

**MINUTES OF THE CHIDDINGSTONE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 22ND JUNE 2022 AT 7.45PM IN CHIDDINGSTONE VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllr J. Roper (Chairman), Cllr A. Baker, Cllr C. Bishop, Cllr P. Harris, Cllr P. Myers and Cllr B. Taylor
Apologies: Cllr M. Quirk, Cllr P. Vicary and District Cllr J. Osborne-Jackson
Absent: Cllr H. Williams
In attendance: Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk). County Cllr M. McArthur, District Cllr R. Streatfeild and two members of the public attended the Open Session only.

Cllr Roper welcomed everyone and congratulated District Cllr Streatfeild on his election as SDC ward member for Peshurst, Fordcombe & Chiddingstone.

Open Session

Report by County Cllr McArthur

County Cllr McArthur reported as follows:

- Ukraine: KCC continues to work closely and effectively with District and Borough colleagues to deliver the Homes for Ukraine scheme. As of 20th May there were 3,062 matched applications of Ukrainian nationals to 1,235 sponsors in Kent; and so far 1,281 have arrived in Kent. Tunbridge Wells, Sevenoaks and Maidstone have the largest numbers of applications. DBS checks, home checks and welfare visits are all going ahead although there is significant pressure on the capacity of both KCC and Districts and Borough Councils. While KCC has made a huge amount of progress in the last couple of months, there are major concerns across the country concerning the scope for re-matching when placements break down, funding arrangements and more. KCC continues to raise this with ministers, and KCC's leader has good access to this through his role on the LGA's Asylum and Migration Task Force. There is growing interest in the need for school places for Ukrainian children, 331 school age children have been notified to KCC's in-year admissions team, of whom 226 are known to have arrived in the county and 90 have accepted places. Places are generally being found within 2-3 weeks, but one of the biggest challenges is that for obvious and understandable reasons the Admissions Code still operates and so a place has to be found in the nearest school with a vacancy.
- Household Support: With many residents experiencing severe pressures from the rising cost of living, KCC has received a further grant, as announced by the Chancellor in his Spring Statement in March, of just over £11m from the Household Support Fund Extension, which KCC is allocating to Free School Meals for the May half term, as well as a £50 flat rate assistance for the summer holidays, along with support for vulnerable residents' energy and water bills and other help to those experiencing financial hardship.
- Children's Services: The recent report of the national Independent Review of Children's Social Care highlights problems of the sector across the country, and it is welcome to see that many elements of its programme for change reflect existing focus and priorities, such as early help and development of a family hubs model. Children's Services has had an Ofsted visit over the last few weeks, carrying out a routine inspection under the ILACS (Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services) framework. When the department was last inspected, in 2017 under a different framework, it was rated Good. The outcome of the inspection will be known on 5th July.
- Active travel: As part of the third round of the Active Travel programme, KCC has recently secured funding for two schemes, one for east-west cycle routes in Sevenoaks and one for walking and cycling in Herne Bay.
- KCC has had a major project come to fruition recently. The Amelia Scott Building in Tunbridge Wells, which was the old civic centre, opened on 28th April. Combining a museum, art gallery, library, registration services and adult education, this is an impressive achievement of joint work between TWBC and KCC.
- Potholes: An extra £7m has been approved for another pot-hole blitz.

Report by District Cllr Streatfeild

District Cllr Streatfeild reported as follows:

- He hasn't attended a full district council meeting since he was elected on 9th May, but he has been nominated to join the Development Control Committee, which will be useful.

- Aviation: Gatwick Airport Ltd (GAL) has formed a new Noise Envelope Group, the necessity for which has arisen from the Planning Inspectorate's request for more consultation on noise issues. GAL has come up with a scheme that is out of line and non-compliant with Government policy. GAL is pushing this proposal forward at a fast rate and wants to finalise plans on the noise envelope by September. GACC is going to involve Environmental Health with regards to noise parameters. D.Cllr Streatfeild recommended that the Parish Council writes to GACC and support its paper and also write to GAL, KCC and SDC to ask why Town and Parish Councils were not included in this consultation and specify the Parish Council's objections to GAL's proposals.

County Cllr McArthur and District Cllr Streatfeild left the meeting at 7.55pm.

