

**MINUTES OF THE CHIDDINGSTONE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 21ST FEBRUARY 2023 AT 7.30PM IN CHIDDINGSTONE VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllr J. Roper (Chairman), Cllr C. Bishop, Cllr P. Harris, Cllr P. Myers, Cllr K. Outlaw, Cllr M. Quirk, Cllr B. Taylor, Cllr P. Vicary and Cllr H. Williams
Apologies: County Cllr M. McArthur
In attendance: Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk) and District Cllr R. Streatfeild

Open Session

Report by District Cllr Streatfeild

District Cllr Streatfeild reported as follows:

- The Gatwick Airport consultation closed in November and the proposal for the expansion of the airport to include the use of the northern runway will go to the Planning Inspectorate in a month's time. GACC and other aviation groups will then have more work to do. The impact of aviation noise on residents in the parish is being monitored by SDC. The proposed increase in use of the existing runway needs to be considered as this would have a more damaging impact on the community than the proposed use of the northern runway.
- Chiddingstone is one of two parishes in the district that have proposed affordable housing developments under way with a S.106 agreement and, as such, is in a very good position with regards to development in the Green Belt. SDC's new homes requirement is 13,000 over the ten year period of the next Local Plan, this would be 7,000 new homes on brownfield sites and 6,000 new homes on Green Belt land using a S.106 agreement. Westerham, Edenbridge and Sevenoaks currently have high intensity development sites under review. A S.106 agreement allows affordable housing to be built as an exception site on Green Belt land, and is a legal agreement between the landowner/developer and the district council. Currently no open market housing can be built on Green Belt land, although an element of open market housing can be built as part of an affordable housing scheme to facilitate the provision of affordable housing. SDC will be looking at sites put forward by Town and Parish Councils to develop for affordable housing under a S.106 agreement on Green Belt land. Chiddingstone parish is fortunate in that two schemes are proceeding, one at planning stage and one at pre-planning stage. The 2021 census shows that the district has aged by ten years, and so older persons developments under a S.106 agreement might be considered favourably. There will be a new call for sites process undertaken as part of the new Local Plan but the best way to proceed with development on Green Belt land for a scheme of affordable housing is via a S.106 agreement in partnership with Town and Parish Councils.
- KCC is under enormous financial pressure due to increased demand on services from the older and younger generations.

Report by County Cllr McArthur

In the absence of County Cllr McArthur, the Clerk read her report:

- "School buses: as previously discussed, the 235 bus service was reintroduced from mid-January, and will run until the summer holidays. KCC officers are acutely aware of the need for this service and continue to pursue funding avenues to extend or secure the route.
- Home to School transport consultation is now open at <https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/>
- Community asset consultation is now open, also at <https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/> for comments on the county wide consolidation of community assets, but so far the proposals show no impact for us.
- KCC Budget: KCC met last week to review proposed budget changes, and agreed the balanced budget. This will mean a council tax increase of 4.995%
- Salt bin – Bore Place Road: I have agreed to fund the installation of a salt bin close to Bore Place drive from my members grant funding."

Closed Session

138. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr County Cllr McArthur.

139. To co-opt new member of the Parish Council to fill existing vacancy

Cllr Roper reported that the vacancy that arose from the resignation of Andy Baker was advertised locally and one application to fill the vacancy was received. He proposed that Ms Kerry Outlaw be co-opted onto the Parish Council with immediate effect, this was seconded by Cllr Harris and all were in favour. Cllr Outlaw signed the declaration of office form which was counter-signed by the Clerk. Members welcomed Cllr Outlaw onto the Parish Council.

140. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed

Cllr Roper declared an NPI in item 153(iii) as he has asked one of the companies providing a quote for the Chiddingstone Closed Churchyard and areas maintenance contract, Hever Landscapes, to carry out some work for him on a personal basis.

141. The minutes of the Chiddingstone Parish Council Meeting held on 17th January 2023 were approved and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Quirk, seconded by Cllr Bishop, and all were in favour.

142. To discuss the format of the Annual Parish Meeting to be held on Tuesday 25th April 2023

Members discussed possible speakers for the meeting.

143. To discuss the Parish Elections to be held on Thursday 4th May 2023

Timetable

- The Notice of Election will be published on Friday 17th March 2023.
- Nominations will open on Monday 20th March at 10am and close at 4pm on Tuesday 4th April.
- Nomination papers are available online at <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/candidate-or-agent/parish-council-elections-england>.
- The Statement of Persons Nominated will be published on 5th April by 4pm.
- The deadline for residents to register to vote for the 4th May polls is Monday 17th April at midnight.
- New postal vote or postal proxy applications, or changes to existing postal or proxy arrangements must be received by 5pm on Tuesday 18th April.
- The deadline for new proxy applications is 5pm on Tuesday 25th April.
- The Notice of Poll and Situation of Polling Stations will be published on 5th April.

