

**MINUTES OF THE CHIDDINGSTONE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON  
TUESDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> MAY 2024 AT 7.30PM IN CHIDDINGSTONE VILLAGE HALL**

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**Present:** Cllr J. Roper (Chairman), Cllr P. Harris, Cllr K. Outlaw, Cllr P. Vicary (from 7.55pm) and Cllr H. Williams  
**Apologies:** Cllr P. Myers, Cllr T. Nunn, Cllr M. Quirk, Cllr C. Shamwana, County Cllr McArthur and District Cllr M. Silander  
**In attendance:** Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk). District Cllr R. Streatfeild attended the meeting for the Open Session only.

**Closed Session:**

**1. a. Election of Chairman for year 2024/2025**

Cllr Outlaw proposed that Cllr Roper be re-elected as Chair for the year 2024/25. This was seconded by Cllr Harris and there were no other nominations. Members unanimously voted to accept the proposal. Cllr Roper said that he was willing to stand and was duly elected.

**b. To receive Chair's Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

Cllr Roper signed the Chair's Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which was countersigned by the Clerk.

**2. Election of Vice-Chair for year 2024/2025**

Cllr Harris proposed that Cllr Outlaw be elected as Vice-Chair for the year 2024/25. This was seconded by Cllr Williams and there were no other nominations. Members unanimously voted to accept the proposal. Cllr Outlaw said that she was willing to stand and was duly elected.

**3. Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr Myers, Cllr Nunn, Cllr Quirk and Cllr Shamwana and members accepted their reasons for absence. Apologies for absence were also received from County Cllr McArthur and District Cllr Silander.

**4. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed**  
None.

**5. Appointment of Committees and representatives to other bodies**

Members approved the following appointments:

Planning Committee:

Cllr Mitzi Quirk (Chairman)  
Cllr Paul Myers  
Cllr Trevor Nunn  
Cllr Jonathan Roper  
Cllr Chris Shamwana  
Cllr Paul Vicary  
Cllr Howard Williams

Finance Committee:

Cllr Jonathan Roper (Chairman)  
Cllr Paul Myers  
Cllr Kerry Outlaw  
Cllr Paul Vicary

Affordable Housing Committee:

Cllr Jonathan Roper (Chairman)  
Cllr Mitzi Quirk  
Cllr Howard Williams

Representatives to other bodies:

Liaison between Parish Council and Parochial Church Council: Cllr Howard Williams  
Kent Association of Parish Councils, Sevenoaks Area Committee: All

Chiddingstone Tennis Club:  
Eden Valley Museum Trust:  
Margaret Hyde Almshouses:

Chiddingstone Village Hall Management Committee:  
Chiddingstone Causeway Village Hall Management Committee:  
Chiddingstone Sports Association:

CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England):  
Chiddingstone Ramblers:  
Chiddingstone Tree Warden:  
Chiddingstone Pond Warden:  
Countryside Access Wardens:

Chiddingstone Community SpeedWatch: Cllr Jonathan Roper  
Cllr Howard Williams  
Cllr Kerry Outlaw  
Mrs Gilly Roper  
Mr Andy Major  
Mr Jeremy Pearce

Cllr Paul Vicary  
Cllr Howard Williams  
Cllr Kerry Outlaw  
Cllr Penny Harris  
Cllr Penny Harris  
Cllr Trevor Nunn (pending)  
Cllr Chris Shamwana  
Cllr Paul Vicary  
Cllr Trevor Nunn  
Ms Jenny Chettle  
Mr Chris Bishop  
Cllr Penny Harris  
Cllr Howard Williams  
Mr Rob McCoy  
Mr David Hunt  
Clerk (co-ordinator)  
Mrs Abby Brunning  
Mr Dan Brunning  
Mr Steen Carndorf  
Mr Chris West

The Closed Session was suspended for the Open Session

### **Open Session**

#### **Report by District Cllr Streatfeild**

District Cllr Streatfeild reported that a new chairman has been elected at SDC, this is Cllr Roddy Hogarth, who represents Seal and Weald. He said that he has received emails from Chiddingstone residents regarding the new refuse collection arrangements and there will be more information soon on this issue.

Cllr Roper asked about the inquiry into the handling of the leisure centres issue, and D.Cllr Streatfeild said that the report will be published tomorrow and undertook to send the Parish Council a copy. Cllr Roper said that SDC is hoping to develop the area around Sevenoaks Leisure Centre, how will this be funded? D.Cllr Streatfeild said that 300 new homes are included in the scheme which will fund the re-development.

