

**MINUTES OF THE CHIDDINGSTONE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY 16TH FEBRUARY 2026 AT 7.30PM IN CHIDDINGSTONE CAUSEWAY HALL**

Present: Cllr J. Roper (Chairman), Cllr S. Andrews, Cllr P. Harris, Cllr P. Myers, Cllr K. Outlaw, Cllr T. Nunn, Cllr C. Shamwana and Cllr H. Williams
Apologies: County Cllr R. Mayall and District Cllr M. Silander
Absent: Cllr P. Vicary
In attendance: Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk). One member of the public attended the meeting for the Open Session only.

Open Session

Questions from members of the public

The organiser of the Chiddingstone Real Football event attended the meeting to discuss the arrangements for this year's event, which are largely the same as last year. All insurances are in place and St. John's Ambulance has been booked. This year there will be an increase in marshals and the event will not be advertised on social media in order that it is locally focussed. A request has been made for a licenced vendor to sell ice creams by the Village Hall driveway and all information on health & safety policies and insurance have been requested. The two charities that normally benefit from the event are Hospice in the Weald and the Kent Air Ambulance Service, and the organiser said he will make a note of the request for Chiddingstone Church to receive a donation. Last year, the event raised £16,000. There will be a leaflet drop in the village prior to the event and a litter pick on the day after the event. The organiser left the meeting at 7.40pm.

District Cllr M. Silander

In the absence of District Cllr Silander, the Clerk read his report:

1. "A large solar panel application was rejected by Development Management Committee against Officer advice. It is being re-considered now by Officers as to how best to proceed, being mindful of potential appeals and legal challenges.
2. I managed to get cross-party support to review our expanding capital projects and the associated aggregate risks. The matter has since been discussed at the Audit Committee, with further investigations to follow."

Closed Session

107. Apologies for absence were received from County Cllr Mayall and District Cllr Silander. Cllr Vicary was absent.

108. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed
Cllr Harris declared a NPI in item 118 as she is a Churchwarden.

109. To co-opt new member of the Parish Council

Cllr Roper proposed that Suzanne Andrews be co-opted onto the Parish Council with immediate effect. This was seconded by Cllr Shamwana, all were in favour, and she was duly co-opted. Cllr Andrews signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office form which was countersigned by the Clerk, and her dispensation form for the setting of the precept. She returned her signed NPI and DPI forms, and was welcomed onto the Parish Council.

110. To report vacancy on the Parish Council following the resignation of Cllr Harris

Cllr Roper reported that Cllr Harris has sadly resigned from the Parish Council, and thanked her for her tremendous contribution to Parish Council matters. Cllr Roper said that, as a non-Parish Councillor, Penny can continue to be the Parish Council's representative on the Margaret Hyde Trust and that her role as Parish Council representative on the Chiddingstone Village Hall Management Committee will cease upon her resignation and a new representative will be appointed at the May Parish Council meeting. The Clerk will inform SDC and advertise the post and, providing there is no requirement to hold an election, a new member will be co-opted in due course.

111. The minutes of the Chiddingstone Parish Council Meeting held 19th January 2026 were approved and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Shamwana, seconded by Cllr Nunn, and all were in favour.