Electors who choose to vote in a polling station will need to provide photo ID for the first time at the polls being held on 4th May. Without an approved form of photo ID polling station voters will not be provided with a ballot paper. The pre-election period (previously called purdah) is from the notice of election on 18th March until the day of the election. The Parish Council is advised to consider its decisions carefully during this time but it is not supposed to stop the workings of a Parish Council.

144. To discuss event to commemorate King Charles III's coronation to be held on Sunday 7th May 2023 and approve costs

The Clerk reported that an application to close the High Street in Chiddingstone has been submitted from 6am to 6pm on Sunday 7th May from the village side of The Old Rectory up to the village side of The Rectory. A small working party of the Clerk, Cllr Harris, Suzanne and Nicoletta has been formed. Suzanne and Nicoletta will get together to provide a food basket to be purchased in advance. Cllr Harris has reserved the tables and chairs from the village hall. The Clerk will buy tablecloths and already has bunting. Voluntary donations of £1 per person will be requested on entry. The magician Rob Neal has been booked for 3 hours for £280. The school will do maypole dancing and also booked, but waiting for confirmation if they can get the numbers together, is a group of Morris Dancers. There will be a choral event in the Church at 4.30pm which is organised in conjunction with Rev'd Lindsay Llewellyn-MacDuff. There will be a royal theme fancy dress for people wishing to join in. Local musicians and comedians will be asked to join in if they would like to. The Parish Council's current insurance cover is adequate for up to 2,000 people. Members approved the costs considered so far.

145. Planning:

i. To consider planning applications received

- i. SE/23/00182/FUL: Bassetts, Tonbridge Road, Chiddingstone Causeway TN11 8JX - to replace the existing cottage with a new dwelling. Members agreed to undertake a site visit.

- ii. SE/23/00022/HOUSE: Hickens, Bore Place Road, Chiddingstone TN8 7AP - demolition of existing outbuildings; erection of new outbuilding for ancillary domestic use, with associated works. Members supported this application.
- iii. SE/22/03431/FUL: Commonwork Organic Farms Ltd, Bore Place, Bore Place Road, Chiddingstone - the construction of a roofed entrance gate and welcome area / visitor information hub. Amended: a schedule of materials has been submitted detailing the amended proposed materials. Members supported this application.
- iv. SE/22/03067/FUL: Causeway House, Tonbridge Road, Chiddingstone Causeway, Tonbridge TN11 8JP - demolition of existing buildings. Erection of 18 residential units with vehicular access, parking, carports, electricity substation and hard and soft landscaping. Amended (1): Additional information - surface water flooding response. Amended (2): Updated landscape plan showing extent of permeable paving - site plan, street scenes, elevations, sections, floor plans and schedule of accommodation for all units minor aesthetic changes to: Chimney stack profiles, re-orientation of dormers and rooflights to overcome overlooking, change in design of windows, rooflights, doors and porches and floor layouts. Planning Committee to review plans and agree a response.
- v. SE/23/00421/AGRNOT: Land at Reynolds Farm, Clinton Lane, Bough Beech - new General Purpose Agricultural Building and access track of free draining stone. Members objected to this application as the reasons given by SDC in their letter of refusal to the previous application are still relevant to this application.