(Cllr Vicary joined the meeting at 7.55pm)

District Cllr Streatfeild said that the current draft Local Plan, Plan 40, focusses development on brownfield sites and areas adjacent to larger towns. The following Local Plan may have to consider development on Green Belt land adjacent to smaller settlements.

Cllr Vicary asked about the emerging legislation relating to Class Q which allows buildings on agricultural units and some former agricultural buildings to be converted to dwelling houses under permitted development. This previously had been limited to the provision of five dwellings with a maximum floor space of 865sq.m. but this will increase to up to 10 dwellings with a maximum floor space of 1,000 sq.m. but each dwelling will be limited to 150sq.m. Agricultural buildings built under permitted development cannot be converted using Class Q for ten years which will prevent barns being erected with the sole view of converting them to residential, and Class Q cannot be used in protected landscapes.

District Cllr Streatfeild reported that at KCC financial discussions continue and a debt of £35m has been rolled forward into this current financial year. The budget has £18m of discretionary spend in any one year. Adult social care and special educational needs are under review. KCC is pushing the Government to make financial decisions on these issues.

Cllr Roper asked about KCC's investments. D.Cllr Streatfeild said that KCC's internal audit has given assurance that there have been no reckless investments.

District Cllr Streatfeild left the meeting at 8.15pm.

The Closed Session resumed at 8.15pm.

## **Closed Session:**

### **6. To confirm that the Parish Council remains eligible to use the General Power of Competence**

The Clerk reminded members that the General Power of Competence gives authorities the power to take the reasonable action they need 'for the benefit of the authority, its area or persons resident or present in its area'. Under the provision a local authority has power to do anything that individuals generally have full legal capacity to do. To remain eligible, the Parish Council has to confirm that:

- (a) the number of members of the council that have been declared to be elected, whether at ordinary elections or at a by-election, is equal to or greater than two-thirds of the total number of members of the council;
- (b) the Clerk is qualified in the Certificate in Local Council Administration;
- (c) the Clerk has completed the relevant training.

There are some restrictions: to abide by statutory duties such as considering the likely effect of crime and disorder and conserving biodiversity, and to abide by legislation, such as employment law, health & safety, equality and data protection.

Members agreed that the Parish Council remains eligible to use the General Power of Competence.

### **7. The minutes of the Chiddingstone Parish Council Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024** were approved and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Harris, seconded by Cllr Vicary, and all were in favour.

### **8. To hear update regarding the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2024**

The Clerk reported that there was an interesting talk by SES Water on their plans for the area around the Bough Beech Reservoir, and Cllr Outlaw gave an overview on the Parish Council creating a cluster of neighbouring parishes in order to prepare an Emergency and Resilience Plan. The winner of the 2024 Chiddingstone Community Award was announced as Martin Keeler for his commitment to parish events, such as the Chiddingstone Fete, as the driving force behind Chiddingstone Football Club and as a member of Chiddingstone Sports Association for many years. A special community award was also awarded to Chris Pounds for his running of the Chiddingstone Youth Club, and flowers were presented to Hilary Allen and Letty Sundt for their hard work in refurbishing the Chiddingstone telephone box.

### **9. Planning:**

#### **i. To consider planning applications received**

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

- i. SE/24/00829/MMA: The Rustles, Ide Hill Road, Bough Beech TN9 7PG - Minor Material Amendment to SE/21/04240/HOUSE. Members were of the opinion that this application is not an MMA and a full planning application should be submitted.
- ii. SE/24/04066/MMA: The Rustles, Ide Hill Road, Bough Beech TN9 7PG - Minor Material Amendment to SE/21/04241/LBCALT. Members were of the opinion that this application is not an MMA and a full planning application should be submitted.
- iii. SE/24/00768/FUL: Mole End, Hill Hoath Road, Chiddingstone TN8 7AE - conversion of the existing detached house into two semi-detached properties with an additional single storey rear extension. New vehicle access for the additional property will be formed to the north of the site. Members supported this application.
- iv. SE/24/00738/FUL and SE/24/00739/LBCALT: The Wheatsheaf, Hever Road, Bough Beech TN8 7NU - stationing of timber cabin as commercial kitchen, installation of canopy and enclosure of cold store. Members had no objection if the Conservation Officer is in support.
- v. SE/24/00630/MMA: Scotland Barn, Watstock Farm, Wellers Town Road, Chiddingstone Hoath TN8 7BH - Minor Material Amendment to SE/21/03307/FUL to include the provision of a subterranean Basement. Members had no objection to this application.
- vi. SE/24/00927/NMA: Tith Barn North, Clouts Farm, Ide Hill Road, Bough Beech, TN8 7PH - Non Material Amendment to SE/22/02435/HOUSE, to change window on rear elevation to double doors. This application had already been determined as Material and therefore a full application is required.

