

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

Present: Cllr J. Roper (Chairman), Cllr C. Bishop, Cllr M. Quirk, Cllr B. Taylor and Cllr P. Vicary
Apologies: Cllr P. Harris, Cllr K. Outlaw, Cllr P. Myers, Cllr H. Williams and District Cllr R. Streatfeild
In attendance: Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk) and one member of the public. Six members of the public attended the meeting for the Open Session only

Open Session

Questions from members of the public

1. A resident attended the meeting in order to discuss the application for grant to the Chiddingstone Fete Committee. She said that the Fete Committee has now been formed and the date of the fete is Sunday 16th July from 1pm to 5pm. The rugby events will be held on the 15th July. Any profits from the fete will go to community projects such as the church roof and a technical upgrade in the church. The committee hope to generate a profit in the region of £4,000. Cllr Roper said that before the Parish Council approve a grant, members will need to know what good causes will benefit from any profit and asked for these details before the next Parish Council meeting to be held on 18th April.
2. A resident asked for an update on parking arrangements in Chiddingstone village, and said that the school's cones now take up a good stretch of the road which means that parking is unavailable for the shop, pub, church and residents. Cllr Roper said that the Parish Council will meet with the school to discuss the matter.
3. The Clerk asked the residents for an update on the flooding issue in Chiddingstone village. A resident reported that a meeting was held last week and contractors have now filled in the hole in the passageway and repaired the leak. The drain by The Castle Inn is still blocked and this needs clearing.

Closed Session

155. **Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr Harris, Cllr Outlaw, Cllr Myers and Cllr Williams and members accepted their reasons for absence. Apologies for absence were also received from District Cllr Streatfeild.
156. **Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed**
None.
157. **The minutes of the Chiddingstone Parish Council Meeting held on 21st February 2023** were approved and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Bishop, seconded by Cllr Quirk, and all were in favour.
158. **To discuss the format of the Annual Parish Meeting to be held on Tuesday 25th April 2023**
The Clerk reported that Rev'd Lindsay Llewellyn-MacDuff and Suzanne Andrews have confirmed attendance. The Clerk is waiting to hear back from Nancy Lovegrove regarding an update on Chiddingstone Castle. The Community Award will be presented, there will be a Chairman's report, plus reports from County and District Councillors. Light refreshments will be served.
159. **To discuss the Parish Elections to be held on Thursday 4th May 2023**
The Clerk reported that the nomination period is open and closes 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> but the Clerk circulated copies to those members present. These nomination forms will need to be completed and returned by 4th April to SDC. The Statement of Persons Nominated is published on 5th April by 4pm. There will be 6 members to be elected in the Chiddingstone Ward and 3 members to be elected in the Chiddingstone Causeway Ward.
160. **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 arrangements are progressing, and there will be a meeting with Chiddingstone residents.

This is on Wednesday 29th March at 6pm in The Castle Inn. The Morris Dancers can't get a group together, there was a suggestion of a barn dance in the road. The Clerk said that she has a quote of £400 for 2 hours, members approved the cost. Table hire might be necessary and Cllr Vicary suggested asking to borrow the tables in Hever Village Hall. There will be a choral event in the church at 4.30pm.

Six members of the public left the meeting at 8.25pm.