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

- vi. SE/23/00076/LBCALT: The Old Rectory, The Village, Chiddingstone TN8 7AH - replacement of external steps and French door. Members supported this application
- vii. SE/22/03102/FUL: Barns at Watstock Farm, Wellers Town Road, Chiddingstone Hoath TN8 7BH - conversion and part-alteration of three existing barns to create four self-contained dwellings with associated parking, private garden and landscaping. Diversion of public path and bridle way. Amended to show additional ecological information that has been submitted, due to the comments received from KCC Ecology. Members agreed that they understood the need to mitigate the removal of a suitable GCN habitat due to this proposed development. However the proposal to plant trees and scrub in this location would have a negative impact on the openness of the Green Belt. This amendment adds to the Parish Council's general concern about the impact of the development on the Green Belt and AONB, this proposal now impacts the openness of the site. Members are also concerned about the impact of the lights from this development on the open aspect of Green Belt and AONB, and on the night sky.
- viii. SE/22/03533/HOUSE: Truggers Barn, Truggers Lane, Chiddingstone Hoath TN8 7BP - erection of two storey contemporary side extension with rooflights to be set down in height from original dwelling with the existing house comprising the original building/dwelling. Members objected to this application on the following grounds:
 1. The roofline of the proposed extension is too high and would have an overpowering impact on the cluster of Truggers Farm house and farm buildings. This would create an unacceptable bulk and scale in the Green Belt, AONB and Conservation Area. The Parish Council would accept an extension with a significantly lower roof height and with a roof angle to match the existing property. This could be achieved by having a single storey extension or by digging down to lower the ground floor level.
 2. The proposal would have a negative impact on the listed building of Truggers Farm.
 3. The choice of materials is considered to be out of keeping with surrounding properties and buildings. The Parish Council objects to the metal cladding on the elevations and roof of the proposed new extension. The Parish Council would accept vertical timber cladding which would differentiate from the existing barn. The recessed shadow gap could be a metal strip which would also create a differentiation from the existing barn. The Parish Council would like to see a Kent peg clay tile roof to match the surrounding dwellings.
 4. The Parish Council would like to see a section drawing of the existing and proposed development as it is unclear whether the levels are correctly shown. For example, floor to ceiling heights of the proposed extension are not shown and there are internal steps on the ground floor but none are shown on the first floor.

If shown incorrectly, this would affect the overall height of the proposed development.

5. If possible, the Parish Council would like the proposed new roof lights over the study on the first floor to be placed nearer to the ridge of the barn. This would ensure that privacy is maintained for the neighbouring properties.

ii. To report SDC notifications of planning decisions

- SE/22/03249/HOUSE and 22/03250/LBCALT: The Barn, Oakenden Lane, Chiddingstone Hoath - side extension to existing dwelling and new vehicular access from lane via existing gate and associated landscaping works. Application refused. Reasons: (1) The scale and materials of the proposed extension, together with additional visual clutter of the pergola, would dominate and obscure views of the Grade II listed barn on site and visually detract from its visual prominence, as well as detracting from how the local grouping of buildings (The Barn and Oakenden) are experienced together, along the southern approach to Oakenden Lane. As such, the scheme would fail to conserve the heritage asset and is contrary to policy EN4 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan. The scheme would constitute less than substantial harm and there are no public benefits of the scheme which would outweigh this harm. As such the scheme is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework. 2) The length, perpendicular siting and materials of the proposed extension, would create a large uninterrupted visual mass which would be prominently sited directly next to Oakenden Lane. As such, the design and siting would enlarge the Barn in a disproportionate manner and visually encroach on the present openness of the site. The extension is thereby inappropriate development in the Green Belt and is contrary to policy GB1 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan, sections 5.15 to 5.17 of the Development in the Green Belt Supplementary Planning Document, and paragraph 149c of the National Planning Policy Framework. There are no Very Special Circumstances identified to outweigh this harm and the scheme remains inappropriate development in line with paragraphs 147 and 148 of the National Planning Policy Framework. 3) The design, materials and siting of the extension would not conserve the dark skies, tranquillity and rural intrinsic qualities of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and immediate area. As such, the scheme is contrary to policies EN1 and EN5 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan, and is contrary to supplementary landscape and design guidance as outlined in the Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment 2017 and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2019- 2024.
- SE/22/03354/HOUSE: 2 Hobbs Hill Farm Cottage, Bradley Road, Blackham - erection of two storey side extension. Solar panels. Alterations to fenestration. Application approved.
- SE/23/00312/W5DAY: St Marys Church, The Village, Chiddingstone – to fell one dead Cedar Tree. No objection raised.
- SE/23/00065/W5DAY: The Green, Chiddingstone Hoath - works to an Ash tree in front garden. No objection raised.
- SE/22/03430/FUL: Vexour Farm, Hampkins Hill Road, Chiddingstone - agricultural building to cover a silage pit. Application approved.
- SE/22/03282/FUL: Land North of Winkhurst Farm, Coopers Corner, Ide Hill - change of use of field to Equestrian Use and construction of stable with store and tack room. Application withdrawn.
- SE/22/02435/HOUSE: Tithe Barn North, Clouts Farm, Ide Hill Road, Bough Beech - single storey rear extension with associated internal alterations. Application approved.
- SE/22/02999/FUL: Cedar Cottage, Coopers Corner, Ide Hill - demolition and replacement of dwelling and garage. Demolition of 4 outbuildings and erection of shed. Application approved.

iii. To hear update on potential breaches of planning policy

The Clerk updated members regarding a potential breach of planning policy in the parish.