- ii. To report SDC notifications of planning decisions
  - SE/24/00436/AGRNOT: Bore Place Conference and Study Centre, Bore Place Road, Chiddingstone - a polytunnel for the growing of vegetables for the market garden. Decision: Prior Approval Not Required.
  - SE/24/00521/FUL: Bassetts, Tonbridge Road, Chiddingstone Causeway - demolition of existing dwelling, erection of new dwelling, alterations to landscaping and driveway. Application approved.
  - SE/24/00927/NMA: Tithe Barn North, Clouts Farm, Ide Hill Road, Bough Beech - Non-Material Amendment to SE/22/02435/HOUSE. Decision: the proposed amendment is Material and a full planning application is required.
  - SE/24/00416/HOUSE: Pear Tree Cottage, Truggers Lane, Chiddingstone Hoath - erecting a new vehicular access with a proposed new gate, part demolition of existing retaining wall with erection of a new retaining wall. Application approved.
  - SE/ 24/00588/LBCALT: The Barn, Oakenden Lane, Chiddingstone Hoath - demolition the existing oil tank and log store within the residential curtilage, and replacement with new garden shed. Application withdrawn.
- iii. To hear update on potential breaches of planning policy  
The Clerk updated members regarding a potential breach of planning policy in the parish.
- iv. The new postal address for holiday let on Lockskinners Lane to Culver Croft was noted.
- v. The new postal address for The Lodge, Hoath House, Chiddingstone Hoath to Wren Cottage was noted.
- vi. New Planning Enforcement legislation  
The Clerk reported that new planning enforcement laws have come in. The 4 year rule for breach of operational development (eg building work) or change of use to single dwelling house has changed to 10 years if completed on or after 25th April. The 4 year rule still stands for development completed before 25th April. The legislation states: In most cases, development becomes immune from enforcement if no action is taken:
  - within 10 years of substantial completion for a breach of planning control consisting of operational development where substantial completion took place on or after 25 April 2024
  - within 10 years for an unauthorised change of use to a single dwellinghouse where the change of use took place on or after 25 April 2024
  - within 4 years of substantial completion for a breach of planning control consisting of operational development where substantial completion took place before 25 April 2024;
  - within 4 years for an unauthorised change of use to a single dwellinghouse where the change of use took place before 25 April 2024
  - within 10 years for any other breach of planning control (essentially other changes of use)
See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ensuring-effective-enforcement>.

## 10. Finance

- i. To approve 2023/24 Year End Accounts  
Members approved the Year End Accounts, proposed by Cllr Outlaw, seconded by Cllr Roper, and all in favour.
- ii. To review the effectiveness of the Parish Council's Internal Control Procedures  
Members reviewed the Internal Audit Procedures and agreed that they remain effective. Proposed by Cllr Roper, seconded by Cllr Williams, and all were in favour.
- iii. Audit for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024: To consider and agree Annual Governance Statement 2023/24  
Cllr Roper read the statements as set out on the Annual Governance Statement and members responded as appropriate. Proposed by Cllr Harris, seconded by Cllr Williams, and all were in favour.
- iv. Audit for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024: To consider and approve Accounting Statements 2023/24  
Cllr Outlaw proposed that the Statement of Accounts be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Vicary, and all were in favour.
- v. To discuss the Internal Audit report 2024  
The Clerk reported that the Internal Audit was carried out by Mulberry & Co on 30<sup>th</sup> April and the report has been received and circulated. The report states "Our sample testing did not uncover any errors or misstatements that require reporting to the external auditor at this time, nor did we identify any significant weaknesses in the internal controls such that public money would be put at risk. It is clear the council takes governance, policies and procedures seriously.