161. Planning:

i. To consider planning applications received

- i. 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 a submitted plan annotating the passing bays, in light of the comments received from KCC Highways. Members had no comment to make on this application.
- ii. SE/22/03067/FUL: Causeway House, Tonbridge Road, Chiddingstone Causeway - demolition of existing buildings. Erection of 18 residential units with vehicular access, parking, carports, electricity substation and hard and soft landscaping. Amended to show re-insertion of two front windows of plots. 7 and 14. Members had no objection to the amendments. The Clerk discussed an email from the applicant regarding the proposed access to the site. Members asked to meet the applicant to discuss this in more detail.
- iii. SE/23/00182/FUL: Bassetts, Tonbridge Road, Chiddingstone Causeway - to replace the existing cottage with a new dwelling. Amended to reduce size of balcony. Members supported the amendment.
- iv. SE/23/00401/FUL: Commonwork Organic Farms Ltd., Bore Place, Bore Place Road, Chiddingstone - siting of 4 hopper huts and toilet block. Extension of existing sand and gravel path for pedestrian and vehicular access. Members supported this application.
- v. SE/23/00420/HOUSE: Thatch Barn, Hoath Corner, Chiddingstone Hoath TN8 7BS - construction of single storey outbuilding to form home office and construction of single storey garage set into hillside and extended off road parking area. Members objected to this application due to the size of the two proposed new buildings which together equates to approximately 150% of the original dwelling. The excessive bulk and scale of the proposal constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt and AONB, and would have a detrimental impact on the Chiddingstone Hoath Corner Conservation Area. The proposal has a negative impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- vi. SE/23/00677/AGRNOT: Land at Reynolds Farm, Clinton Lane, Bough Beech - new General Purpose Agricultural Building. Chiddingstone Parish Council objects to this application as the reasons that the previous application was refused still stand. The previous application ref is 22/01367/AGRNOT, and the refusal to this application states: "The proposed building would not constitute a permitted form of development under Schedule Two, Part 6, Class A of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), as the agricultural is less than five hectares and the development is carried out on a parcel of land less than one hectare. The building would also be located within 400 metres of a protected building and would accommodate livestock. Finally, no details have been provided to justify why the agricultural building is required, given the size of the agricultural unit and the recent planning history for the site, changing part of the land to equestrian and residential uses." In the Parish Council's view, nothing has changed and this refusal reason is still applicable to this application.
- vii. SE/22/03532/CONVAR: Pucknells, Camp Hill, Chiddingstone Causeway TN11 8LE - variation of conditions 2, 4 and 8 of 18/01811/FUL for conversion of existing building to dwelling. Erection of a side extension. Associated works to the ground levels. Associated works with amendments to design and to allow external lighting to the porch and garage/store. Members agreed that the planning committee would consider this application.
- viii. SE/23/00603/LDCPR: 2 Hobbs Hill Farm Cottage, Bradley Road, Blackham TN3 9UP - erection of single storey rear extension; erection of outbuilding. Members agreed that the planning committee would consider this application.

