

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

Present: Cllr J. Roper (Chairman), Cllr A. Baker, Cllr Mrs P. Harris, Cllr P. Myers,
Cllr Mrs M. Quirk (from 8.07pm), Cllr B. Taylor and Cllr H. Williams

Apologies: Cllr C. Bishop and Cllr R. Streatfeild

In attendance: Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk) and District Cllr Mrs S. Coleman. Cllr Osborne-Jackson 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. The woodstore at Triangle Oast that was built without planning or listed building approval was reported to Enforcement Officers but they considered that it would not be expedient to follow up.
2. There is still no progress on the appeal for the track in Chiddingstone Hoath.
3. There is still no more information on the appeal for the Sevenoaks Local Plan.
4. The application for an outbuilding at 27 Truggers Lane may be approved by the Planning Officer by delegation and D.Cllr Mrs Coleman said that she will not ask that the application is taken to the Development Control Committee. She has asked that a condition be imposed on any approval to say that the hedge must be retained at the current height in perpetuity.
5. The activity on the site on Ide Hill Road is being investigated by Enforcement Officers.
6. Levels of people with a positive Covid-19 test are now very low in the Sevenoaks district.
7. There are elections at the beginning of May but SDC has found it hard to find people to act as Polling Clerks this year due to concerns about Covid related issues. SDC hope that this can be rectified in time for the elections.

Report by District Cllr Osborne-Jackson

District Cllr Osborne-Jackson reported as follows:

1. There were some complications regarding refuse collections as the local transfer station was closed and SDC crews were having to go to the Tunbridge Wells transfer station up to three times a day. Therefore, some collections were regrettably missed and residents were advised to leave their refuse out as crews would return that same day or the next day. The Direct Services staff at SDC have been outstanding and their hard work is much appreciated.
2. There is good news from central Government about Covid vaccines and testing. There is a non-symptom testing centre at the Bat & Ball in Sevenoaks, testing and vaccines are free of charge.
3. A reminder that Covid breaches in behaviour can be reported to Kent Police anonymously.
4. There has unfortunately been an increase in the number of scams in operation, please report if you are a victim of a scam to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040.
5. He has worked on some casework in Chiddingstone Causeway and had positive results. He has arranged a meeting with the Chief Executive Officer at WKHA to discuss local cases, and also a meeting with the Sevenoaks District Chief of Police.
6. The Southeast Communities Rail Partnership has arranged for an artwork installation at Penshurst Station with the artists showcasing in this space being associated with Jessops Farm Studios in Chiddingstone Causeway.

Cllr Mrs Harris asked for an update on the issue at Grove Close. D.Cllr Osborne-Jackson said that he will obtain an update from the Enforcement Officer, but the last he heard was that the development was at that time legitimate and in accordance with planning policy.

Cllr Osborne-Jackson left the meeting at 7.48pm.

Closed Session

- 130. Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr Bishop and Cllr Streatfeild and members accepted their reasons for absence.
- 131. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed**
Cllr Roper declared an NPI in item 138(i)(iii) as he has a granddaughter who is a pupil at the school.
- 132. The minutes of the Chiddingstone Parish Council Meeting held on 16th February 2021** were approved. The minutes would be signed at the next open public meeting. Proposed by Cllr Williams, seconded by Cllr Myers and all were in favour.
- 133. To approve amended date of the Annual Parish Meeting and the Annual Parish Council Meeting**
- Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Monday 19th April, commencing at 6.30pm, to be held remotely via zoom.
 - The April Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 19th April, commencing at 7.30pm, to be held remotely via zoom.
 - The Annual Parish Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday 18th May, commencing at 7.30pm. It is unsure at present whether this meeting will be held in person or remotely via zoom.
- Cllr Mrs Harris proposed that these meeting dates be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Roper and all were in favour.
- 134. To consider and update Risk Assessment**
Members reviewed and approved the updated Risk Assessment. It was agreed to go ahead and purchase the two litter picking signs as approved as an action in the 2020 Risk Assessment. The litter picks in 2020 were cancelled and members now wish to recommence this activity. Once lockdown restrictions are lifted, the Parish Council will be able to support Cllr Taylor's monthly litter pick which would be covered by the Parish Council's public liability insurance. The provision of two more litter picking warning signs will improve the safety for the litter pickers. Cllr Williams and Cllr Mrs Harris undertook to carry out a visual inspection of the gravestones in the Closed Churchyard and the Tree Survey was undertaken in November 2020.
- 135. To review the Chiddingstone Mourning Protocol**
Members reviewed and approved the Mourning Protocol, with the additional comment that the Parish Council will be governed by legislation in force at the time, in particular with regards to lockdown restrictions and social distancing.
- 136. To consider and approve the Chiddingstone CCTV Policy**
Members reviewed and approved the CCTV Policy. This may be amended once further information is received from SDC. Proposed by Cllr Myers, seconded by Cllr Williams and all in favour.
- 137. Planning:**
- i. To consider planning applications received
 - i. SE/21/00455/HOUSE and SE/21/00456/LBCALT: Granary Cottage, Lockskinners, Chiddingstone TN8 7NA - demolition and replacement of modern link building, internal reconfiguration of Granary (modern fabric only), refit of existing kitchen and bathroom in Granary Cottage, replacement front porch and minor internal repair and alteration. Members supported this application.
 - ii. SE/21/00300/LDCPR: 1 Ryewell Cottages, Ryewell Hill, Chiddingstone Hoath Kent TN8 7BN - erection of a detached outbuilding. Members supported this application.
 - iii. SE/21/00583/AGRNOT: Vexour Farm, Hampkins Hill Road, Chiddingstone - covering concrete handling areas between existing buildings and erecting a lean-to for agricultural machinery storage. The Clerk reported that the following email was received from the applicant:

1. The roofs will not be flat but have similar shape to current roofs, they will be below the highest point of the current buildings, ie they will not stick out between the buildings. They are similar to the roof we have over our cattle handling area situated between 1st and 2nd cow barns.
2. The roofs will be fibrous cement, similar to what we currently have, there will be no special ventilation ridge on these roofs, which typically are reflective when new. The roofs will be dull (non-reflective) and not visible due to filling in between existing buildings and band of trees and hedges around the farm yard.

Members supported this application.

- iv. SE/20/01834/FUL: Newtyehurst Farm, Cowden Pound Road to Truggers Lane, Markbeech TN8 7DA - proposed conversion of agricultural barns into 12 residential units including the demolition of 2 existing residential units and the construction of 2 replacement dwellings. Amendment: submission of Biodiversity report and updated marketing report.

(Cllr Mrs Quirk joined the meeting at 8.07pm)

Members agreed to consider the new documents uploaded and submit further comments if required. The Clerk reported that an email was received from a resident regarding two very large mounds, one of earth and one of chalk, which have been brought into the farm. There is also concern about the increasing amount of noise from off road motorcross bikes which are disturbing the earth in the ancient woodland. Cllr Roper reported that Cllr Streatfeild has spoken to the landowner about this issue and was told that the motocross noise was coming from two farm hands who work for the landowner using his land for their own recreation with his permission. There is no intention to build a track or to hold events that would require planning permission or a licence. He added that he contacted D.Cllr Mrs Coleman who advised that the resident should report the noise nuisance to the Environmental Health team at SDC via the website and that the resident can download the noise app and record the motorcross noise in real time which would provide evidence. The landowner has advised Cllr Streatfeild that the earth and chalk are for agricultural purposes. D.Cllr Mrs Coleman has advised that any change to the land levels and use of the site would require a planning application. The resident has been advised to report this to Planning Enforcement officers if it is believed that there is a breach.

- v. SE/21/00660/HOUSE: Old Coach House, Chiddingstone Hoath TN8 7BU - loft conversion with dormer roof and all associated works. The Clerk reported that an email was received from the applicant's architect, stating that, currently, the upstairs bedroom is not compliant with recommended living standards and building regulations as there is approx 1300 mm and 1650 mm height entering the bedrooms making it difficult/impossible for an adult to enter any of the rooms on the first floor. The applicant is therefore proposing a front dormer in order to access these bedrooms properly with sufficient head height. There is no further extension other than this minimal addition. The applicant is proposing to use local tile material (Kent Peg Tiles) for the front.

Cllr Mrs Quirk undertook to look at the plans and make a recommendation to the Planning Committee.

- vi. SE/20/02571/FUL: Larkins Farmhouse Hampkins Hill Road Chiddingstone - addition of 4 stables to the North West of the dwelling outside of the residential curtilage, to include a hay store and tack room. The addition of a type 1 surface widening the track to the stables for horse box parking, and the addition of a 60m x 20m open manege (sand school) to the north of the dwelling sited outside of the residential curtilage. Storage barn and muck heap located to the east side of the sand school. Addition of open air swimming pool located within the sunken walled garden with changing room and plant room. Amended application to show changes to access around stable block and enlarged hay barn as well small change in access to other storage outbuilding on site. Further information on access as the proposed access track is amended to ensure an 8m space between the trunk of any trees and any new surface. It is proposed to use mot stone to form a surface because the track will be used by tractors and horse lorries and provides the best most cost-effective surface and in addition matches what is already down. Further information on plant room and heat pump to be used. The room itself would be made from timber and have a timber shingle roof.