“I am pleased to report that overall, the systems and procedures you have in place are fit for purpose and whilst my report may contain recommendations to change these are not indicative of any significant failings, but rather are pointers to improving upon an already well-ordered system. It is therefore our opinion that the systems and internal procedures at Leigh Parish Council are well established and followed.” There was one recommendation: “I remind the Council that it is required to also post any supporting documentation with the agenda as outlined by the Information Commissioner's Office.” This does not include the correspondence list, but if a report is prepared for consideration of members then this should go online with the agenda, unless it's confidential or relating to a contract, tender, or Clerk's salary.

Cllr Roper thanked the Clerk for preparing the Year End accounts.

vi. To approve list of payments

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

## 11. **Affordable Housing provision in the parish**

i. To hear update regarding the Chiddingstone Affordable Housing schemes

The Clerk reported that Graham Mann, who is ERHA’s Development Design Manager, has provided the following update:

i. Chequers site in Bough Beech: “I visited Chequers on Friday and was really pleased to see how the site is progressing. The contractor is concentrating on getting the road in with the drainage which makes sense for their operations. The houses (plots 4-7) are set out, ready to excavate foundations. It’s early days but so far I am very impressed with the forward planning and site set-up by the contractor. Works are ahead of programme by a couple of weeks. The street name application has been submitted to SDC and a response is awaited.”

ii. Bassetts site in Chiddingstone Causeway: “we are still working through the legals with the landowner, but consultant fees are all obtained ready to appoint as soon as the legal matters are finalised. I don’t have a timescale on this yet as negotiations are still ongoing. I think there are just a few sticking points that are being worked through. As we have spent time liaising with consultants in preparation for working up a new planning application, I would think this is likely to progress. We are certainly hoping it will.”

ii. To discuss recent flooding in Redleaf Close and hear an update on progress

Cllr Roper reported that District Cllr Silander has had a meeting with West Kent’s Director of Property and Assets, Neil Diddams, to discuss this matter. It was agreed that Cllr Roper and the Clerk should attend a meeting on site with Mr Diddams in order to discuss this in more detail, and maybe the residents would like to attend.

## 12. **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 the results of the traffic survey have been received. A Teams meeting was held with Nigel Rowe, the officer from Highways, Cllr Roper and Cllr Outlaw to discuss the survey results. Currently the 85% percentile of traffic on the survey is travelling under 46mph which is the trigger speed that the police would use in a 40mph zone. 85% takes into account a small reduction for exceptional results such as emergency services. At the meeting, it was pointed out that the roads are all narrow with no pavements, are residential and vehicles travel fast. The Parish Council and local residents would like to reduce the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph on all roads in Bough Beech and on Camp Hill. This would require a Traffic Regulation Order. Cllr Outlaw said that KCC will not consider a speed reduction unless there have been serious road traffic accidents recorded, or near misses. Presumably near misses should be reported to Kent Police. A site visit has been arranged with the KCC officer on 27<sup>th</sup> June at 10am to look at all the sites.

ii. Highways

- The Village, Chiddingstone on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2024 for 1 day between 09.30hrs and 15.30hrs from the junction of Mill Lane, Hill Hoath Road to the Lych Gate while works are undertaken by Openreach.
- Winkhurst Green Road, Bough Beech on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2024 for 1 day between 09.30hrs and 15.30hrs between Scallops and Bore Place Road while works are undertaken by Openreach.

**13. To discuss the currently temporary closure of Chiddingstone Post Office**

The Clerk reported that the Post Office has sent a notification to say that following the resignation of the postmaster the Chiddingstone Post Office closed on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024. The Post Office is working hard to keep the period of closure to a minimum and are investigating the options available which will enable them to reinstate a Post Office service to the local community. The Clerk undertook to meet the new owner of the village shop and discuss the provision of Post Office services.

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

Cllr Vicary reported that the next meeting is on 6<sup>th</sup> June. Cllr Roper, Cllr Vicary and Cllr Shamwana to meet prior to this meeting in order to discuss the Parish Council's position.

