

**MINUTES OF THE CHIDDINGSTONE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON  
MONDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2026 AT 7.30PM IN CHIDDINGSTONE CAUSEWAY HALL**

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**Present:** Cllr J. Roper (Chairman), Cllr P. Myers, Cllr T. Nunn, Cllr C. Shamwana, Cllr P. Vicary and Cllr H. Williams

**Apologies:** Cllr P. Harris, Cllr K. Outlaw and County Cllr R. Mayall

**In attendance:** Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk). District Cllr R. Streatfeild and District Cllr M. Silander attended the meeting for the Open Session only.

### **Open Session**

#### **Report by District Cllr R. Streatfeild and District Cllr M. Silander**

District Cllr Streatfeild reported that there is not much to report at District Council level currently, although there have been two Councillor defections to the Reform party, there has been a change in leadership and the situation is unstable. Sadly one member passed away over the Christmas period. District Cllr Silander said that the District Council is led by a Cabinet of 5 people who make all the decisions. For example, approval was granted by the Cabinet for an 18.2m hotel to be built in Swanley. There is no control over capital projects and the budget for a housing development in Edenbridge started at £8m, was increased to £10.2m and then increased again to £12m. Cllr Streatfeild reported that in previous years, SDC has not been reliant on Government funding, but 2026/27 will be the first year that this situation will change. Cllr Streatfeild reported that GACC's Judicial Review proceedings are starting tomorrow and it is hoped that that there will be a successful outcome, even if this merely delays the project. Air traffic movements at Gatwick Airport are still not at 2019 figures. District Cllr Silander asked whether there is any update on the proposal for 351 new dwellings in Chiddingstone Causeway, and Cllr Roper said that the Parish Council has met with the landowners and it was suggested that a Chiddingstone parish Housing Needs Survey would be a useful way of seeing whether homes for local people are needed.

District Cllr Streatfeild and District Cllr Silander left the meeting at 7.45pm.

#### **Report by County Cllr R. Mayall**

In the absence of County Cllr Mayall, the Clerk read his report:

“The KCC Draft Budget has been published. This sets an increase in the KCC council tax of 3.99%. This has been made possible through £100 million in savings. There are no cuts to Council services. At the same time the Council's debt has been reduced by £67 million. The increase in council tax we inherited from the previous Conservative administration was anticipated at being 4.99%. Despite our detractors in the media and elsewhere claiming Reform were a bunch of barbarians who didn't know how to run a council and there was managerial chaos, we believe our performance contrasts well with other councils. In the case of Labour-run Medway Council, the council tax is most probably going to have to go up by 4.99% and they are having to ask the Government to bail them out. Borrowing has risen by £81 million and their debt has increased from £552 million to £634 million in one year. Much of the media does not seem very interested in reporting this story however.”

### **Closed Session**

93. **Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr Harris and Cllr Outlaw and members accepted their reasons for absence. Apologies for absence were also received from County Cllr Mayall.
94. **Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed**
  - i. Cllr Vicary declared an DPI in items 99(ii)(ii) and 99(iii)(i) as he is the applicant in these planning applications
  - ii. Cllr Nunn declared a DPI item 99(iii)(iii) as he is the applicant in this planning application, and an NPI in items 99(ii)(ii) and 99(iii)(i) as his wife works at Chiddingstone Dairy.
95. **The minutes of the Chiddingstone Parish Council Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025** were approved and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Vicary, seconded by Cllr Nunn, and all were in favour.