Cllr Mrs Quirk undertook to look at the plans and make a recommendation to the Planning Committee.

- vii. SE/21/00758/HOUSE and SE/21/00759/LBCALT: Keepers Cottage, Somerden Green, Chiddingstone TN8 7AL - demolition of rear extension. Alterations to two existing outbuildings including provision of modest link between them to enable them to be converted to provide a residential annexe.
Cllr Mrs Quirk undertook to look at the plans and make a recommendation to the Planning Committee.
- ii. To report SDC notifications of planning decisions
 - SE/20/02670/HOUSE: Triangle Oast, Hampkins Hill Road, Chiddingstone - demolition and replacement raised terrace and external ladder, new and replacement doors, windows and roof lights, associated internal alterations and landscaping. Application approved.
 - SE/20/03815/FUL: Lockskinners Farmhouse and Granary Cottage, Lockskinners, Chiddingstone - conversion of existing building from two self-contained residential units to a single family dwelling. Application approved.
 - SE/21/00398/LBCALT: The Rustles, Ide Hill Road, Bough Beech - installation of four secondary windows. Application withdrawn.
 - SE/20/03798/FUL: Hoath Corner Wood, Ryewell Hill, Chiddingstone Hoath - proposed new access for forestry use, including sealing up existing access. Application approved.

iii. Notice at Moat Lane, Cowden

The Clerk reported that an email has been received from Tom Fry, SDC Enforcement Officer, regarding the land to the west of Moat Lane, Cowden. Sevenoaks District Council has made a Direction under Article 4 (1) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. An Article 4 Direction is an order made by a local planning authority to remove certain permitted development rights. The Direction relates to development as follows:

- Development consisting of use of land as a caravan site: The use of land, other than a building, as a caravan site in the circumstances referred to in para A.2. Class A Schedule 2, Part 5 of the Order.
- Development consisting of minor operations: The erection of, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure. Class A of Part 2 of Schedule 2 to the said Order 2015.
- Development consisting of means of access to a highway: The formation, laying out and construction of a means of access to a highway which is not a trunk road or a classified road, where that access is required in connection with development permitted by any Class in this Schedule (other than by Class A of this Part). Class B of Part 2 of Schedule 2 to the said Order 2015.
- Development consisting of temporary buildings and structures: The provision on land of buildings, moveable structures, works, plant or machinery required temporarily in connection with and for the duration of operations being or to be carried out on, in, under or over that land or on land adjoining that land. Class A Part 4 of Schedule 2 to the said Order 2015

A copy of the Direction, including the map defining the area covered, can be viewed on SDC's website. Representations may be made concerning the Article 4 Direction between 25 February and 18 March 2021 inclusive. This Direction shall come into force on Thursday 15 April 2021 if confirmed on that date or subject to any representations made, another date in accordance with paragraph 1 (7) of Schedule 3 of the Order.

138. Finance

Cllr Roper reported that a Finance Committee meeting was held on Thursday 11th March. Cllr Williams attended the meeting to temporarily replace Cllr Bishop who was unable to attend the meeting. Members approved the temporary co-option of Cllr Williams onto the Committee.

i. To discuss and approve applications for grants

The Clerk reported that the amount of funding in the Grants Budget is £1,800. The Finance Committee recommended that the following grants be given:

- i. Stonewall Park Cricket Club: bowling machine (cost £624.99 + VAT): a grant of £300.
- ii. Chiddingstone WI: gazebo (cost £300): a grant of £300.
- iii. Chiddingstone School: wooden storage trolley and 5 picnic benches (cost £1167): a grant of £1167.
- iv. Chiddingstone Village Hall: new kitchen (cost £22,688): no grant this year.