146. Finance

i. To approve list of payments

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

ii. District Precept Tables

The Clerk circulated copies of the 2023/24 precept tables for Town and Parish Councils in the district.

147. Affordable Housing provision in the parish

- i. Chequers site in Bough Beech: the Clerk reported that the application has not yet been determined. The S106 agreement should be completed this week and the determination deadline is 23rd February.
- ii. Bassetts site in Chiddingstone Causeway: the Clerk reported that Ashill Regen have been slow to pass over the flood risk data to English Rural Housing Association, but have promised to do so this week. ERHA hopes to submit the planning application by early/mid March.

148. Highways and Rights of Way

- i. To hear update regarding applications for speed reduction measures in Bough Beech and on Camp Hill
The Clerk reported that she has asked KCC to proceed with all the traffic surveys in Bough Beech and on Camp Hill but has not yet heard back.
- ii. To consider initiating a SpeedWatch Scheme
The Clerk reported that two people have offered to volunteer for the Chiddingstone Community SpeedWatch Scheme. SDC have some SID boards that the Parish Council can borrow. Cllr Roper, Cllr Williams and Cllr Bishop undertook to volunteer and members agreed to proceed with the scheme.
- iii. To consider application to re-route SR514 in Bough Beech and to create a permissive path to Ide Hill Road
The Clerk reported that, due to the train noise nuisance issue, the Chair and the Clerk met the landowner, Jan Boomaars, to discuss whether he would mind if the footpath that leads from the level crossing in Bough Beech to the reservoir was re-routed, firstly under a permissive path whilst the formal application to re-route the path is considered. He was happy if the path went around the field and joined up with the existing path one end and Ide Hill Road the other. The proposal would be to create a permissive path around the field to the north of the railway track, with access to Ide Hill Road through the metal gate. Members agreed that the Clerk should write to the landowner to request permission to use this access for pedestrians only. The Parish Council will offer to pay to replace the metal gate at the roadside.
- iv. Highways
 - Urgent Road Closure - Hoath Corner to Oakenden Lane, Chiddingstone Hoath - 10th February 2023 for up to 1 day. The road will be closed from Hoath Corner to Oakenden Lane. This is to enable carriageway repairs to be carried out by Kent County Council.
 - Hoath Corner to Oakenden Lane, Chiddingstone Hoath - speed restrictions (20mph) to be in force between Watstock Bridleway to Chiddingstone Hoath from 17th March for up to 18 months because of carriageway patching, surface treatment and associated preparation, finishing and accommodation works, KCC intends to make an Order for traffic speeds to be restricted to 40mph on the approach to, and then 20mph through, working sites
 - Cycle event on Sunday 26th February from Sevenoaks travelling through Weald, Charcott and Chiddingstone Causeway. There are up to 1500 cyclists, on a 100km event.
 - A request was made to Highways for a new salt bin on Bore Place Road, on the corner by the old entrance to Bore Place. Highways said that requests could only come from County Cllrs, so the Clerk put the request to C.Cllr McArthur, who has managed to get approval for the bin and pay for it from her member's fund.

149. To discuss proposal for new Chiddingstone Sports Association constitution and associated costs

To be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting.

150. Aviation

See Open Session above.

151. 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: KCC Consultations:
 - Community Services consultation which runs from 17 January to 26 March 2023. The consultation proposes changes to the way we use our buildings to deliver some of our community services.

KCC has experienced big increases in costs and has less money to spend. Whilst ensuring effective support for residents who need services, KCC needs to:

- tackle the rising costs of maintaining our many buildings
- find savings, so we can balance the budget
- reduce our carbon footprint to meet our Net-Zero ambitions.

What services are included in the proposals? Children's Centres and Youth Hubs, Public Health Services for Children and Families, Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities, Community Learning and Skills, and Gateways. The proposals are:

- Having fewer permanent buildings, meaning that some of our buildings would close
- Co-locating more of our services, meaning more than one service would be available from some of the buildings
- Continuing to deliver some services by outreach, which means they do not take place in a dedicated or permanent space, but move around to when and where they are needed
- Ensuring residents can continue to access services and information online.

The proposals have been designed by considering where there is greatest need for services. Please visit www.kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation.