- 112. To discuss the Annual Parish Meeting to be held on Monday 13th April 2026 in Chiddingstone Village Hall**
 Members agreed that the main focus this year will be the Neighbourhood Plan and the SDC Local Plan proposals. Cllr Nunn undertook to ask CPRE to come and talk to residents. The Community Award will be awarded and light refreshments will be served. Clerk to order roadside posters.
- 113. To discuss and approve update to Risk Assessment**
 Cllr Outlaw reported that the Risk Assessment has been updated and the only point that requires clarification is the freehold status of the Chiddingstone Sports Pavilion. Cyber risk has been considered and a meeting was held with Cllr Outlaw, Cllr Roper and the Clerk with Vision ICT to discuss the safety of the website and email servers and the backup service, which were satisfactory. There is a recommendation that all members have up-to-date virus protection on their devices and they are password controlled. It was agreed that the circulated documentation should be considered and discussed further at the next Parish Council meeting. The Risk Assessment was approved, proposed by Cllr Roper, seconded by Cllr Nunn and all were in favour.
- 114. Planning:**
- i. To consider planning applications received
 - i. SE/25/02901/FUL: Newtyehurst Farm, Cowden Pound Road To Truggers Lane, Markbeech TN8 7DA - partial demolition of building to convert barn B into two pairs of semi-detached units with car parking. Alteration to fenestration. Juliet balcony. Replacement cladding to roof and walls. Associated landscaping. It was agreed that the Planning Committee would look at the plans and agree a response.
 - ii. SE/25/03528/FUL and SE/25/03529/LBCALT: 1 Little Hale Cottage, Hale Oak Road, Chiddingstone TN8 7AX - demolition of existing extension and erection of replacement extension to listed building. Demolition of existing barn and shed and erection of replacement outbuilding with associated change of use, change of use to residential garden land. It was agreed that the Planning Committee would look at the plans and agree a response.
 - iii. SE/25/03591/HOUSE: Keepers, Penshurst Road, Penshurst TN11 8HY - proposed single storey rear and two storey side extensions, covered porch to front and side elevations, new rear central pitched roof, chimney rebuilt, new dormer windows and roof lights and associated landscape works. This is an adjoining Parish consultation. Clerk to contact Penshurst Parish Council to discuss this application.
 - iv. SE/25/03023/FUL and SE/25/03024/LBCALT: Watstock Farm, Wellers Town Road, Chiddingstone Hoath TN8 7BH - conversion of part of the existing stables into two dwellings. Parking. Alterations to fenestration. Internal alterations. Landscaping and raised beds. Fencing. It was agreed that the Planning Committee would look at the plans and agree a response.

The Clerk reported that the Planning Committee considered the following application since the last meeting:

 - v. SE/25/02403/FUL: Brownings Farm, Hale Oak Road, Chiddingstone TN8 7AX - erection of Timber Pole Barn. Relocation of fences and gate. Members had no objection to this application.
 - ii. To report SDC notifications of planning decisions
 - i. SE/25/03290/LBCALT: 2 The Village, Chiddingstone - partial repair and rebuild of the western and southern walls to the garden of No. 2, including the replacement of the shed if required. Application approved.
 - iii. To hear update on potential breaches of planning policy
 The Clerk updated members regarding potential breaches of planning policy in the parish.
 - iv. To hear update on the Chiddingstone Neighbourhood Plan
 Cllr Nunn reported that the Steering Group has met on zoom on a couple of occasions and there was a full in-person meeting at Bore Place last week. It was a very positive meeting and everyone was engaged. The Group is starting to look at policies which have been drawn up in line with the responses received from the initial survey. The draft policies when prepared will be put to the Parish Council for approval before going out to public consultation.
 - v. To hear update on the draft Housing Needs Survey
 Cllr Nunn reported that the draft Housing Needs was sent to both the SDC Housing Policy Officer and the Senior Planning Officer who is assigned to the Chiddingstone Neighbourhood Plan for their approval. The officers have confirmed that the evidence gained from the Housing Needs Survey will be admissible for planning purposes because the questions and format are consistent with other surveys used in the district.