Report by District Cllr Osborne-Jackson

In the absence of District Cllr Osborne-Jackson, the Clerk read his report:

- "Warm congratulations to District Cllr Richard Streatfeild on his election as ward member for Penshurst, Fordcombe & Chiddingstone and I look forward to working closely with you.
- The Platinum Jubilee weekend was very enjoyable and I attended both the Chiddingstone event and the Leigh event, both on the Sunday.
- The last month has seen a large amount of casework in the Leigh and Chiddingstone Causeway ward, and also the Penshurst, Fordcombe & Chiddingstone ward, which I was covering until District Cllr Streatfeild was elected on Thursday 9th May.
- I have had a one-to-one meeting with the head of housing at WKHA, and I am keeping residents informed.
- I welcome the news that contractors have been given the works order by KCC to reduce speeds in Chiddingstone Causeway and it was good to see partnership working to achieve this successful result.
- It is unfortunate for local residents and businesses that SES Water has had to extend the road closure in Chiddingstone Causeway but I am glad that SES Water is communicating with everyone. They have apologised for the disruption caused.
- I attended the armed forces flag raising day at SDC offices yesterday morning.
- I am happy to be contacted by members or residents on any matter at the district council or within my ward and will do all I can to help."

Questions from members of the Public

Two residents from the Horseshoes area on the Tonbridge Road attended the meeting to ask if there is anything that can be done to reduce the speed limit along this stretch. Cllr Roper said that the Parish Council has been working with KCC to implement a traffic regulation order to reduce speed in Chiddingstone Causeway from 40mph to 30mph. This has been a long process but work is due to start on 8th August. The Parish Council will take these concerns on board and will consider this request along with the requests for speed reduction in other parts of the parish.

The members of the public left the meeting at 8.10pm.

Closed Session

- 22. Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr Quirk and Cllr Vicary and members accepted their reasons for absence. Cllr Williams was absent. Apologies for absence were also received from District Cllr Osborne-Jackson.
- 23. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed**
None.
- 24. The minutes of the Chiddingstone Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 17th May 2022** were approved and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Harris, seconded by Cllr Taylor, and all were in favour.
- 25. To hear report of Chiddingstone Platinum Jubilee event held on Sunday 5th June 2022**
The Clerk reported that, despite dire weather forecasts, the day stayed dry and there was an excellent turnout in the Chiddingstone Castle grounds.

The school very kindly organised maypole dancing and child and adult races, and there was a tug-of-war, a dog show, an exhibition by Art in June, giant bubbles, traditional fete-style stalls, a Jubilee crown art tent, plus jazz was played during the whole event, which culminated in an opera recital in the orangery. Food was provided in the marquee and there was a barbeque, bar and wine for sale. The pizza van, ice cream van and coffee trailer were also in attendance. Huge thanks go to everyone who helped to organise the event, special thanks go to Laura Furness. Cllr Roper reiterated his thanks to all those who helped to make the day such a success.

26. Planning:

i. To consider planning applications received

- i. SE/22/01331/HOUSE: Carberry Cottage, Tonbridge Road, Bough Beech TN8 7AU - to raise the roof to create additional floor space. Alterations to fenestration. Replacement chimneys. First floor to be clad in clay hanging tiles. Solar panels on roof. Existing front pergola to be replaced with open flat roofed front porch. Members supported this application.
- ii. SE/22/01453/HOUSE and SE/22/01454/LBCALT: Lockskinners House, Chiddingstone TN8 7NA - replacement of modern windows, new roof lights, replacement of south porch, relocate existing SVP, minor internal reconfiguration. Members supported this application providing it satisfies planning policy.

The Clerk reported that since the last Parish Council meeting, the Planning Committee agreed the following response:

- iii. SE/22/01211/HOUSE: The Dairy Cottage, Mill Lane, Chiddingstone TN8 7AA - proposed conversion of loft space into further accommodation with dormers and rooflight. Members supported this application.

ii. To report SDC notifications of planning decisions

- SE/22/01039/HOUSE and SE/22/01040/LBCALT: Brook Cottage, Wellers Town Road, Chiddingstone Hoath - reinstatement of fire damaged pottery and greenhouse. Applications approved.
- SE/22/01119/WTCA: Chiddingstone Village Hall, The Village, Chiddingstone TN8 7AH. No objection to the proposed tree works as specified within amended notification and agreed on site. These works include: reduce crown by 30%, thin crown by 0-20%, raise canopy to 5.0m above ground level.
- SE/22/00820/HOUSE: 2 Lakeside Close, Bough Beech TN8 7PL - erection of glass balustrade around existing flat roof and erection of retractable awning. Application approved.
- SE/22/00490/HOUSE: Hillside, Chiddingstone Hoath - replacement of existing ground floor windows and doors with bifolding doors. Application approved.
- SE/22/00671/HOUSE: Squirrels, Ryewell Hill, Chiddingstone Hoath - three velux windows into roof on side elevations. Application approved.