- Consultation on Draft Home to School Transport Policy for children and young people aged 4 to 16, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), to come into effect from the 2024-25 academic year. More information is available at www.kent.gov.uk/schooltransportpolicy. Deadline: 21st March 2023.
 - Consultation on Post 16 Transport Policy Statements for 2023-24 and 2024-25, which includes support for 19+ learners with an Education, Health and Care Plan. More information is available at www.kent.gov.uk/schooltransportpolicy. Deadline: 21st March 2023.
- ii. Item 3: KALC Sevenoaks meeting dates: March 10th, June 9th, September 8th, December 8th, all in Sevenoaks Town Council chamber from 7pm to 9pm.
- iii. Item 4: South East Water re: draft Water Resources Management Plan consultation which looks at how drinking water will be supplied to customers up to 2075. The consultation closes on 20th February.
- iv. Item 6: Kent Police:
- No Road Name, Chiddingstone - between 20:00 on Friday 10th February and 17:00 on Sunday 12th February, somebody broke into a marquee on a commercial property and stole tools. Crime Report No. 46/28926/23
 - Clinton Lane, Bough Beech - on Thursday 16th February around 18:25, somebody shot at and smashed a window of a Mini Cooper driving down the road. Crime Report No. 46/31155/23

152. To hear update regarding the Margaret Hyde Almshouses

Cllr Roper reported that no progress has been made since the last meeting. The Parish Council will nominate new trustees at the May Parish Council meeting.

153. To hear report and discuss Parish Projects, including approval of costs:

- i. Litter Pick, Bulk Refuse Freighter and Flytipping
- i. Parish litter pick – to be undertaken on 4th March, 1st July and 9th September
Cllr Taylor said that he carried out a litter pick on 4th February, clearing the stretch from the railway bridge on the B2027 to the village shop in Chiddingstone Causeway. A lot of rubbish was collected.
- ii. Bulk Refuse Freighter visits – arranged for 4th March, 1st July and 9th September.
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| 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 |
- iii. Flytipping – none.
- ii. Train horns in Bough Beech
See item 148(iii) above.
- iii. Maintenance contract for Chiddingstone Closed Churchyard and other areas
The Clerk left the room whilst the quotes were discussed. The quotes had all been sent to Cllr Roper. Members agreed that the maintenance contract will be awarded to Hever Landscapes Ltd for the next 3 years.

- iv. Parish telephone boxes and location of defibrillators
 - i. Chiddingstone village: the Clerk reported that Hilary Allen has offered to get a group of people together to refurbish the phone box if the Parish Council buys the materials. She suggested moving the defibrillator to the village hall. The Clerk said that the Village Hall Management Committee is happy for the defibrillator to be located in the village hall porch. Members agreed to proceed on this basis and approved the purchase of the materials to refurbish both the Chiddingstone and the Chiddingstone Causeway phoneboxes. Cllr Outlaw said that BBRAT has had trouble obtaining new defibrillator pads. Clerk undertook to order replacements early. Members agreed.
 - ii. Chiddingstone Hoath: Cllr Harris reported that the fundraising is in hand for the new phonebox. She added that a lorry has damaged the bottom step on the drive to one of the houses. Members agreed to push on with the posts. The Clerk to apply for a licence to install a post on KCC land.
- v. Summer Family Fun Play Event
The Clerk reported that this will be held from 10am to 2pm on Friday 11th August on the Chiddingstone Causeway Sports Field. Members agreed to book Andy Hiccup, who has been highly recommended by other councils, for 2 hours at a cost of £225.
- vi. Trees
 - i. The Clerk reported that she has spoken to Karah Templeton regarding the ash tree in the carpark by the tennis courts and is meeting Chris St. Pierre to look at the trees. The Clerk said that she will also discuss with Chris St. Pierre the two oak trees just past Wellers Town as a lot of deadwood is overhanging the road.
 - ii. The Clerk reported that she has applied for approval from SDC to fell the dead cedar tree in the closed churchyard in Chiddingstone, and approval given. The Clerk has also applied for permission from the Diocese but not heard anything.
 - iii. The Clerk reported that she has spoken to a resident opposite the dead tree in Chiddingstone Hoath, and suggested he obtains some independent advice. The tree is on unregistered land.
- vii. Penshurst Station
The Clerk reported that she's been approached by the South East Rail Partnership about Penshurst Station and whether some maps or artwork could be put on the platform fencing – a ROW map, some local information etc. Members agreed to give this consideration.

154. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda

- i. Cllr Roper reported that the matter of a Chiddingstone car park has been raised again with Nancy Lovegrove, the chair of Trustees at Chiddingstone Castle. A meeting is in the process of being arranged to discuss further.
- ii. Cllr Taylor raised concern about the safety for all road users at Coopers Corner. Clerk to raise with Highways.
- iii. Cllr Vicary suggested that the S.106 agreements and whether an older persons housing needs survey could be carried out should be discussed at the March Parish Council meeting.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday 21st March 2023 at 7.30pm in Chiddingstone Causeway Hall.
The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

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