

**MINUTES OF THE CHIDDINGSTONE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 19TH NOVEMBER 2019 AT 7.30PM IN CHIDDINGSTONE CAUSEWAY VILLAGE HALL**

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

Apologies: District Cllr Mrs S. Coleman and District Cllr J. Osborne-Jackson

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

Open Session

Report by County Cllr Lake

County Cllr Lake reported as follows:

- Petition: C.Cllr Lake will discuss the Parish Council's petition for speed reduction in Chiddingstone Causeway with the Chairman of KCC and he would prefer to present it to KCC rather than the Joint Transportation Board. C.Cllr Lake said that he will also be pushing for speed reductions in Wellers Town and Markbeece. He hopes to present the Parish Council's petition at the KCC meeting on 16th December.
- Bus Drivers: C.Cllr Lake is following up the matter of bus drivers and the requirement for DBS checks. He will be asking the Cabinet member for Highways & Transport at the KCC meeting on 16th December why existing Go Coach drivers are not required to have a DBS check.
- Operation Brock: this is KCC's policy for getting lorries around Kent post Brexit, which has come to a halt, but the matter will be watched to see what happens.
- Aviation: C.Cllr Lake said that he was away for the GON public meeting, but he understands that they have raised £10,000. Cllr Streatfeild said that the total is now £13,000. This is funding required to back the Gatwick's Big Enough campaign. C.Cllr Lake said that he hopes to be KCC's representative again on Gatcom.
- KCC Budget: C.Cllr Lake said that he feels that a total increase in council tax of 3% is the maximum that KCC should impose, and that the Government should realise that the increasing costs relating to social care should not be paid for solely by tax payers but by central Government.
- KCC Finances: C.Cllr Lake reported that KCC's pension fund holds an investment in the Woodford Equity Income Fund. Trading in this equity fund was suspended in June 2019, and in October KCC was notified that the fund would not be reopened and instead would be wound up in January 2020, when investments will start to be repaid to investors from the fund's assets. This delay in recouping the Kent Pension Fund's investment will not impact on the fund or its ability to pay members. The Woodford investment represents around 4% of KCC's total investments which were valued at £6.432bn.

Questions from Members of the Public

1. A resident from Chiddingstone Hoath asked whether the Parish Council was aware that a public footpath in Chiddingstone Hoath has been obstructed? He saw two men installing an electric fence which obstructed PROW 539, this footpath runs diagonally across the field, joining PROW 540 at the corner. The electric fence is obstructing the path at both ends. The men said that the fence is required because the landowner wants to graze sheep in the field, the fence is merely diverting walkers around the edge of the field, also is only temporarily there for a week or two. The resident said that he has now reported this obstruction to Kent PROW, and has received an automatically generated response to say that the issue has been inspected and officers are working with the landowner to resolve the problem. To date no sheep have been put in the field. C.Cllr Lake said that he will discuss this with PROW officers. Cllr Mrs Harris undertook to speak to the landowner.
2. The owner of the village shop in Chiddingstone Causeway attended the meeting in order to ask the Parish Council for its initial view regarding plans to improve the shop, retaining the Post Office. The plans will shortly be submitted to SDC for Pre-Planning Advice. The Parish Council gave some initial feedback, and item to be put on the agenda for the December Parish Council meeting.

Report by District Cllr Mrs Coleman

In the absence of D.Cllr Mrs Coleman, the Clerk read her report:

- Local Plan: SDC has now sent a detailed reply to the Inspector and provided more evidence that the 'duty to cooperate' has been met. The Planning Inspector will not provide SDC with the codes necessary to upload these extra documents onto the Local Plan Library during the election purdah however detailed information can be found on the 'news and updates' section of the SDC website. SDC is taking legal advice about the possibility of launching a Judicial Review action.
- CIL: The next spending board will be meeting on 9th December to consider the shortlisted funding applications.
- Fire Safety: Following D.Cllr Mrs Coleman's visit to the House of Commons when the Grenfell Report was debated she has made enquiries about the position locally. Only 2 high-rise buildings caused any concern and on further investigation neither were using the same type of cladding which caused the Grenfell tragedy and are considered safe.