**96. To approve list of meeting dates 2026**

Members approved the following meeting dates for 2026:

Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> January	Parish Council	Chiddingstone Causeway Hall	7.30pm
Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> February	Parish Council	Chiddingstone Causeway Hall	7.30pm
Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> March	Parish Council	Chiddingstone Causeway Hall	7.30pm
Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> April	Annual Parish Meeting	Chiddingstone Village Hall	7.30pm
Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> April	Parish Council	Chiddingstone Village Hall	7.30pm
Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> May	Annual Parish Council	Chiddingstone Village Hall	7.30pm
Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> June	Parish Council	Chiddingstone Village Hall	7.30pm
Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> July	Parish Council	Chiddingstone Village Hall	7.30pm
Monday 21 <sup>st</sup> September	Parish Council	Chiddingstone Village Hall	7.30pm
Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> October	Parish Council	Chiddingstone Causeway Hall	7.30pm
Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> November	Parish Council	Chiddingstone Causeway Hall	7.30pm
Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> December	Parish Council	Chiddingstone Causeway Hall	7.30pm

**97. To discuss the vacancy on Chiddingstone Parish Council**

The Clerk reported that the vacancy is published and electors have until 29<sup>th</sup> January to inform SDC that ten or more wish to request an election, otherwise the Parish Council will be able to co-opt a new member.

**98. To discuss and approve update to Risk Assessment**

The Clerk reported that she, Cllr Roper and Cllr Outlaw have worked on the draft update to the Risk Assessment which has been circulated. All sections have been updated, and a new section has been prepared for cyber risk. A meeting has been requested with Vision ICT to discuss their cyber protections and their back up service. A request has also been made for a quote for cyber insurance cover. Members approved the draft Risk Assessment subject to updates on the cyber risks, and it was agreed that Cllr Roper, Cllr Outlaw and the Clerk will agree the wording on this section. Proposed by Cllr Nunn, seconded by Cllr Shamwana and all were in favour.

**99. Planning:**

i. To discuss and approve draft Planning Committee Terms of Reference

Members considered and approved the Planning Committee Terms of Reference. Proposed by Cllr Nunn, seconded by Cllr Myers and all were in favour.

ii. To consider planning applications received

i. SE/25/01005/HYB: Land South of Bassetts, Tonbridge Road, Chiddingstone Causeway - hybrid application comprising: in full: erection of 11 dwellings with patios and solar panels. Bike and bin stores. Creation of new access and parking with EV chargers. Fencing and gate. Associated landscaping and the creation of pond and in outline: erection of 4 dwellings with associated parking with access matters reserved. Amended Application. The amendment is a change in the red line boundary on the application. The Parish Council's previous comments were: "Chiddingstone Parish Council strongly supports this application. The Parish Council has been working in partnership with English Rural Housing Association for many years in order to provide two schemes of low cost affordable housing for people with a strong connection to the parish of Chiddingstone. The units proposed will help to satisfy the need identified in the Chiddingstone Housing Needs Survey, and these affordable housing units are desperately required in this area where properties to rent on the open market are often too expensive for local people to afford, and many people are having to move away from the area where they live, grew up or work. The Parish Council hope that this development will provide some much needed affordable homes for these local people." Members agreed to support the amendment and reiterate previous comments. Clerk to raise a request with ERHA for consideration to be given to more visitor parking along the verge area opposite the houses, possibly on a grasscrete surface.

ii. SE/26/00049/AGDET: Hilders Farm, Ide Hill Road, Bough Beech - details of elevational drawings for the design and external appearance of SE/25/03224/AGRNOT. Cllr Vicary reiterated his DPI in this item and took no part in the discussion or vote. Members supported this application.