- ix. SE/23/00573/HOUSE and SE/23/00574/LBCALT: Frienden Farm, Moat Lane, Chiddingstone Hoath TN8 7DN - internal alterations and replacement of existing window in east elevation with french doors, 2 skylights within original roof slope and construction of a 3 bay car port. Members agreed that the planning committee would consider this application.
- x. SE/23/00538/FUL: Frienden Farm, Moat Lane, Chiddingstone Hoath TN8 7DN - proposed internal and external alterations, including sub division of land and change of use from ancillary accommodation to Frienden Farmhouse to a separate unit of residential accommodation. Alterations to fenestration. Addition of a veranda. Post and rail fence. Members agreed that the planning committee would consider this application.
- ii. To report SDC notifications of planning decisions
 - SE/22/03431/FUL: Commonwork Organic Farms Ltd, Bore Place, Bore Place Road - the construction of a roofed entrance gate and welcome area/visitor information hub. Application approved.
 - SE/22/03295/HOUSE: 14 Chequers Hill Cottages, Chequers Hill, Bough Beech - demolition of existing garage and proposed garage and alterations to vehicular access and associated work. Application approved.
 - SE/22/03518/FUL: Stable West of Little Truggers, Truggers Lane, Chiddingstone Hoath - conversion and change of use of stables into separate unit of residential accommodation with associated parking and landscaping. Application approved.
 - SE/23/00421/AGRNOT: Land at Reynolds Farm, Clinton Lane, Bough Beech - new general purpose agricultural building and access track of free draining stone. Application withdrawn.
 - SE/23/00076/LBCALT: The Old Rectory, Chiddingstone - replacement of external steps and French door. Application approved.
- iii. To report planning applications that have gone to appeal
 - SE/22/02461/FUL: Grove Close, Hampkins Hill Road, Chiddingstone TN8 7BA – stables with ancillary storage and menages.
- iv. To hear update on potential breaches of planning policy
The Clerk updated members regarding a potential breach of planning policy in the parish.
- v. To discuss Designated Rural Areas
The Clerk reported as follows:
 1. “Paragraph 64 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) allows local authorities to seek an affordable housing contribution on small development sites (9 units and under) located within Designated Rural Areas (designated under Section 157 of the Housing Act 1985).
For sites located outside of Designated Rural Areas, the NPPF states that affordable housing contributions can only be sought on major developments. Major development is defined as 10 or more units or where the site area is larger than 0.5 hectares. Core Strategy Policy SP3 (Provision of Affordable Housing) originally set a requirement for all new housing developments to provide affordable housing on a sliding scale (either on site provision or a financial contribution), however as the NPPF postdates the adoption of the Core Strategy we are much more limited in what contributions we can seek and can only seek contributions in line with the NPPF.
 2. With regards applying a lower threshold for affordable housing contributions on sites located within Designated Rural Areas, in March 2015 Cabinet resolved to apply a lower threshold of 6 to 9 units to sites located in those Designated Rural Areas in force at that time. This related to locations within Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and contributions have been sought on this basis ever since. The lower threshold does not apply to sites located within Designated Rural Areas that come forward for Rural Exceptions Housing under Core Strategy Policy SP4).
 3. In December 2021, Cabinet approved an application being made to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, seeking the designation of additional areas. These are: Badgers Mount, Brasted, Chiddingstone, Cowden, Crockenhill, Eynsford, Farningham, Fawkham, Halstead, Hever, Knockholt, Leigh, Penshurst, Seal, Sevenoaks Weald, Shoreham and Sundridge with Ide Hill.
 4. The application has been successful and on 12 December 2022, the Housing (Right to Buy) (Designated Rural Areas and Designated Regions) (England) Order 2022 (“the Order”), comes into force.
 5. Approval is sought to update the March 2015 Cabinet resolution, whereby the lower site threshold of 6 to 9 units is applied in all Designated Rural Areas, set out in Appendix A.

This will ensure our ability to secure affordable housing contributions from smaller sites is maximised, whilst not impacting our rural exceptions housing programme.

6. The primary purpose of Designated Rural Area status is to restrict the consequences of the Right to Buy. It allows restrictive covenants to be put in place so that social housing can only be sold on to someone who has been living or working in the parish for 3 years. Alternatively the landlord may require the tenant to offer the home back to them if the tenant wishes to sell within 10 years of buying.

7. Designated Rural Area status assists the Council's rural exceptions housing programme, because sites within these areas are not permitted to be developed as First Homes Exceptions Sites. First Homes are capped at £250,000 and are for first time buyers only, and are for people with a local connection. At least 25% of the scheme's affordable housing must be First Homes. This exclusion helps to ensure sites will continue to only come forward for rural exceptions housing under Core Strategy Policy SP4. This will ensure the delivery of genuinely affordable housing to meet identified local housing needs.

8. Subject to Cabinet approval, any planning application within a listed parish for a site comprising 6-9 homes, would trigger an affordable housing contribution under Core Strategy policy SP3. This would be in the form of a commuted sum payment.

vi. Permission in Principle (PIP)

The Clerk advised that applicants can now apply for a new Permission in Principle for residential development. The first stage establishes whether a site is suitable in principle, looking at location, land use and the amount of development. The second stage assesses the detailed development proposals, such as amenity impact, highway safety, parking, ecology and other technical details. This is not the same as an outline application with the later submission of reserved matters. Consultation period will be 14 days with site notice and parish consultations. SDC has 5 weeks to determine and it cannot impose planning conditions. Certain sites cannot use a PIP – major developments, householder development, one that needs an environmental statement or a site with a special habitat.

