clerk advised that the Parish Council already has an aviation committee comprising Cllr Streatfeild, Cllr Menges and Cllr Williams. Cllr Streatfeild advised that any requests for spending money, or any requests for letters, responses and statements that are not in line with the HWCAAG policy will still require prior approval from each member Town and Parish Council.

36. To discuss the proposal for a parking area by Chequers Cottages in Bough Beech
   The Clerk reported that Cllr Baker agreed at the last Parish Council meeting to contact the contractor who provided the most competitive quote. Due to the absence of Cllr Baker, members agreed to discuss further at the next Parish Council meeting. Cllr Streatfeild reported that David Rivers has been in contact as he wishes to explore the development of the car parking area in front of Chequers Cottages. Mr Rivers is also hoping to draw up a plan for development of land to the rear of Chequers. Preliminary plans include 3-4 business units, a holiday let and social housing. Cllr Streatfeild reported that the Parish Council has not received a formal plan or a formal request to open discussion on this proposal.

37. To consider request for a new noticeboard in Bough Beech and Chiddingstone Causeway
   The Clerk reported that Chase Fencing has said that they can’t discount their price. Members agreed, therefore, to proceed with an order of two new noticeboards from Village & Urban. The specification is for two lockable oak noticeboards to sit 4 x A4 sheets, including lettering and posts, at a cost of £1,050. Delivery from Somerset would be between £70 and £100. Proposed by Cllr Mrs James, seconded by Cllr Menges and all were in favour.

38. To discuss Affordable Housing provision in the parish
   i. To discuss problems associated with flooding at Redleaf Close
      Cllr Streatfeild reported that a meeting was held on Thursday 21st May at 2pm in St. Luke’s Parish Room. Cllr Streatfeild, Cllr Baker, Cllr Mrs James, Cllr Cooke, the Clerk attended plus Gavin Missons from SDC, Mark Leader and Neil Vernon from WKHA. Cllr Streatfeild reported that he has spoken to one of the residents who is happy with how the repairs to the foundations have been carried out, and is in the process of discussing the kitchen with WKHA.
      The Clerk reported that an update has been received from Mark Leader, following that meeting:
      “1) Richard Barwick has never been a shareholder or Board member of West Kent Housing Association – we don’t understand why/how this incorrect thought began.
      2) Richard Barwick also has confirmed he has never been a Board member of any Housing Association.
      3) Charcott wasn’t built by Barwick’s but was carried out by Croudace – Barwick went into liquidation at project completion for Redleaf Close.
      4) 2 Redleaf and others – we are doing what we discussed with you and arranged access with residents in surveying the homes and undertaking below ground checks.
5) We have been contacted by the local MP following a letter to him from Mrs Benger and are responding to that regarding their re-housing situation.

6) Opening up of the French drain at the site boundary does indicate that this was not completed as drawn and we will have to undertake further works. We also will need to understand how this has happened without recording changes to the design.

7) Works to rectify the floors to 4-7 Redleaf are progressing well.”

ii. To discuss the letting agreement for Slaters in Bough Beech

The Clerk reported that Gavin Missons at SDC undertook to look into this for the Parish Council. He said: “I’ve had a look into the original planning agreement and see that it does require Chiddingstone Parish Council to have a hand in nominating. Therefore, I’m going to speak to Moat Homes (assuming you agree) and see if we can introduce an allocations system whereby any future lettings are made to those with a local connection to your village/s – along the lines of criteria set for rural schemes, such as Redleaf Close. I can’t promise anything as I’ll need to look further into this, but at least we have some evidence of the original agreement.”

iii. To hear update on the Housing Needs Survey relating to a possible new affordable housing scheme

The Clerk reported as follows:

Flooding Issues: none.