- iii. SE/26/00012/FUL: 2 Hill Hoath Cottages, Hill Hoath Road, Chiddingstone TN8 7AE - change of use of agricultural land to residential garden. Members had no objection to this application.
- iii. To report SDC notifications of planning decisions
  - i. SE/25/03224/AGRNOT: Hilders Farm, Ide Hill Road, Bough Beech - two steel portal framed agricultural building extensions, extending in total to 211.39 sq.m. Decision: Prior Approval Required.
  - ii. SE/25/03242/AGRNOT: Woodland North of Hoath House, Chiddingstone Hoath - erection of a three-bay portal framed and part-timber clad forestry building. Decision: Prior Approval Not Required.
  - iii. SE/25/02208/HOUSE: Polebrook Farm, Bore Place Road, Chiddingstone - demolition of single storey north-east range, removal of canopy on south-east elevation, dormer windows, and chimney. Construction of single-storey north-east extension with raised terrace, two-storey extension and two-storey infill extension to south-west elevation, two storey south-east extension with dormer window and Juliet balcony, two-storey north-west extension. Alterations to fenestration. Changes to roof; raise ridge height and change hips to gables, new chimney. Changes to hard and soft landscaping; new paved patios and paths. Application approved.
- iv. To report notification of planning appeal decision:  
 Appeal Ref: APP/G2245/W/25/3373180. The application Ref is 25/00994/FUL: Watstock Farm, Wellers Town Road, Chiddingstone Hoath, Kent TN8 7BH. The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission. The appeal is made against the decision of SDC for the proposed conversion of a surplus agricultural barn to a new detached dwelling. The appeal is dismissed. The Inspector states: "The Framework states that substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt including harm to its openness. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Although I have concluded that the proposal would preserve openness and not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt, the proposed dwelling would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt by definition. There would also be other harm, since it has not been convincingly established that deterioration of the irreplaceable habitat would be avoided and there is a lack of clear evidence that harm to bats can be avoided or mitigated. The risks to irreplaceable habitat and protected species are in themselves matters weighing significantly against the proposal. While the appellant claims betterments would be secured in visual and ecological terms, for the reasons given above the evidence does not convincingly support that claim. The effect on the National Landscape and listed building is neutral. Where benefits would be secured, they are inherently constrained by the limited scale of the development. Even in the context of the substantial shortfall in housing supply and delivery, they collectively carry no more than modest weight. Consequently, the other considerations do not clearly outweigh the substantial weight which is given to the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and the other identified harm. I therefore conclude that the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development do not exist." Appeal Dismissed
- v. To hear update on potential breaches of planning policy  
 The Clerk updated members regarding potential breaches of planning policy in the parish.
- vi. To hear update on the Chiddingstone Neighbourhood Plan  
 Cllr Nunn reported that two Steering Committee meetings have been held and Bore Place has kindly offered space for future meetings to be held there. The initial topic under discussion is parking, how this can be designed, provided and managed in the parish. Cllr Shamwana advised that Chiddingstone Cricket Club has been in touch to see whether there is any feedback received from the initial survey regarding the Cricket Club and how the Club can take this forward.
- vii. To discuss the draft Housing Needs Survey  
 The draft HNS was circulated and members approved the content and the process for promoting it. The results will be used for both the Neighbourhood Plan and also will provide evidence of what local housing need there is for the Local Plan.
- viii. To discuss the SDC Draft Local Plan  
 The Regulation 19 will be published in the summer and will be subject to consultation.

## 100. Finance

- i. To discuss the 2025/26 Actual & Year End Forecast, and the 2026/27 Budget

Members discussed the actual 2025/26 income and expenditure to date versus budget and were happy with how the accounts are looking so far this year. The accounts have been looked at in detail by the Finance Committee. Members discussed and approved the 2026/27 Budget. Proposed by Cllr Williams, seconded by Cllr Shamwana and all were in favour.

ii. To discuss 2025/26 Earmarked Reserves

Members agreed the following transfers in Earmarked Reserves

- i. Transfer £200.00 from the General Fund to ER Election
- ii. Transfer £8,973.00 from ER Grants & Other Projects to ER Professional Fees
- iii. Transfer £7,000.00 from ER Chiddingstone Car Park to ER Infrastructure Projects
- iv. Transfer £2,500.00 from ER Infrastructure Projects to ER Professional Fees
- v. Budget 2026/27, transfer £5,000.00 from General Fund to ER Infrastructure Projects
- vi. Budget 2026/27, transfer £8,000.00 from General Fund to ER Professional Fees

Proposed by Cllr Vicary, seconded by Cllr Nunn and all were in favour.