It was agreed that the survey will be published this Friday on the website and social media. Clerk to prepare some leaflets for shops and pubs and some roadside signs to advertise the survey. It was agreed that it is important that as many responses as possible are sought. The survey covers all types and tenure of housing and should be completed by people who may want to move within the next ten years, or not at all as they may want to provide their views on how development may or may not evolve in the parish.

vi. To discuss the SDC Draft Local Plan

Cllr Roper reported that the SDC Draft Local Plan Regulation 18 public consultation has closed and SDC are analysing responses. Cllr Roper said that he will contact the landowner of the site to the rear of the Little Brown Jug to arrange another meeting. The Regulation 19 public consultation will be published in the summer.

vii. To discuss SDC's Local List Supplementary Planning Document of heritage and non-heritage assets

The Clerk reported that she attended a meeting held by SDC about the district Local List and SDC are asking the parishes to consider nominating items to be included. The Local List can include heritage assets and non-heritage assets that are important to the community, such as maybe the war memorial, the Chiding Stone, heritage phone boxes, pillboxes, the wall and gates to Chiddingstone Castle, Vexour Bridge and the signpost on Chiddingstone Hoath Green. The assets can be privately owned or in public places. Cllr Nunn suggested that all members give consideration to what assets could be considered for nomination to the Local List, and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group can take this forward.

viii. To discuss the visit of planning students from University College London

The Clerk reported that students are coming to the parish on Monday 9th March and she and Cllr Roper will attend.

ix. Consultation on the changes to the NPPF

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council should if possible respond to this consultation and members agreed to have a look and a draft response can be prepared. Deadline 10th March.

115. Finance

i. To discuss the provision of a new planter in Chiddingstone Causeway

Cllr Williams reported that he has investigated possible planters and there is a lined zinc galvanised one costing £120 including VAT. Members approved the expenditure.

ii. To approve membership renewal to the Aviation Environment Federation: £36

Members approved this membership renewal, proposed by Cllr Harris, seconded by Cllr Nunn, and all were in favour.

iii. To approve list of payments

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

116. 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: "No issues to report from the scheme itself, the sewage treatment plant works were concluded however the system is still settling and may require some actions to be undertaken to dissipate the build up at the outfall pipe. Our contractors are liaising with the Environment Agency on this matter. The end of defect inspections will be scheduled for June."

ii. Bassetts site in Chiddingstone Causeway: "The minor drawing revisions following a boundary amendment by the landowner have been incorporated into the site plans and the planning officer has confirmed that consultation has recommenced with a determination date of 6th April. We have received the feedback from SDC on the viability assessment undertaken by Adams Integra, most of which is acceptable however we are querying the build cost assumption that Adams Integra have used as they seem to be markedly lower than the current contractors are able to work to. We are finalising the tender documents for issue to five local contractors this month. We are aiming for an October start on site subject to updating the financial appraisal based on the tender returned and concluding the land acquisition negotiations."

- ii. To discuss measures to mitigate flooding in Redleaf Close
Cllr Outlaw reported that an unsatisfactory response was received from WKHA on the first stage complaint, and the complaint has now moved to the second stage and our response has to be submitted by Friday. More evidence of flooding has been received recently during heavy rain. WKHA has 20 working days to respond to the second stage complaint and if a satisfactory response is not received, the complaint will be forwarded to the Housing Ombudsman.

117. 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 KCC have reported as follows: “The consultation period has ended and we had one objector to whom I am legally obliged to write to giving more information on the proposal. I have given them 14 days to respond which ends today and no response has yet been received. I will therefore be writing to my head of service requesting approval of the proposed Traffic Regulation Order. Once I receive that I will hand the scheme over to engineers for design and installation. Realistically I would hope the scheme is in place late Spring time but will of course keep you posted.”
- ii. To hear update on Chiddingstone SpeedWatch
The Clerk reported that four dates have been arranged in February and March and a new volunteer from Bough Beech has signed up to help.
- iii. KCC Highways: Temporary Road Closures
 - Truggers Lane To Grove Road, Chiddingstone Hoath - 12th March for 2 days adjacent to Oakenden Lane. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while works are undertaken by Openreach. See <https://one.network/?tm=GB147588174>.
 - Clinton Lane, Bough Beech - 18th February for up to 2 days from B2027 Clinton Lane to junction with How Green Lane. It is planned that the road will be closed between 7pm and 4am each day. This is to enable carriageway repairs to be carried out by KCC.
 - Finch Green, Chiddingstone Hoath from 19th February for up to 1 day between Coldharbour Road and Grove Road. It is planned that the road will be closed between 8am and 4pm each day. This is to enable carriageway repairs to be carried out by KCC.
 - Coopers Corner, Ide Hill from 16th February for up to 2 days outside Sycamores to outside Winkhurst Farmhouse. This is to enable overhead cable repairs to be carried out by UK Power Networks.