27. Licensing

SE/22/01563/LAPRE: Lockskinners Farm, Chiddingstone TN8 7NA: premises licence application for the supply of alcohol across 160 acres at Lockskinners Farm between 11am and 9pm.

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting, it was agreed to submit a comment to say that the Parish Council had no objection to the sale of alcohol but do strongly object to the provision of live and recorded music. The application was then amended to remove the provision of live and recorded music and would only be for the sale of alcohol between 11am and 9pm. However, the provision of amplified and non-amplified music is deregulated and anyone who has a licence to sell alcohol can provide such if the number of attendees is under 500. Members agreed during the month to submit the following comment to the licencing officers:

Chiddingstone Parish Council has no objection to the sale of alcohol as part of this premises licence application. The Parish Council is concerned about the potential impact, disturbance and public nuisance to local residents if amplified live and recorded music is provided, but appreciate that this is deregulated if there is a licence to sell alcohol. The Parish Council would welcome conditions attached to this licence to limit public nuisance, if it is possible to restrict the numbers attending an event selling alcohol (separate to the cross-country events held at this site) to perhaps 50 and to restrict the number of vehicles/trailers selling alcohol to 1. A further condition limiting the times that amplified live and recorded music is provided would also be welcome.

28. Finance

- i. To approve costs of the Chiddingstone Platinum Jubilee event held on Sunday 5th June 2022
The Clerk reported that income for the event was £5,637.71 (including float) and net expenditure was £5,396.42 (including float), so there is a small profit of £241.29. There is one outstanding payment to Allmans Butchers. Members approved the accounts for the event. Proposed by Cllr Myers, seconded by Cllr Bishop and all were in favour.
- ii. To renew membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks: £135
Members approved this membership renewal, proposed by Cllr Harris, seconded by Cllr Bishop and all were in favour.
- iii. To renew membership of AEF: £36
Members approved this membership renewal, proposed by Cllr Myers, seconded by Cllr Harris, and all were in favour.
- iv. To approve list of payments
Cllr 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 to authorise the payments online.
- v. The Clerk reported that the six monthly payment to PWLB of £3,088.00 has been debited from the bank account.

29. Affordable Housing provision in the parish

- i. To hear update regarding the Chiddingstone Affordable Housing schemes
 - i. Chequers site in Bough Beech: the Clerk reported that the planning application has been submitted and is subject to normal consultation. Alison Thompson from ERHA said “We understand the case officer made a site visit last week but I’ve not had any update since. English Rural has paid for an independent consultant to review our Financial Viability Appraisal, on behalf of SDC.”
 - ii. Bassetts site in Chiddingstone Causeway: the Clerk reported that ERHA said: “On Bassetts we’ve received the ecological scoping survey which has highlighted further species surveys required so we’re seeking quotes for this work. We are nearly there regarding the drainage so am hoping we can restart the legal work to acquire the site in due course.”
- ii. To discuss a new Housing Needs Survey to potentially be carried out in June 2023
The Clerk reported that Liz Crockford from SDC had originally asked if SDC could carry out a second Second Stage Housing Needs Survey in June 2023, this is sent to all households but only those with a need are asked to respond. She has since discussed this with Planning Policy Officers, and said “The discussions concern the robustness and validity of parish needs surveys – a critical element in securing permission under rural exceptions planning policy. The outcome is that we are unwilling to accept more than one 2nd stage needs survey on the trot. Chiddingstone had a full survey in 2015 and a 2nd stage survey in 2018. For its next survey, a full survey will therefore be required. Although the Parish Council and ERHA are progressing rural exceptions sites in Bough Beech and Chiddingstone Causeway, a suitable site has yet to be identified in Chiddingstone Hoath. A full survey will give residents an opportunity to suggest potential sites here.” Members agreed to a full housing needs survey being carried out by SDC in May 2023.