iii. To set the level of the 2026/27 Precept

The Clerk reported that the Finance Committee met on 15<sup>th</sup> January in order to look at the budget and precept requirements for 2026/27. The Tax Base has increased slightly and the Finance Committee recommended that the precept be increased from £51,000 to £56,000. This is an increase of 9.36%, which for a Band D property would be an annual increase of £7.54. Cllr Nunn proposed that the precept for 2026/27 be set at £56,000, this was seconded by Cllr Shamwana and at show of hands all were in favour.

iv. To discuss the report of the Chiddingstone Interim Internal Audit

The Clerk reported that the interim Internal Audit report has not yet been received, however there are the following recommendations (i) there is an outstanding invoice carried forward and it is recommended that this be resolved and a reminder that the end of year AGAR may need to be restated, (ii) that committee agendas and minutes are added to the website and the diary of meetings for 2026 is updated, (iii) that the Risk Assessment matrix identifies what constitutes high, medium or low risk for consistent evaluation, and (iv) that the council's Finance Regulations are updated to reflect current practice. Members agreed to implement these recommendations.

v. To discuss the Clerk's hours of working

The Clerk left the room whilst this item was discussed. The Clerk is currently paid for 20 hours a week, and members approved the proposal to increase this to 22 hours a week to take into account additional works working on the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan issues. There will be a reduction in employer pension contributions from April due to the Town and Parish Council pooling of pension funds, so the net increase in the increase in hours will be £263.88 next year.

vi. To consider quotes for the relocation of the bench on Chiddingstone Hoath Green

Members discussed the four quotes received and awarded the work to Hever Landscapes for moving the bench onto a new concrete base. £624 + VAT. The existing concrete base will remain in place and this will be re-addressed at a later date.

vii. To discuss the planters in Chiddingstone Causeway

The Clerk reported that the planter on the western entrance to Chiddingstone Causeway needs replacing. Members agreed to consider options for the replacement, which Cllr Williams undertook to investigate.

viii. To approve list of payments

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

## 101. Affordable Housing provision in the parish

i. To hear update regarding the Chiddingstone Affordable Housing schemes

The Clerk reported that English Rural Housing Association has provided the following update:

- i. Millbrook site in Bough Beech: "Sewage Issue – Arazu have confirmed that works undertaken by their contractor on 22<sup>nd</sup> December were successful, and the air intake is now functioning correctly. The contractor advised it will take about 4 weeks for the system to settle down and for the smells to dissipate."
- ii. Bassetts site in Chiddingstone Causeway: "The consultant team have provided the updated drawings and reports reflecting the agreed minor boundary change and this has been submitted to SDC. We have been given a determination date of 6<sup>th</sup> April 2026.

“I am continuing to liaise with our solicitors on the S106 agreement and also chasing for an update from Adams Integra on the viability assessment. I am also working on the procurement plan for the site.”

ii. To discuss measures to mitigate flooding in Redleaf Close

The Clerk reported that the complaint has been submitted to WKHA on behalf of the residents, and a response has been received which says that WKHA are awaiting information and are still investigating the complaint. In line with the Housing Ombudsman code, WKHA has extended the complaint by 10 working days, which means that a response will be received by 23<sup>rd</sup> January.

## 102. 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 speed reduction on Camp Hill to 30mph has been subject to consultation and would run from the junction with the B2027 and Camp Hill House. When the results of the consultation are known, the Traffic Regulation Order will be approved.

ii. To discuss the request by Chiddingstone School to display banners opposite the school to restrict parking

The Clerk reported that car parking at the school continues to be a problem and a clear stretch with no parked cars is required to allow the school bus and coaches to park and allow safe access for the children. Members discussed the provision of a bus cage printed on the road, but there was concern that this is non-enforceable and additional road markings in the Conservation Area and National Trust village would not be supported. Members also did not support the proposal for banners as put forward by the school for the same reasons. The Parish Council felt that the best option would be chain support posts with a barrier chain. These would provide a deterrent and will be easy to remove at the end of the school day.