County Cllr Lake and members of the public left the meeting at 8.30pm.

Closed Session

81. **Apologies for absence** were received from District Cllr Mrs Coleman and District Cllr Osborne-Jackson.
82. **Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed**
None.
83. **The minutes of the Chiddingstone Parish Council Meeting held on 15th October 2019** were approved and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Mrs Harris, seconded by Cllr Mrs Quirk and all were in favour.
84. **Planning:**
 - i. To consider planning applications received
SE/19/02968 and SE/19/02969/LBCALT: Hale Oak Farmhouse, Hale Oak Road, Sevenoaks Weald TN14 6NQ – erection of hardstanding. Members had no objection to this application.

The Clerk reported that since the last meeting, the Planning Committee considered the following applications:

- i. SE/19/02830/LDCEX: Newtyehurst Farm, Cowden Pound Road to Truggers Lane, Mark Beech TN8 7DA - confirmation that the end two sections of Building B at New Tyehurst Farm are Lawful. Members had no objection providing the application satisfies planning policy and the applicant has specified a proven need.
- ii. SE/19/02912/LBCALT: Lockskinners Barn, Chiddingstone TN8 7NA - single storey infill extension and alterations to the roof of the cow shed. Members had no objection providing the application satisfies planning policy.
- iii. SE/19/02757/FUL: Three Horseshoes Lodge, Chiddingstone Castle, Chiddingstone TN8 7AD - demolition of dwelling and erection of one dwelling, landscaping works. Members supported this application, providing that there is a condition imposed to ensure that the privacy of the northern boundary of the new access to the site, which borders Tyehall in Hill Hoath Road, is preserved and conserved, and that a post and rail fence be erected and a mixed native hedge planted. There should also be a condition to prevent the erection of urban types of boundary in this location, especially close-boarded fencing, as this would be out of keeping in the Conservation Area.
- ii. To report SDC notifications of planning decisions
 - SE/19/02289/HOUSE: Hoath Hall, Chiddingstone Hoath - demolition of existing porch, erection of a larger porch and alterations to fenestration. Application approved.
 - SE/19/02623/FUL: Land to Rear of 1 & 2 Camp Hill Cottages, Camp Hill Chiddingstone Causeway-erection of semi-detached pair of dwelling houses and associated vehicular access. Application approved.
 - SE/19/02635/HOUSE: Lockskinners Farmhouse & Granary Cottage, Lockskinners Chiddingstone - removal of chimney, moving of the front door to Granary Cottage, removal of porch to Farmhouse, moving of modern internal dwelling divisions and relocation. Application approved.

- iii. To hear update regarding SDC's Draft Local Plan
The Clerk reported that the Planning Inspectorate unexpectedly cancelled the next round of Local Plan hearings. Despite having all the Local Plan evidence 169 days earlier, the Government Appointed Inspector, Karen Baker, wrote to SDC on 15 October, about its 'Duty to Co-operate' with neighbouring councils to find sites for new homes. She said: "My main concern relates to the lack of constructive engagement with neighbouring authorities to resolve the issue of unmet housing need." Evidence submitted to the Inspector, however, clearly demonstrates the Council had worked closely with its eight neighbouring councils since 2015 when it began the new Plan. See Open Session above for more information.
- iv. To discuss planning training event at SDC to be held on 15th January 2020
The Clerk reported that SDC has changed the date again due to the Election, and the new date will be 4.30pm-6pm on Wednesday 15th January in the Council Chamber. Cllr Roper, Cllr Williams, Cllr Bishop and Cllr Mrs Harris have said they'd like to attend.

85. **Licensing:**

To discuss the Neverworld Festival 1st to 4th August 2019

The Clerk reported that she has chased the organiser of the event with the Parish Council's queries, but nothing received yet.