Highway Issues
i. The Clerk reported that she has asked for the 40mph zone to be extended at Camp Hill Cottages to include the row of cottages as the current 40mph zone starts at the junction with Richards Close.

ii. Gilwyns mirror: the Clerk reported that she made a request for funding from County Cllr Pearman’s Members Fund, and he responded as follows: “Highways do not support the installation and use of such mirrors, so the request is dead before it’s even been made, and I cannot support something which Highways will not endorse, even if I was of a mind to. The solution is as contained in the highways and drainage booklet which was sent out to Parish Clerks a couple of weeks ago, namely, the landowner / tenant needs to carry out a severe cutback of the hedge in the late autumn to coincide with the property boundary, and then prevent rapid re-growth so that the hedge lines at the junction are more appropriate for vehicular usage. I know it takes two or three years for the hedges to re-establish themselves, but this is something which has to be undertaken at some point, or everyone must accept that that is how the junction is at the moment, will stay like it in the immediate future, so best that car drivers take care! I can think of dozens of junctions in the division which are in a very similar situation.” Cllr Menges said that there is a lot of traffic from Chiddingstone Castle now and people have spoken to him about near misses at the crossroads. Clerk to ask Highways for their official view on mirrors and also what the Parish Council’s liability would be if they installed a mirror on this crossroads.

iii. Cllr Vicary reported a large pothole by Hilders Farm on Ide Hill Road. Clerk to report.

iv. The Clerk reported that she has contacted Network Rail and asked them to repair the bridge and the parapet screen. Cllr Vicary reported that the vegetation needs cutting back on the bridge to improve visibility.

v. Clerk to mention potholes in the parish magazine and ask residents to continue to report them to KCC.

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

i. Chiddingstone Car Park:

Members agreed to take this item off the agenda now as it is clear that a carpark cannot be progressed until Chiddingstone Castle allow an access to pass over their land. Members agreed to consider again if there is a change or, if not, once a year at the May Parish Council meeting.
ii. **Allotments**  
Nothing to report.

iii. **Community Garden**  
To consider suggestion of new steps from the village hall to the garden

The Clerk reported that both Cllr Cooke and Bob Golds rang her today to ask whether the Parish Council could pay the full amount of the works to the windows and doors, claim back the VAT and charge the net amount to the Village Halls Management Committee. The net amount is xxxxxx. They have received a pledge of £10,000 from KCC and £2,500 from SDC. The quote for steps into the Community Garden is xxxxxx. Clerk to ask the Chiddingstone Village Hall Management Committee for a formal request for funding towards the steps and Clerk to seek advice from the Internal Auditor regarding the VAT as the Parish Council is the custodial trustee. The Clerk reported that the next Village Hall Management Committee meeting is on 6th July. Cllr Cooke has said that he can attend.

iv. **Village Signs**  
The Clerk reported that she has chased the contractor by email and phone.

v. **Swathe & Visibility contract**  
The Clerk reported that the first cut has been done, the second cut will be done towards the end of July.

vi. **Play Area**  
Nothing to report.

vii. **Rural Broadband**  
The Clerk reported that an advertising space has become available in the parish magazine and CHCIC have agreed to take the space for the remainder of the year.

viii. **Summer Family Fun Play Event**  
The Clerk reported that the Chiddingstone event will be held on Friday 7th August on the Chiddingstone Causeway Sports Field from 2.30pm to 5.30pm. No costs have been sought yet for the advertising, but last year, the Parish Council ordered two advertising boards at a cost of £25 each. 650 leaflets were printed and distributed to all the schools and nurseries in the three parishes. The cost for leaflets for Chiddingstone Parish Council was £28.50. Members agreed to proceed on the same basis as last year.

42. **Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda**

   i. The Clerk reminded everyone that the SDC ‘Switch & Save’ event will be on Thursday 25th June in Chiddingstone Causeway Village Hall from 4pm to 8pm. Residents should pop in with a copy of a recent utility bill and SDC will try and save them money.

   ii. Cllr Mrs Quirk reported that she has received a comment from a resident about the number of noticeboards in the parish. Members agreed to monitor the situation as it is important that the number of signs advertising local businesses does not get out of control. Clerk to ask Highways for their official view.

   iii. Cllr Williams reported that the footpath from Somerden is overgrown again. One side belongs to Mr Boomaars and one side to Mr Clifford-Baynes. Clerk to ask both farmers to book the work in after 31st August.

The meeting closed at 9.40pm.

The date of the next Parish Council meeting will be held on Wednesday 15th July 2015 at 8.00pm in Chiddingstone Causeway Village Hall.

* * * * *