- The recommended total grant funding would be £1,767. Cllr Mrs Harris proposed that this recommendation be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Mrs Quirk and all were in favour.
- ii. To discuss the Bough Beech car parking area
Cllr Roper reported that the Finance Committee recommended to the Parish Council that this project be put on hold for the time being until the Parish Council is aware of funding that may be required for speed reduction measures in Chiddingstone Causeway. Members agreed.
 - iii. To discuss and approve changes to the Chiddingstone Finance Regulations
The Clerk reported that the Finance Committee reviewed the Finance Regulations and recommended that updates are approved. Cllr Taylor proposed that these updates be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Williams and all were in favour.
 - iv. To discuss 2020-21 Earmarked Reserves
The Finance Committee reviewed the Earmarked Reserves and are happy that they are appropriate for year-end. Members agreed.
 - v. To discuss district-wide precept and council tax tables
The Clerk reported that the Finance Committee looked at the tables showing the level of precepts and Band D amounts in the district and how Chiddingstone Parish Council's figures compare. It was noted that, despite the increase in precept a few years ago to fund the loan from the PWLB, the level of precept has remained steady since then and Chiddingstone sits lower than half way on Band D compared to other parishes. It was agreed that this does give the Parish Council room to increase the precept in future for projects such as the speed reduction measures.
 - vi. To approve list of payments
Cllr Mrs Harris proposed that the list of payments be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Baker and all were in favour. Cllr Roper and Cllr Myers undertook to authorise the payments online.

139. Licensing

The Clerk reported that SDC Licensing Officers have advised that no application has yet been received for a Neverworld event this year. The Chairman asked D.Cllr Mrs Coleman to speak and the Closed Session was suspended. D.Cllr Mrs Coleman undertook to speak to Licensing Officers to see if an application has been made. The Closed Session was resumed.

140. Affordable Housing provision in the parish

The Clerk reported as follows:

- i. Site adjacent to Chequers Barn, Bough Beech: Alison Thompson from ERHA said that the solicitors are still working on the land option agreement and both she and the landowner are chasing them.
- ii. Site adjacent to Bassetts, Chiddingstone Causeway: Alison Thompson said: "our highways consultant has now requested a meeting with a more senior officer at KCC, as they believe Highways is incorrect in disputing the visibility splays put forward, following the road safety audit. One comment from Highways has been that because the Parish Council have plans to submit a Traffic Reduction Order, then there is 'accident potential' (although there is no data to support this)." Members agreed that a reduction in speed would reduce any 'accident potential' there may be on this or any road. This would be a benefit for the visibility at this site.
- iii. Site Opposite The Rock, Chiddingstone Hoath: none.

141. To discuss the Sports Field in Chiddingstone Causeway

Cllr Roper reported that, after the decision last month to investigate and in principle make an application for Village Green status on the sports field in Chiddingstone Causeway, he and Cllr Myers have been in discussion about how to proceed. The documentation that Debbie James had pulled together is now out of date and the Parish Council need to start the exercise again. A simple questionnaire for local residents to complete is being drawn up, this will show what use they have made on the sports field and what they have seen other people doing without permission from the landowner. This needs to be hand delivered to all people in Chiddingstone Causeway and surrounding area, including Charcott, Somerden, houses on the B2027 towards Waterlake, Camp Hill, Moorden and Knotley Hall. Cllr Mrs Harris reported that she spoke to the Causeway Stoolball Club and the sport has been played on the sports field for 100 years, there was a senior league and a junior league.

100 years ago also cricket and football were played on the sports field. The Pavilion was built in 1908, previously they used a tent. Cllr Baker said that the Causeway School and the Village Hall used the sports field. Cllr Myers said that recent use of the sports field is also important. Cllr Roper undertook to circulate the draft questionnaire to members for comments or views. There is no fee for making the application. Cllr Roper undertook to contact the landowners' agents to advise them of the Parish Council's intentions and to ask whether the landowners may be prepared to submit an application themselves.

142. Rights of Way

None.

143. Highways

- i. To discuss the speed limit on B2027 through Chiddingstone Causeway including traffic surveys
Cllr Roper reported that the traffic survey has been carried out and the tubes have been removed today. KCC will now assess the information and respond to the Parish Council with the results and any recommendation by the end of March.
- ii. To discuss the replacement of the wooden fingerpost opposite the junction to Camp Hill
None.
- iii. To discuss the proposal to install wildlife cameras and CCTV notices in the parish and associated costs
Cllr Taylor reported that one wildlife camera has been purchased and it is hoped that this will be placed on British Rail land on Clinton lane as a trial to see how it works. Approval has been requested from Network Rail but a response has yet to be received. If this works well, then the Parish Council could purchase additional cameras for other parish flytipping hotspots. Cllr Taylor said that he can source the CCTV warning signs. If Network Rail is slow at responding, it was agreed that the Clerk and Cllr Taylor would discuss and agree another location for the trial. Members agreed, proposed by Cllr Myers, seconded by Cllr Williams and all were in favour.