118. Closed Churchyard and Maintenance Areas

- i. To approve updated specification for maintenance contract
The Clerk reported that the last contract expired at the end of November and the Churchwardens and the Parish Council have been liaising regarding the wording for the new specification and contract. Members approved the new specification and quotes will be received and discussed at the next meeting. There are additional works that require a separate quote and Clerk to instigate. Cllr Harris reported that there will be a tidy up of the northern part of the closed churchyard on 21st March from 10am to 12pm.
- ii. To consider request to remove grass verge from the corner opposite The Castle Inn, Chiddingstone, to the hedge opposite Chiddingstone School
The Clerk reported that the Church requested that the grass verge be removed, but this has been refused by KCC who, as the Highway Authority, own the verge. They said that it would be inappropriate in a Conservation Area. Cllr Harris reported that there did not used to be a verge at the base of the church wall and undertook to find photographic evidence which can be sent to KCC.

119. To discuss the Chiddingstone Real Football event

See Open Session above.

120. Aviation

- i. GACC newsletters, the contents of which were noted.

121. To discuss correspondence received

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

- i. Item 4: KALC: Chairmanship Conference - Thursday 26th February in New Romney. Cllr Outlaw to attend.
- ii. Item 6: Kent Police: The Village, Chiddingstone, between 00:01 on Saturday 7th February and 11:01 on Monday 9th February, somebody smashed the sun roof of a school minibus. Crime Report No. 46/22285/26.

122. 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. Litter Pick, Bulk Refuse Freighter, Flytipping
None.
- iii. Rural Swathe Cutting Contract
The Clerk reported that the first cut in 2026 will be in April/May. The Clerk is working with KCC as to the documents required for this year. KCC has approved payment of their contribution towards the 2025 rural swathe cuts and invoices have been sent to the other parishes in the cluster for payment by 31st March.
- iv. Summer Family Fun Play Event
The Clerk reported that this will be on Friday 7th August on the Chiddingstone Causeway Sports Field from 10.30am to 1.30pm.

123. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda

- i. Cllr Shamwana reported that an application for a new padel court has been made to the Chiddingstone Sports Association and asked for members to have a look at the proposal and let Cllr Roper know their views.
- ii. Cllr Roper thanked Cllr Harris very much for her time as a Parish Councillor and for her large contribution.
- iii. Cllr Harris reported that the noticeboard in Chiddingstone Hoath has been repaired and repainted and Clerk to write a note of thanks.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 16th March 2026 at 7.30pm in Chiddingstone Causeway Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.28pm.

Chiddingstone Parish Council – 16th February 2026
List of Payments since last meeting (figures inclusive of VAT)

Payment Number	Date	Payee	Amount <u>inc. VAT</u>	<u>VAT</u>
813	16.02.26	Clerk – salary	£1,508.64	
814	16.02.26	HMRC – PAYE	£398.72	
815 SO	16.02.26	Kent County Council – pension contribution	£567.43	
816	16.02.26	Kent County Council – pension contribution	£55.74	
817	16.02.26	Clerk – mileage	£70.65	
818	16.02.26	Hever Landscapes Ltd – closed churchyard & areas Nov	£518.40	£86.40
819	16.02.26	Forvis Mazaars LLP – 2024/25 external audit fee	£378.00	£63.00
820	16.02.26	Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd – 2025/26 interim internal audit	£270.78	£45.13
821	16.02.26	Aviation Environment Federation – membership renewal	£36.00	
			<u>£3,804.36</u>	<u>£194.53</u>

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