86. **Finance**

- i. To discuss Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign's application for grant towards Gatwick's Big Enough
Cllr Streatfeild reported that he attended the GACC AGM last week and at the present time he does not feel that it would be a correct spend of public money to give a grant to GACC. Clerk to add item to the December Parish Council agenda for consideration to give a grant to GON in this financial year.
- ii. To discuss KCC's draft budget consultation 2020-2021
The Clerk reported that KCC is currently consulting on its budget for 2020-21. The consultation runs until 25th November 2019, see www.kent.gov.uk/budget
 - Next year KCC expect its budget to increase by up to £60m (6% of their net budget). This increase comes from a combination of an additional one-year grant from central Government, particularly to help towards social care pressures. The proposals in this consultation to increase Council Tax by up to the 2% referendum level and levy a further additional 2% towards social care.
 - The funding KCC receives is still not keeping pace with the additional costs and demand for services. Taken together, this means there is forecast to be a budget gap in 2020-21 of between £18m and £22m. KCC is confident that they can resist some of the additional costs and demands, which will help to close the gap, but savings will still be needed to balance our budget.
 - Council Tax: An increase of just under 2% would add £23.04 per year (or 44p per week) to the KCC element of the bill for a typical band C property and take the total KCC element of council tax to £1,178.08 (or £22.60 per week). Such an increase would raise £14.3m towards the council's rising costs.
 - Social Care: KCC is proposing to levy a 2% social care increase in 2020-21. This would raise an additional £14.3m to be spent on adult social care services and increase the KCC element for a band C property by a further £23.04 (or 44p per week). This would make the final estimated band C bill, after the social care levy, to be £1,201.12.
 - KCC has saved £657 million since 2011

Members agreed to support C.Cllr Lake's view that the maximum increase in council tax should be 3%.
- iii. 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 Streatfeild and Cllr Roper undertook to authorise the payments online.
- iv. Finance Committee Meeting
The next Finance Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday 26th November at 7.30pm in Chiddingstone Causeway Village Hall. Cllr Streatfeild, Cllr Roper, Cllr Williams, Cllr Bishop and the Clerk to attend.

87. **Affordable Housing provision in the parish**

The Clerk reported as follows:

- i. Site adjacent to Chequers Barn – a meeting was held with the landowner, ERHA, Cllr Streatfeild and the Clerk to discuss how to move forward now that the SDC Draft Local Plan is currently at a standstill. It was agreed to push forward with a planning application, taking comments from the Pre-Planning Advice into consideration.
- ii. Site adjacent to Bassetts – ERHA has advised that Savills, acting for the landowner, is keen to push forward with a planning application soon. They have prepared a new layout plan.
- iii. Site opposite The Rock – none.

88. Highways

- i. To discuss the proposal to reduce the speed of vehicles on B2027 though Chiddingstone Causeway
See Open Session above.
- ii. To discuss a Chiddingstone Highways Improvement Plan
No update.
- iii. To discuss correspondence regarding the use of farm vehicles on the roads
The Clerk reported that she emailed one of the parish farmers and had a very proactive response, and a meeting has been arranged. Cllr Streatfeild, Cllr Mrs Harris, Cllr Roper and the Clerk to attend. The farmer said that his staff had seen some appalling behaviour from residents, which he would also like to discuss with the Parish Council. Cllr Bishop asked that members ask the farmer whether he has a HSE plan for the agricultural vehicles using the public highway.
- iv. To hear update regarding fly tipping in the area
Cllr Taylor reported that he has received an update from SDC regarding the fly tipping near Nizels, which included some identifying paperwork. The culprit is known to SDC but has not yet been found. Flytipping has also been collected from Clinton Lane and Coopers Corner.
- v. Highway Issues
 - i. The Clerk reported that she received a complaint from a resident of Camp Hill as SDC has replaced the Richards Close sign and the new sign is in the wrong position. Clerk has reported this online.
 - ii. Drainage at Wellers Town – the Clerk and Cllr Bishop are going to meet Emily Kinsella, KCC drainage officer, on site with SES Water on Monday 25th November between 2pm and 4pm.
 - iii. Hedge in Chiddingstone Hoath – a resident advised that he was told by KCC Highways to substantially cut back his hedge, which is right on the roadside. He has agreed to undertake the work.

89. Rights of Way

See Open Session above.