**15. Aviation**

i. GACC: Annual General Meeting on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2024 at 7pm at Stanhill Court Hotel, Stanhill, Charlwood RH6 0EP

ii. GACC: "Gatwick DCO News: there is an Issue Specific Hearing on Climate Change (ISH 6 on Tuesday 30 April) and an additional Open Floor Hearing (OFH 3 on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May at 2:00 pm). On the 28<sup>th</sup> March the Examining Authority published updates on a number of deadline responses. This included a list of questions arising from the first series of hearings (ISH 1 to ISH 5). There are 288 of these and most of these are addressed to Gatwick – the applicant. However there are some addressed to other participants and where pertinent we have been submitting our responses. Also published are Written Representations relating to the hearings so far, and a series of statements and documents including Local Authority Impact Reports were published. We highlighted in our last issue that the complexity of Noise issues was such that it became obvious that the subject could not be covered in one hearing. This was in part answered in the questions referred to above and this has allowed us to submit a detailed response challenging Gatwick's proposed methods of managing noise."

iii. GACC Update:

Airspace Modernisation: The difficulties relating to engagement on Gatwick's airspace modernisation proposals are still ongoing. We remain very concerned about the narrowing of flight paths, the intensification of noise that would bring about, the lack of any compensation and the increase in capacity arising from modernisation. Despite what appeared to be a sound meeting with the CAA in February the resultant letter from their Chief Executive, Rob Bishton, gave us no comfort on any of these points and subsequent follow up continues to be disappointing. We continue to work on this and to seek to involve MPs and will report back once we have further news.

Noise Management Board: Gatwick's Noise Management Board is not currently operational as the airport develops proposals for a third term of the board. This is proving to be an unnecessarily slow process and it is unclear whether Gatwick is listening to the views we and other stakeholders have expressed on, for example, the composition and leadership of the board and its objectives. Again, we'll provide an update when there's more news. Meanwhile some of the initiatives the previous board was pursuing, such as on the fair and equitable dispersal of flight paths, seem to have ground to a halt.

Night Flight Consultation: The Department for Transport has commenced its consultation on Night Flights at the designated airports which include Gatwick. (Gatwick has the highest number of approved flights of any of the three designated airports).

Gatwick Operations: Flight and passenger numbers continue to rise and as at April this year Gatwick declared it was operating at 91% of 2019 levels. Night flights have particularly increased – arrivals being about 75% up month on month. Night period departures although within the maximum numbers permitted, are now higher than in 2019 and particularly so in regard to the 05.00-05.59 period. Gatwick also announced in March a pre-tax profit at its year end of £314.8m in the year to the end of December. Gatwick reportedly says it expects to pay out its first shareholder dividends in five years but has not said when."

iv. GON:

Gatwick expansion: "As a reminder Gatwick wants to expand from 46.6 million passenger and 283,000 flights in 2019 to over 80 million passengers and 386,000 flights per annum. If approved it would be as big as Heathrow was (in passenger terms) before the pandemic. Growth on that scale would have huge climate change, noise, air quality, local transport and other effects.

“The Gatwick expansion planning inquiry opened on 27 February 2024. The inspectors have six months to complete the inquiry, then three months to submit their recommendations to the Secretary of State. It therefore looks likely that the decision will be made by the next government sometime in the first half of 2025, although that can be delayed. There have so far been two open floor hearings and five issue specific hearings covering noise, local transport, the need for the development and socio economic issues. GON has been at most of those hearings. Where we haven't been able to attend we've made sure our views are covered by other groups, particularly the Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign (GACC). GACC has been working closely with climate experts the Aviation Environment Federation and commissioned the New Economics Foundation to write a report challenging Gatwick's economic and employment forecasts. Encouragingly all the Councils around Gatwick are also working together to oppose expansion and have engaged legal and technical advisors to help make their case.

GON submitted a detailed Written Representation. We focussed on climate and noise issues but also commented on need for the development, its lack of compliance with government policy, economic and employment factors and local transport consequences. We'll continue to oppose Gatwick's proposals as the inquiry progresses. At this stage of the process our view is that it's more important to make sure that the key issues are raised by Councils or community groups, so they are considered by the Inspectors, than to have lots of individual responses. We were hugely grateful though to all of you who submitted individual Relevant Representations last year. Close to 6,000 representations were submitted, with well over 80% opposing expansion. The Inspectors can have no doubt about local community views!”