144. Aviation

- i. The Clerk reported that the response to the Night Flight consultation was submitted prior to the deadline.
- ii. The Clerk reported that NATS has stated on its blog: "We are planning operationally for 75% of 2019 traffic this summer. It's by no means certain that traffic will reach those levels, but we do know that if – and when – the industry gets the green light, the airlines will be up and running very quickly indeed and we have always said that airspace won't be a constraint on the restart. But we don't know which routes may open up, and whether there will be a surge in bookings for the May half-term. If airline routes and schedules are not dissimilar to 2019 we can handle 75% with current social distancing measures in place in our ops rooms. We are now running simulations at both of our centres at Prestwick and Swanwick to restore confidence for our controllers. Those will be complete in May so I'm confident we will be ready to respond when the moment comes."

145. To discuss the request by Chiddingstone Village Hall for a letter of support for work to the driveway

The Clerk reported that Bob Golds has emailed to say: "In the last few years, we have been having difficulty in obtaining National Trust support for renewing the driveway which has been partly damaged by considerable rainfall and partly by 'wear and tear'. The School has recently replaced the non-functioning ACO drain and grating across the School gateway which has greatly improved matters but the driveway itself is in need of attention. It also represents a Health & Safety risk and last year someone tripped and fell. The responsibility for repair or renewal lies with the National Trust but our lease requires the Village Hall to contribute, which of course we will do. When I raised this with the National Trust last year, they (understandably) were short of income for this Financial Year. However, we are fast approaching a new Financial Year and I would like to write to remind them of their responsibility, offer our contribution and seek approval for an early go-ahead. It would strengthen our case if we could append a letter of support from the Parish Council, perhaps highlighting the considerable usage and the safety angle." Members agreed that the Parish Council would write a letter of support.

146. To discuss correspondence received

- i. Item 3: Kent Police: Camp Hill, Chiddingstone - between 7:00am on Wednesday 24th February and 7:00am on Thursday 25th February, somebody broke into a garage at a residential property and stole various tools.
- ii. Item 7: Email regarding the provision of a new telegraph pole on National Trust land for the provision of fibre broadband to Chiddingstone School. This was sent to Gary Churchill at The National Trust.
- iii. Item 8: Kent Police: There are reports from Kent Police on the increase of dog theft or attempted thefts in Kent over the past week. Cases have increased by 33% in the South East since 2018 - with 163 incidents reported within the last year. Dog thefts are now at an all-time high, with puppies stolen for an immediate resale and adult dogs being taken for forced breeding on puppy farms. Report information about a stolen dog or suspicious behaviour to Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or call the Police on 101.
- iv. Item 10: KCC: Member Briefing on Environmental issue: (relevant excerpts)
A Major Grant for KCC's Major Energy Projects: In July 2020 KCC not only committed to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2030, but also identified a series of Major Energy projects that would achieve this goal. We're now delighted to announce that KCC has been awarded a grant of £20.6m towards the cost of these projects. The grant comes from the Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and will fund two solar parks, solar panels, LED lights and heat pumps across the KCC estate. These projects will reduce carbon emissions and costs as well as improving Kent's energy resilience. We've also applied for £1.2m in funding for energy saving projects for Kent's schools. We'll be moving at pace as the Government expects us to deliver these projects by 30 September 2021.
The Parish Charger Project: The first 28 locations for our Parish Charger project are now receiving full quotes from our supplier, Connected Kerb, with installations due to start within the next month or so. We're delighted to announce that we've secured funding for a further round of installations. Parish Councils and trustees of Community buildings who would like to have an EV charging point for public use installed on their land should contact electricvehicles@kent.gov.uk to find out more.
Clerk undertook to send this information to the Causeway Hall.

147. To hear a report and discuss Parish Projects:

None.

148. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda

Cllr Roper asked whether members would like to discuss at the next meeting whether the Parish Council should consider what can be done with the area around the pond in Chiddingstone Causeway. The area is very overgrown, the fence is a mess and there is a lot of vegetation left from the tree works. It would be nice to improve the area for the local residents. Whether this means asking The Redleaf Trust if the Parish Council could take ownership of the pond area or carry out some work there but without taking it on formally. Cllr Baker said that there are liability issues with the pond due to the surface water in Redleaf Close that runs off the fields, into the car parking area and gardens, then into the pond. There is a culvert that runs from the pond under the road to the sports field. Members agreed to give this some thought and item to be added to the Agenda for the April Parish Council meeting.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday 19th April 2021 at 7.30pm via zoom. The Annual Parish Meeting will be held prior to this meeting, commencing at 6.30pm

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.

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