30. Highways

- i. To hear update on the application to reduce speed on B2027 through Chiddingstone Causeway
The Clerk reported that KCC has confirmed that a works order has been raised with the contractors for the speed limit change, and they are aiming to begin construction during week commencing 8th August. Members agreed to open discussions with Leigh Parish Council on a possible speed reduction in Camp Hill.
- ii. To discuss access for lorries using the narrow lane at the top of the green in Chiddingstone Hoath and to consider quote for oak post on the corner of the green
The Clerk reported that she has received a quote for a 15cm (6”) square post with pointed top which would be installed on the corner to protect the postbox. Price: £168 + VAT. Members agreed to install two posts at the top of the green, one on each corner. Cllr Harris to investigate signs warning that the lane is unsuitable for lorries which would be placed on the green.

- 31. To hear update regarding the new fence and improvements at the pond in Chiddingstone Causeway**
The Clerk reported that the fence will be a solid picket fence with pointed tops. Batchellor Monkhouse will request the Parish Council's pledged contribution of £2,000 when the works take place.
- 32. Chiddingstone Sports Pavilion and Sports Ground**
- i. To hear update regarding the hedge planting works on the boundary of Chiddingstone Sports Field
Cllr Roper reported that the neighbouring residents have said that they own both fences and they do not want the area on their land to be cleared, topped or altered in any way. Therefore the free saplings from the Woodland Trust have been cancelled.
 - ii. To discuss the Sports Association's Constitution and membership
Cllr Roper reported that discussions are continuing as reported last month to regularise the Sports Association and agree a new constitution. The membership of the Sports Association will possibly be the Cricket Club, the Badgers, Chiddingstone School and Chiddingstone Parish Council, with a possible annual contribution of £1,000 each. A meeting is in the process of being arranged with these interested parties and item to be discussed next month. Members approved this draft basis for discussion as a means to take this forward.
- 33. Chiddingstone Community Garden**
The Clerk reported that approval has been granted by SDC to reduce the crown of the oak tree by 30%, thin the crown by 0-20% and raise the canopy to 5m above ground level. A quote for these works is awaited.
- 34. Aviation**
- i. To discuss Gatwick Airport Ltd's Noise Envelope consultation
See Open Session above. Members supported the Community Group Position Paper. Clerk to write to KCC, SDC and GAL as well as the community groups.
 - ii. To discuss Gatwick Airport Ltd's second consultation on their proposed Northern Runway Project
The Clerk advised that this second consultation covers changes to the car parking, travel to and from the airport, the airfield, hotels and offices, water management, carbon, noise, and others. These have evolved in response to feedback from the Autumn 2021 Consultation and due to further design, development, and environmental assessment work. Members felt that this consultation does not impact the parish but will accept the advice of GACC if a response is required.
- 35. To discuss correspondence received**
The Clerk reported that lists of correspondence received have been circulated and drew members' attention to the following
- i. Item 2: KALC:
 - Councillors Conference on Thursday 30th June at Lenham Community Centre 10am to 4pm including lunch. Cost £60 + VAT.
 - Chairmanship Conference on 28th July at Lenham Community Centre. This year the focus will be on community leadership.
 - ii. Item 3: Kent Police: monthly newsletter.
 - iii. Item 4: KCC: "on the 10th February, Kent County Council agreed its budget for 2022/23. In order to meet the ongoing severe financial challenges that the council faces, it was proposed that the discretionary Kent Homeless Connect service could be allowed to end when the contract expires on 30th September 2022. Instead KCC would work with district, city and borough councils, to find and embed alternative ways of delivering this essential support. See www.kent.gov.uk/homelessness consultation."
 - iv. Item 7: SDC: The Platinum Jubilee Village Hall Improvement Grant Fund will provide grant funding over three years (to 2025) to support capital improvement projects for village halls, such as installing Wi-Fi, extending buildings and modernising facilities. The new £3 million grant fund announced will be a significant boost to rural communities with 125 village halls set to benefit, allowing vital modernisation and improvements to take place. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/platinum-jubilee-fund-creates-boost-for-village-halls>. This has been sent to both village hall management committees.