iii. KCC Highways: Temporary Road Closures

- Camp Hill, Chiddingstone Causeway: 9<sup>th</sup> February 2026 for 1 day between 9.30 and 15.30 between B2027 Tonbridge Road and Charcott. Pedestrian access will be maintained during the works. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while works are undertaken by Openreach. See <https://one.network/?tm=GB146663020>.
- Lockskinners, Chiddingstone: 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026 for 1 day between 09.30 and 15.30 outside Granary Cottage. Pedestrian access will be maintained during the works. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while drainage cleansing works are undertaken by Kent. See <https://one.network/?tm=GB147285846>.

## 103. Aviation

i. GACC newsletters: noted.

ii. Aviation Environment Federation email regarding consultations: noted.

## 104. To discuss correspondence received

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

- Item 4: Kent Police: Tonbridge Road, Chiddingstone - between Monday 1<sup>st</sup> December and Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, somebody stole a recently delivered parcel from a doorstep. Crime Report No. 46/210347/25.
- Item 5: SDC: “We are, once again, running our Voluntary and Community Awards and we're keen to have nominations from your Parish or Town Council area. With Local Government Re-organisation moving at pace, this is likely to be our last awards. So, we want to take this opportunity to recognise as many people and organisations as possible from right across the District. Parish and Town Councils are at heart of their communities. They are usually aware of all the amazing community work in their areas.”
- Item 6: SDC News Release: “Thousands of residents took part in Sevenoaks District Council's latest Local Plan (Regulation 18) consultation. From 23<sup>rd</sup> October to 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025, the public were asked to share their views on proposed Local Plan policies and development sites to meet the Government's new compulsory housing target for the District – a 63% increase on the previous target. They were also asked for their opinions on the Government's new designation of 'Grey Belt' in the District. Around 5,000 people and organisations took part. A total of 1,150 people also attended 30 face-to-face 'Pop-up' sessions that took place at 10 locations across the District where Council staff were on hand to answer questions. The Council will publish all the Local Plan comments (without address information) on its website later in the New Year.

“All the comments will then be analysed and considered before the Council publishes a final draft of the Local Plan in summer 2026 for further public comments (called the Regulation 19 Publication). This version of the Local Plan will be submitted to Government for examination by the end of 2026.”

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

- i. Chiddingstone Carpark  
The Clerk reported that she is in the process of arranging another meeting with the Chiddingstone Castle Trustees to consider options.
- ii. SpeedWatch  
The next SpeedWatch session will be arranged soon.
- iii. Litter Pick, Bulk Refuse Freighter, Flytipping  
None.
- iv. Rural Swathe Cutting Contract  
The Clerk reported that the first cut 2026 will be April/May.

**106. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda**

None.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at 7.30pm in Chiddingstone Causeway Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.

**Chiddingstone Parish Council – 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026**  
List of Payments since last meeting (figures inclusive of VAT)

Payment Number	Date	Payee	Amount inc. VAT	VAT
803	15.12.25	Inigo Quirk – contribution to flowers for funeral (Chair’s Expenses)	£75.00	
804	19.01.26	Clerk – salary	£1,398.27	
805	19.01.26	HMRC – PAYE	£330.00	
806 SO	19.01.26	Kent County Council – pension contribution	£567.43	
807	19.01.26	Clerk – mileage, office expenses and reimbursement costs	£66.60	
808	19.01.26	Hever Landscapes Ltd – closed churchyard & areas Oct	£518.40	£86.40
809	19.01.26	Chiddingstone Table Tennis Club – loss of earnings	£70.00	
810	19.01.26	Kember Loudon Williams – planning consultant fee	£429.00	£71.50
811	19.01.26	Teambase - stationery	£107.98	£18.00
812	19.01.26	GACC – grant, approved 08.12.25	£600.00	
			<b><u>£4,162.68</u></b>	<b><u>£175.90</u></b>

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