90. Tree Warden / Pond Warden reports

Cllr Bishop reported that he attended the South East Tree Wardens Forum in Maidstone and Mote Park on 2nd November. 90 people attended the forum and there was a speaker from Sussex Woodland Trust. The key message is for communities to plant more hedges and trees, and Clerk to mention in the Parish Magazine that this is to be encouraged and free trees might be available.

91. To discuss a Sevenoaks District Climate Emergency

The Clerk reported that she emailed District Cllr Margot McArthur, who is the Chairman of the Cleaner & Greener Advisory Committee, saying that Chiddingstone Parish Council has asked whether SDC has declared a climate emergency. The response was “Consideration is currently actively underway as to how SDC can work towards a zero carbon future. Our Leader Cllr Fleming will be bringing a paper to the next Full Council meeting on 19th November for debate, and I am sure tree-planting will form part of that. Therefore, at present, SDC has not declared a climate emergency, but I am copying Cllr Fleming into this response so he is aware of your views.”

92. To discuss Kent Wildlife Trust’s application to designate the woods South of Chiddingstone Castle as a Kent Local Wildlife Site

Members agreed to investigate this further before submitting a response.

93. Aviation:

See Finance and Open Session above. The Clerk reported that GON's public meeting was held on Friday 1st November in Penshurst Church. 200 people attended and the main reason for the meeting was to raise funds towards GON's costs in relation to the Gatwick's Big Enough campaign. Within 5 days, they had raised £10,000, total now £13,000. The AEF AGM was on Monday 11th November, and GACC held their AGM on Friday 15th November. Cllr Streatfeild attended, the new date for the AGM is in February. GACC wants all county, district and borough councils to have the opportunity to scrutinise planning applications for Gatwick Airport. There is an invitation to attend the Gatwick Airport Airspace & Noise Management Board annual public meeting on 3rd December at the Hilton Hotel, South Terminal, Gatwick Airport from 2pm to 5pm. Pre-booking required.

94. 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 5: KALC Sevenoaks branch: Agenda for their AGM at 7pm on Thursday 22nd November 2019 at Sevenoaks Town Council Office, Bradbourne Vale Rd, Sevenoaks TN13 3Q, followed by a branch meeting with guest speaker SDC Cllr Lesley Dyball talking about her People & Places portfolio.
- ii. Item 6: Eden Valley Museum Trust – newsletter.
- iii. Item 9: Kent Police:
 - Ide Hill Road, Bough Beech – on Thursday 17th October between 2:00pm and 2:30pm, somebody arrived at a farm in a black Ford Transit van, entered the warehouse and stole two chainsaws.
 - Hoath Corner, Chiddingstone - between 6:05pm on Friday 18th October and 1:06am on Saturday 19th October, somebody smashed the driver's side window of a Mazda CX-5.
 - Richards Close, Chiddingstone Causeway: between 12:01am on Monday 28th October and 3:44pm on Thursday 31st October, somebody keyed a Mercedes C Class parked in the road.
 - Chequers Hill, Chiddingstone Causeway: on Thursday 31st October between 9:55am and 11:55am, somebody broke into a shed at a residential property and stole a chainsaw.
 - Hoath House, Chiddingstone Hoath: between 4:30pm on Tuesday 29th October and 7:00am on Wednesday 30th October, somebody broke into a shed at a residential property and stole an orange/black Kubota lawn mower.
- iv. Item 12: SDC "The Community Grant Scheme helps voluntary organisations which provide services, activities or projects that benefit Sevenoaks District residents, focusing on those in greatest need. The fund will support services, activities or projects that are delivered with the help of volunteers and that support Sevenoaks District Community Plan priorities set out below
 - Volunteering:
 - Promote, encourage or support volunteers and volunteering as part of a project, service or activity.
 - Social Inclusion:
 - Improve opportunities for vulnerable or elderly people;
 - Encourage community participation of excluded or vulnerable groups;
 - Improve the wellbeing of local residents.
 - Community Safety:
 - Reduce crime or anti-social behaviour. Information, Advice, Advocacy and Counselling:
 - Provide information, advice, advocacy or counselling to residents when they are in particular need.
 - Young People:
 - Projects, services and activities that encourage participation in local communities or provide positive activities or opportunities for young people.
 - Arts and Sports:
 - Funding for the Sevenoaks District Arts and Sports Councils to support arts and sports projects that contribute to the overall wellbeing of residents and encourage the inclusion of groups with particular needs.
 - Community Grants Scheme 2020/21 Who can apply?