Airspace modernisation: In a separate process Gatwick is redesigning its arrival and departure flight paths. It submitted a shortlist of options to the Civil Aviation Authority in September last year and they were approved in October. Together with other community groups we wrote to the CAA in September asking it not to approve the shortlist and asking for a meeting to discuss our joint concerns. Our request was rejected although we have subsequently met the CAA's CEO, jointly with other groups, to discuss the key issues. The options proposed by Gatwick all concentrate aircraft noise to a greater or lesser degree compared to the current position. Eight of the twelve shortlisted arrival options (which affect west Kent much more than departures) are single tracks. If one of those was approved all arriving aircraft would follow that route with great accuracy except at busy times when air traffic controllers would intervene to "vector" some aircraft onto alternative routes. Life under a single track route would be profoundly different to now. There could be an aircraft overhead about every 90 seconds all day every day at busy times (these routes were described as "noise sewers" by a previous CAA CEO). There would be significant health, mental health and property value impacts, but there would be no compensation because the government hasn't put in place a compensation scheme. Of course other people would experience fewer aircraft, which must also be taken into account. We are very concerned about Gatwick's shortlisted options and the CAA's evaluation process and will continue to press for changes to both. We'll keep you informed as the process develops. There will eventually be a consultation on the preferred option(s) but that is unlikely to be until 2025 and it may in any event be too late to make major changes by then.”

- v. AEF: Government's night flight restrictions consultation: “AEF's Airspace and Noise Community Forum has responded to the DfT's consultation on its proposed three-year night flights regime at the three designated airports (Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted) between October 2025 and October 2028. The proposals, we feel, are just a recipe for inaction. The Government's proposals to roll over the existing quota counts at all three London airports means that most communities will have seen little reduction to harmful aircraft noise exposure at night for many years. In addition, we sharply criticise the Government's failure to propose any meaningful changes to the night-flight dispensation regime, a regime that – as we point out – can be exploited by airports. Meanwhile, the Government's failure to take forward its proposals to extend the operational ban on QC4 aircraft to the full night period and to introduce a scheduling ban on QC2 aircraft cannot be justified. The Government's proposed night noise abatement objective does not, we say, define or clarify in a meaningful way the obligations it imposes on the aviation industry or expected outcomes. The objective is: “To limit, and where possible reduce, the adverse effects of aviation noise at night on health and quality of life while supporting sustainable growth and recognising the importance to the UK of commercial passenger and freight services. As you will see, the proposed objective includes an unsubstantiated claim for the benefits of passenger flights at night.

“This inclusion has been made despite the Government’s failure to deliver its commitment to conduct “thorough research to properly inform and develop a new evidence-based night noise regime” in time for this latest review of the night noise. In the absence of Government research, we cite evidence-based critiques of the Government’s assumptions around the economic benefits of night flights and the aviation sector in general that strongly suggest the aviation sector is a drain on the UK economy. The consultation closes at 11:59pm on 22 May 2024”

## 16. 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: Kent Police: Newsletter April 2024: “Community events: Local Beat Officer was extracted for part of the month with Annual refresher training. As well as regular patrol of all beat areas, attending burglary locations, assisting response teams with High Risk missing people and RTCs, there have been a few key events. Edenbridge Police and Community Together meeting was attended by Local Officer, PC Kemp. This brings together members of the Town Council, Councillors, partner agencies and community members to discuss any matters within the Town. PC Kemp was out on the beat with the Edenbridge Community Warden, Kevin, to attend areas of ASB and recent criminal damage. Child Centred Policing Team had the addition of another member, in the way of PC Harrison. PC Harrison is an incredibly experienced officer and a wealth of knowledge around ASB. PC Harrison will be working alongside PCSO Darling to provide support and advice to young people and their families. Attended the Leigh Annual Parish Meeting to round off the month. It was great to see so many people from the community.”
- ii. Item 5: Thank you note from Martin Keeler for the Chiddingstone Community Award, he was very surprised and very grateful. He apologises for not attending the Annual Parish Meeting.
- iii. Item 6: Mulberry & Co (our internal auditors). Training Programme:  
Councillors – Policies, Powers & Duties: Thursday 9th May 6.30–8.30pm – zoom. This 2 hour zoom training session provides an understanding of the regulatory framework councils operate within, and how policies and procedures underpin the core work of the council. The session will explain the range of powers and duties which parish councils have available, including the General Power of Competence (GPC), and how these can be used for the benefit of the community. The session is suitable for new councillors as well as being a useful refresher for existing councillors. The cost is £45 + VAT per person  
Making Effective Planning Representations: Tuesday 14th May 9.30am–12.00pm – zoom. This session is aimed at parish clerks and councillors with planning responsibilities who want to understand the way in which representations on planning applications can be drafted efficiently and professionally. It will give you an understanding of the way in which planning officers use consultee comments to determine an application and the terminology that will help to get your points across. We also look at where to gather information about an application and which issues you should consider (and which to avoid) when your council is discussing a response. Rather than planning policy, this session focuses on the practicalities of your involvement in the planning process and putting the right points across as effectively as possible. The cost is £50 + VAT per person  
Councillors Roles, Responsibilities & Working Relationships: Wednesday 15th May 6.30–8.30pm – zoom. This 2 hour zoom training session covers the fundamental aspects of the role of a councillor and is recommended as an excellent starting point for new councillors as well as being a useful refresher for existing councillors. The session will include understanding what a parish council is, the council structure, observing the requirements of the Member Code of Conduct, the responsibilities of different roles within the council and exploring good practices for managing key relationships within the council and with the wider community. The cost is £45 + VAT per person  
Chairs Training: Wednesday 22nd May 6.30–8.00pm – zoom. A 90-minute zoom training session exploring the role of the Chair. This covers the Chair of the council, and the Chair of a committee, and includes guidance on the skills required to be an effective Chair. The session is suitable for existing or aspiring Chairs of council and/or committees, and will include advice and guidance on managing meetings, conflicts within the council and the council’s role as an employer. The cost is £45 + VAT per person.
- iv. Item 7: KALC: Kent Resilience Forum are holding a Communities Prepared Building Resilient Communities Training Workshop on Tuesday 21st May from 9.30 am at the Civic Centre, Ashford Borough Council.