- v. Item 8: South-East Communities Rail Partnership - 2021 Annual Review. “As with many organisations, 2021 was a challenging year for Community Rail but I hope you will see from the examples in our annual review that the Southeast Communities Rail Partnership CIC was able to deliver a number of successful projects collaborating with community groups and partners. We were incredibly pleased that at the national community rail awards in December 2021, to win “The Outstanding Contribution to Community Rail” award jointly with the Friends of Buxton Station.”
- vi. Item 9 and 17: SES Water communications: “We’re sorry for a change of dates to our work in your area but we’re spending a little longer in Tonbridge Road so we can improve our network and keep your supplies running. We recently let you know we’d have to replace a further 70 metres of water main. We’ve now realised, from digging in the road, that we’ll need to go a bit further. We’re sorry for any disruption this might cause but we have found the main we needed to locate just before Causeway Stores, so we won’t need to go any further. We will not be crossing the front of the shop and it will remain open, with parking, throughout our work. We expect to be complete, laying all the water main and transferring properties to it, by Sunday 7th August, when we’ll move into Camp Hill with a full road closure. All traffic management in Tonbridge Road will then be removed. We’re now looking to have all our work in Camp Hill completed by early October.”
- vii. Item 10: KALC: Kent Connect to Support - supporting you to live well in Kent. “Kent Connect to Support will help people find accessible, easy to navigate, interactive information and advice on care and support, for them, a relative or a friend. It can help people to look after themselves, stay independent and connect with their local community. See <https://kent.connecttosupport.org>.”
- viii. Item 11: Kent Police: The Village, Chiddingstone - between 00:01 on Saturday 4th June and 07:00 on Sunday 5th June, somebody stole lead from the roof of a church. Crime Report No. 46/108487/22
- ix. Item 14: Email from resident requesting that the speed limit is reduced on Camp Hill.
- x. Item 16: SDC: “Effective place branding turns a location into a desirable destination for residents, businesses, investors and visitors. The Sevenoaks place brand will help to sell the district’s potential.”
- xi. Item 18: SDC: “The next CIL Spending Board will be taking place on Thursday 1st September 2022, with a deadline for applications of midnight on Sunday 17th July 2022.”
- xii. Cllr Roper reported that there has been a discussion on the Chiddingstone Neighbourhood Watch Whatsapp group regarding cctv and the parish planters. Members agreed that the Clerk will only use the Parish Council’s platforms, which are email, the website and the Parish Council’s Instagram and Facebook pages, and not enter into dialogue on Whatsapp with the general public as it is not a Parish Council controlled platform.

36. To hear update regarding the Margaret Hyde Almshouses

Cllr Baker reported that the meeting between the Margaret Hyde Almshouses and the Penshurst Almshouses last week was postponed and a new date will be arranged. He will report back thereafter.

37. To hear a report and discuss Parish Projects:

- i. St. Mary’s Church post and rail fence and removal of dead Cedar tree
The Clerk reported that Hever Landscapes replaced the damaged fence as per their quote after the thieves who took the lead off the church roof left the fence broken and in a mess. The PCC may be able to claim on their insurance for this repair. There is a dead cedar tree by the church wall. The Clerk has shown Harry Walker, the arboricultural officer at SDC, and he confirmed that the tree is dead, suggesting the Parish Council apply for a 5 day notice to fell. Clerk to obtain quotes and to seek approval from both the diocese and SDC.
- ii. Heritage phone box in Chiddingstone Hoath
None.
- iii. Rural Swathe and Visibility Cutting
The Clerk reported that the first cut has been carried out across the cluster by KCC.
- iv. Litter Pick and Bulk Refuse Freighter
 - i. Litter Pick: Cllr Taylor reported that the next litter pick will be on Saturday 2nd July, meeting at the Wheatsheaf at 9.30am. He said he will tackle the car debris left at Coopers Corner after road traffic collisions. Clerk to contact Highways about this accident black-spot.

Clerk to add this date to the website. Other litter picks on this day to take place in other parts of the parish and Clerk to borrow equipment from SDC.

- ii. Bulk refuse freighter next dates: 2nd July, 10th September, stopping at
 - The Rock Inn, Chiddingstone Hoath 10.30-11.15
 - The Wheatsheaf Inn, Bough Beech 11.30-12.15
 - Richards Close, Chiddingstone Causeway 12.30-13.15
- v. Train horns in Bough Beech
The Clerk reported that she has now had agreement from Network Rail to meet on site, but is awaiting for a date.
- vi. Summer Family Fun Play event
This will take place on Friday 5th August from 2pm to 5pm on the Chiddingstone Causeway Sports Field. Members agreed to the provision of roadside advertising boards.

38. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda

Cllr Baker asked about the specification for the fencing work on the sports field in Chiddingstone Causeway. Clerk to contact Batcheller Monkhouse for an up-to-date plan for the work.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday 19th July 2022 at 7.30pm in Chiddingstone Causeway Hall. The meeting closed at 9.25pm.

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