You can apply if you deliver services to Sevenoaks District residents in two or more parishes and are a "Not for profit" registered charity; a Youth organisation; a Voluntary organisation or a Community Interest Company.

If your organisation works with children, young people or vulnerable adults, you should have a Safeguarding Policy and staff and volunteers must have enhanced level Disclosure and Barring Service checks and appropriate training.

The minimum you can apply for is £100. The most we will award for any one application is £5,000 The grant can be spent on project costs such as support for volunteers, equipment or premises hire. In addition, you can apply for core running costs that are commensurate with the project, service or activity applied for.”

- v. Item 15: Kent Police Rural Task Force report, 4th November.
- vi. Item 16: Martin Barraud: “Three years on from a local idea to help take Penshurst’s 50 Fallen off the wall, we were invited last Friday by the Western Front Association to lay a Tommy at The Cenotaph as part of the Service on 11th November.” Cllr Roper reported that he laid a wreath on Remembrance Sunday on behalf of the Parish Council. Item to be added to the December Parish Council agenda to consider a grant to Royal British Legion. Clerk to contact churchwardens regarding the purchasing of wreaths in future.

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

- i. Maintenance of Closed Churchyard and other parish areas:
None.
- ii. Rural swathe and visibility cutting contract
The Clerk reported that the third cut will be done within the next couple of weeks. The cost for the contract next year will be about the same as this year, there may be a slight increase due to fuel costs.
- iii. Community Garden
 - i. To discuss new lease from The National Trust and agree legal fees
Item to be considered next month.
 - ii. To consider the provision of a hand rail to be installed by the steps
Members agreed that this should be paid for by the Village Hall Management Committee and Cllr Mrs Harris undertook to discuss this with them.
- iv. Chiddingstone village carpark
Nothing to report.
- v. Bough Beech car parking area:
The Clerk reported that she has submitted the Parish Council’s request for a contribution from BBRAT and Cllr Streatfeild and the Clerk have been invited to attend their meeting on Wednesday at 8pm.
- vi. Bulk Refuse Freighter
The Clerk reported that the next date is Friday 7th December.
- vii. Rural Crime
The Clerk reported that a meeting was held in The Rock on Wednesday 13th November, and the notes of the meeting are on the Parish Council’s website. A new SOS WhatsApp group has been formed, which is cross-parish, and currently there are 120 on the group. Hartfield Parish Council has asked what else can be done cross-parish, and how can the parishes work together? Cllr Streatfeild said that the key message is to report anything suspicious to the police, which will not only get crimes logged and investigated but will also ensure that more police resources are sent to this area. The PCSOs are having a stand outside Waitrose in Edenbridge on 23rd November. Cllr Bishop said that he wanted it emphasised that the new SOS WhatsApp group is not a vigilante group, but just local people who want to assist neighbours through a social media form of neighbourhood watch. Cllr Streatfeild said that people must remain in their cars and take photos or videos of the perpetrators, they must not put themselves at risk. The PCSO has advised that he drives through the parish in a marked police car when he’s on duty and there are a lot of unmarked police cars patrolling the area.

96. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda

The Clerk reported that the manager of the Bough Beech Kent Wildlife Trust site by the reservoir, has advised that Kent Wildlife Trust is moving out of the site, they are giving up their lease, which expires in 2027, and they are giving the site back to the water company. The water company is trying to find someone else to take it on. The Kent Wildlife Trust has had a centre there for 50 years. The centre was closed to visitors in 2017 but it still operated from the site, now they are moving away completely. Clerk to contact the school and Bore Place.

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 10th December 2019 7.30pm in Chiddingstone Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

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