162. Finance

i. To discuss application for grant from the Chiddingstone Fete Committee

To be discussed at the April Parish Council meeting.

ii. To discuss 2022/23 Earmarked Reserves

Members discussed and approved changes to Earmarked Reserves as follows:

- Delete Bough Beech Car Park reserve
- Delete Play Area reserve
- Transfer £3,000 from General Fund to a new reserve, Chiddingstone car park
- Transfer £1,500 from General Fund to Election costs reserve
- Transfer £2,000 from General Fund to Grants reserve
- Change name of Jubilee Event Fund reserve to Coronation Event reserve.

Cllr Bishop proposed these changes, seconded by Cllr Quirk and all were in favour.

iii. To approve list of payments

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

163. 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 S106 planning agreement is currently being circulated for signing and ERHA is expecting the planning approval to be issued by 27th March.

ii. Bassetts site in Chiddingstone Causeway: the Clerk reported that ERHA has said that their engineers are continuing with their surveys.

ii. To discuss the Chiddingstone Housing Needs Survey and S.106 developments in the parish

The Clerk reported that she has contacted Liz Crockford at SDC, who is the Housing Enabling Officer, as Chiddingstone was due to have a new full Housing Needs Survey in May/June 2023. The response was that Action with Communities in Rural Kent, which hosted the Rural Housing Enabler service, ceased trading in January 2023.

Since that time, SDC has been working with colleagues from across Kent to try and secure a replacement service for the rural housing and community-led housing enabling functions. A replacement delivery vehicle has been approved, subject to funding and completion of a Service Level Agreement. It is hoped that the new service may commence operation from 1st May. Once the new service is up and running, the date of the Chiddingstone survey will take place. Liz also said that SDC's Affordable Housing SPD policy update 12/2021, does allow for a small number of open market homes on rural exception sites in order to deliver affordable housing for local needs. Delivery of open market housing for local older people is certainly something SDC would look to support, if such provision was backed up by independently evidenced need. How such homes could be secured for local people in perpetuity is something that SDC would be happy to explore with the Parish Council. At the current time, however, existing and emerging rural exceptions housing policy does not support open market only rural exception housing schemes. Members agreed to ensure that a section on older persons housing needs is included in the Housing Needs Survey.

164. 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 have not yet heard back.
- ii. To hear update on the Chiddingstone Community SpeedWatch Scheme
The Clerk reported that a new Chiddingstone Community SpeedWatch Scheme has been registered and the volunteers (3 Councillors and 4 residents) need to register online and join the Chiddingstone scheme. They will then undertake some training and our sites will be assessed. Penshurst Parish Council has some equipment which we may be able to borrow. The Clerk reported that her bid to SDC's Community Mobilisation Fund has been successful to the value of £400 towards the Chiddingstone Community Speedwatch Scheme
Members agreed that the following sites should be suggested to Kent Police:
 1. Chiddingstone Causeway - opposite St. Luke's Church in layby
 2. Chiddingstone Causeway - outside Little Brown Jug or by bus shelter
 3. Bough Beech - by The Close
 4. Bough Beech - Hever Road in Slaters layby
 5. Bough Beech - on Clinton Lane in the layby
 6. Bough Beech - Ide Hill Road, near Clouts Farm
- iii. To consider application to re-route SR514 in Bough Beech and to create a permissive path to Ide Hill Road
No update, item to be discussed further at the next Parish Council meeting.
- iv. To hear report of ongoing drainage issues in Chiddingstone village
See Open Session above.
- v. Highways
KCC – notification of temporary road closures:
 - Truggers Lane to Oakenden Lane - carrying out patching repair work to the carriageway on 16th March for one day between 8am and 5pm.
 - Hale Oak Road, Sevenoaks Weald – on 11th April 2023 for 2 days between 09.30am and 3.30pm. The road will be closed adjacent to Halls Green Farmhouse. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while works are undertaken by Openreach.
 - Hoath Corner to Oakenden Lane, Chiddingstone Hoath between the junctions of Truggers Lane and Oakenden Lane on 13th April for 4 days, between 7am and 7pm. The road will be closed and will be resurfaced with Micro-Asphalt.
- vi. Chiddingstone Real Football Event
The organizer of the event has contacted the Clerk to see if the Parish Council require any information on this year's event. There will be as many stewards as possible to cover both ends of the village. For litter control there will be ton bags on stakes to encourage people not to drop litter. They will be litter picking as they go and will as usual do a full litter sweep in the morning. This year, the event will donate profits to the local food banks, air ambulance and the Hospice in the Weald.