- v. Item 8: Kent Police:
  - Camp Hill, Chiddingstone - on Wednesday 17th April around 20:10, somebody tried to break into a residential property. They cracked a window. Crime Report No. 46/62304/24
  - Camp Hill, Chiddingstone - on Wednesday 17th April around 20:18, somebody tried to break into a residential property. They may have been interrupted by someone. Crime Report No. 46/62285/24
- vi. Item 11: High Weald AONB Unit: “We are pleased to announce that the new High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-29 has been approved by the High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee, for adoption by the 15 Local Authorities. We have published the new Plan on our website, and it can be viewed and downloaded here: <https://highweald.org/aonb-management-plan/> AONB Management Plans are statutory documents, under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. They are policy documents for the whole of the protected landscape, formulated to coordinate ambition, policy, investment and action to achieve the legal purpose of ‘conserving and enhancing natural beauty’, and are the principal vehicle for ensuring that the statutory purposes of the protected landscape are met. This Plan is the first edition of a new 20-year strategy, with a five-year implementation plan, and includes:
  - the Statement of Significance, which defines what makes the High Weald special and identifies the qualities that justify its designation as a nationally important landscape,
  - character statements, including a list of key characteristics, describing the components of natural beauty that policy and actions should aim to conserve and enhance, and
  - a set of management policies (‘Objectives’) for the conservation and enhancement of the AONB together with proposed ‘Actions’ which indicate the ambitions of partners for themselves and for other organisations, and which guide resources and effort to where they are most needed.
  - A set of programmes, principles for action and investment strategy for a range of cross cutting themes which address current and future major challenges of biodiversity, climate change, fairer access to nature, and development pressure. Ensuring that the Management Plan’s objectives and relevant actions are reflected in any works your Parish Council carries out within the High Weald AONB will help you meet your statutory duty as set out in Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of AONBs in making decisions that affect it.”
- vii. Item 12: Email from District Cllr Streatfeild: “You may have heard about the violent crime incident in Edenbridge. I was asked to follow up by Penshurst Parish Council and spoke to officers yesterday. They said there is an operation ongoing which the policeman I spoke to was not going to give me any details on. He did say that from the community policing side there currently high visibility patrolling in Edenbridge at least for the next two weeks. He also said on current plans, Edenbridge is likely to be the first place that gets a second beat officer and a third when those numbers come through later in the year.”
- viii. Item 13: The Rt Hon Tom Tugendhat, MP: “Direct rail services from Tonbridge, Leigh, Penshurst and Edenbridge stations to Gatwick would have a huge benefit to our community. It would allow us to travel quickly, reliably and sustainably and reinstate the direct rail link between Kent and Gatwick which was lost back in 2008. For many years I have been working to bring these services back. I am pleased that this work has led to Network Rail investigating the possibility further. Unsurprisingly, their work has shown that a service is ‘credible and appropriate’, in a detailed report. I now need your support to help deliver these services. As a community, demonstrating we would use a direct rail service between Tonbridge and Gatwick, calling at Leigh, Penshurst and Edenbridge stations, will help make this case. That’s why I have set up a page on my website asking for your comments. I have also included on my website the report from Network Rail backing this campaign. Introducing a direct rail link won’t only help those who use Gatwick Airport for flights, but it will boost the Tonbridge-Redhill line and open up new opportunities to reach Surrey and Sussex more easily. We all know that the country lanes between the A21 and M23 are unsuitable for lots of traffic, forcing many to use the M25 instead. If you support this aim, I would like to hear from you.”
- ix. Item 17: SDC Newsletter: Cllr Roddy Hogarth was elected as Sevenoaks District Council’s new Leader at the Annual Council meeting on Tuesday 14 May 2024. Cllr Hogarth, who represents Seal and Weald, was first elected to the Council in May 2011.

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

- i. Chiddingstone Car Parking  
Members discussed possible options.

- ii. SpeedWatch  
A SpeedWatch session was held on 8<sup>th</sup> May in Chiddingstone Causeway. 132 vehicles passed the site and of those 32 were travelling at 35 mph or more in a 30mph zone. These have been reported on the SpeedWatch website and the Police may contact people who were speeding. The next date is Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> May from 5pm to 6.30pm.
- iii. Litter Pick, Bulk Refuse Freighter and Flytipping
  - i. Parish litter pick  
Next date 15<sup>th</sup> June at 9.30am in Bough Beech, Chiddingstone, Chiddingstone Hoath and Chiddingstone Causeway.
  - ii. Bulk Refuse Freighter visits  
Next date 15<sup>th</sup> June, stopping at: 10.00-10.30: The Rock Inn  
10.45-11.15: The Wheatsheaf  
11.30-12.00: Richards Close
  - iii. Flytipping  
None.
- iv. Rural Swathe & Visibility Cutting contract 2024  
The Clerk reported that the first cut has been done. The invoice has been received for £3,600 + VAT and will be shared between all four parishes at the end of the season.
- v. Emergency Plan  
Cllr Outlaw reported that a meeting of the cluster was held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May, when the terms of engagement were agreed in that there will be one Plan which each parish will feed into. The focus will primarily be on the emergency part of the plan and then resilience issues will be focused on separately. Cllr Outlaw reported that she attended a Kent Resilience Forum workshop today in Ashford and 50 Parish Councils were represented.
- vi. Parish telephone boxes and defibrillators  
Cllr Harris reported that the Chiddingstone Hoath community is giving consideration to the use of the phonebox.
- vii. Parish broadband provision  
The Clerk reported that Cllr Nunn has been assisting the church and the village hall in their connections for broadband.
- viii. Summer Family Fun Play Event  
The Clerk reported that this will be held on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> August from 10.30am to 1.30pm on the Chiddingstone Causeway Sports Field. It was agreed not to book an entertainer and the Clerk said that she is happy to do some facepainting.
- ix. Bough Beech village signpost  
The Clerk reported that the post has been driven into, but it was agreed to delay this repair.

#### **18. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda**

Cllr Harris reported that the resident of Gilwyns has said that vehicles are damaging her low wall adjacent to the road and asked if it would be possible to erect some railings. The Clerk reported that this would be on Highways land and the resident will need to apply for permission. The Clerk undertook to visit the resident.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 7.30pm in Chiddingstone Causeway Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

**Chiddingstone Parish Council – 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024**

List of Payments since last meeting (figures inclusive of VAT)

Payment Number	Date	Payee	Amount inc. VAT	VAT
609	25.04.24	Cheaper than a Skip – rubbish removal from PC land	£260.00	
610	21.05.24	Clerk - salary	£1,337.07	
611	21.05.24	HMRC – PAYE	£215.78	
612 SO	21.05.24	Kent County Council – pension contribution	£531.00	
613	21.05.24	Clerk – mileage and reimbursement of costs	£397.19	
614	21.05.24	Mulberry Local Authority Services – internal audit fee	£270.78	£45.13
615	21.05.24	KCC KCS – copying charges 02.07.23-01.04.24	£123.50	£20.60
616	21.05.24	PP Broad Agricultural Contractors – rural swathe cut April/May	£4,320.00	£720.00
			<b><u>£7,455.32</u></b>	<b><u>£785.73</u></b>

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