One member of the public left at 9.25pm.

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

Members agreed that a meeting should be called for all interested parties. Clerk to arrange.

166. Aviation

The Clerk reported that the AEF Annual Report has been received.

167. To discuss correspondence received

The Clerk reported that lists of correspondence received have been circulated and drew members' attention to the following:

- i. Item 3: KALC events:
 - The Dynamic Councillor, online, 23rd March from 6pm. Price: £50 + VAT
 - Annual Planning Conference, Lenham Community Centre, 30th March from 9.30am. Price: £60 + VAT. Cllr Roper, Cllr Quirk and the Clerk will attend.
- ii. Item 8: CPRE Annual Chairman's Report.
- iii. Item 9: Kent Police: No Road Name in Chiddingstone - between 18:00 on Sunday 26th February and 09:00 on Monday 27th February, somebody broke into a new unit and stole tools, fixings, a radio and radiators. Crime Report No. 46/39469/23
- iv. Item 10: KALC: to mark the Coronation of Their Majesties, The Coronation Champions Awards, with the support of Her Majesty The Queen Consort, will celebrate and recognise inspiring volunteers who have made an exceptional difference in their communities.
- v. Email from Tom Tugendhat regarding the Sencio Community Leisure Centre in Edenbridge.

168. To hear update regarding the Margaret Hyde Almshouses

Cllr Roper reported that he and the Clerk attended a meeting with the Penshurst Almshouse Trust. He has suggested that the two trusts are split operationally, with separate bank accounts and separate meetings. The Margaret Hyde Trust has, according to the trust deed, two trustees appointed by the Parish Council and the Rector of Chiddingstone is an ex-officio trustee. These three trustees can then appoint a further two trustees. Members agreed to appoint the two new trustees at the May Parish Council meeting.

169. To consider and update Risk Assessment

Members discussed and updated the Risk Assessment. Cllr Quirk proposed that the changes be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Vicary and all were in agreement.

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

- i. Litter Pick, Bulk Refuse Freighter and Flytipping
 - i. Parish litter pick – next date 1st July.
 - ii. Bulk Refuse Freighter visits – next date 1st July. The Clerk reported that the cost has increased from £208.29 + VAT to £338.10 + VAT. Members agreed to continue for this year and review the number of stops in 2024.
 - iii. Flytipping – Cllr Taylor reported that there have been incidences of tyres and bottles dumped in the area.
- ii. Parish telephone boxes and location of defibrillators
 - i. Chiddingstone village: the Clerk reported that Hilary Allen is still keen to refurbish the phone box. The Clerk has ordered materials. Dave Cole has supplied a quote to move the defibrillator to the porch of the village hall. Price £335.00 + VAT. Members approved the quote.
 - ii. Chiddingstone Hoath: The Clerk reported that Cllr Harris has said: "the campaign to restore the red Heritage Box to The Green is underway. Our little committee has drafted a letter to be circulated round the Hoath, I was driven into Tunbridge Wells to open a savings deposit account at Metro. Fundraising being planned for the Spring and a letter going into the Village Magazine. I have had an offer from a local farmer to transport the box on to the Green in the future."
 - iii. Chiddingstone Causeway: The Clerk reported that materials have been ordered for the refurbishment of the phone box by Shane Hodge. This is used as a book swap location but it is very untidy. Members agreed that there should be another use such as an information point.

iii. 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. Andy Hiccup has been booked for two hours entertainment at £225.

iv. Chiddingstone Car Park

The Clerk reported that she is waiting to hear back from Nancy Lovegrove. Cllr Roper asked the Clerk to arrange a meeting with the school regarding the cones in the road.

171. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda

None.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday 18th April 2023 at 7.30pm in Chiddingstone Village Hall.
The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Tuesday 25th April at 7.30pm in Chiddingstone Causeway Hall.

The meeting closed at 10pm.

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