MINUTES OF THE CHIDDINGSTONE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14TH OCTOBER 2026 AT 7.30PM IN ST. LUKE'S PARISH ROOM, CHIDDINGSTONE CAUSEWAY

Present:	**Cllr J. Roper (Chairman), Cllr S. Andrews, Cllr I. Henderson, Cllr T. Nunn, Cllr C. Shamwana and Cllr P. Vicary**
Apologies:	**Cllr K. Outlaw, Cllr P. Myers, Cllr H. Williams and County Cllr R. Mayall**
In attendance:	**Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk). District Cllr R. Streatfeild, District Cllr M. Silander and 1 member of the public attended the meeting for the Open Session only. 1 member of the public attended the meeting until 8.04pm.**

Open Session

Report by District Cllr Streatfeild

District Cllr Streatfeild reported as follows:

- The rollout of the new waste collections is causing some issues in built-up areas, less so in rural areas. SDC has taken delivery of smaller wheelie bins for people with restricted space and residents can contact SDC and make a request for one of these to be delivered. SDC will collect the large wheelie bin at the same time. Residents who have old wheelie bins can take them to Dubrik Household Waste Recycling Centre and unfortunately they cannot be collected from residents' homes. The way that the waste is collected will remain the same, and residents should leave their wheelie bins where they used to leave their bags. Residents are able to request a change in the way that their waste is collected by contacting SDC. Up-to-date information can be found at www.sevenoaks.gov.uk.
- SDC members have had a briefing on the new National Planning Policy Framework which includes some more definitions on items such as well-connected railway stations. Railway stations in the district are being categorised against the criteria included in the new NPPF. The Local Plan will be based upon the previous version of the NPPF. Cllr Roper asked whether Regulation 19 consultation responses will be sent to the Planning Inspectorate at the end of the year? D.Cllr Streatfeild said that SDC is able to submit its own response and this and the Draft Plan will be discussed by full council at the SDC meeting on 1st December and there will be a vote as to whether the Draft Local Plan will go forward in its current form.

District Cllr Streatfeild left the meeting at 7.43pm.

Report by District Cllr Silander

District Cllr Silander reported that he has received complaints from residents about people parking in front of the row of cottages in Chiddingstone Causeway, often on the pavement. Clerk to advise the police as it is not acceptable for vehicles to block the pavement.

District Cllr Silander left the meeting at 7.50pm.

Questions from members of the public

1. A resident said that she has joined CPRE and is now responsible for Chiddingstone, Penshurst and Chevening. If the Parish Council has any concerns about potential development in the parish, please get in touch. She said that she is concerned about threat to trees and would like to see more Tree Preservation Orders made, especially on trees in areas of potential development. She said that she is considering standing as the Chiddingstone Tree Warden but is currently finding out more information on the role. Cllr Nunn asked what CPRE's view is of changing the boundaries of the National Landscapes. He said that the Kent Downs National Landscape has carried out an assessment of the boundaries and the boundary in Chiddingstone parish is one of 19 sites that scores strongly for extension. The resident said that she will raise this at the next CPRE meeting.
2. The same resident said that she is completely in favour of improvements to the parking area at Chequers Cottages in Bough Beech.

1 member of the public left the meeting at 7.54pm

Closed Session

48. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Outlaw, Cllr Myers and Cllr Williams and members accepted their reasons for absence. Apologies for absence were also received from County Cllr Mayall.

49. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed
Cllr Shamwana declared an NPI in item 52(i)(i) as he is a neighbour to the applicant.

50. The minutes of the Chiddingstone Parish Council Meeting held 9th September 2026 were approved and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Vicary, seconded by Cllr Nunn, and all were in favour.

51. To discuss and approve Chiddingstone Parish Council's Data Audit
The Clerk reported that it is a requirement for the 2026-27 Audit to complete a Data Audit. This must be reviewed and updated annually. Members reviewed and approved the draft Data Audit. Proposed by Cllr Roper, seconded by Cllr Vicary, and all were in favour.

52. Planning:

i. To consider planning applications received

i. SE/26/02283/LDCPR: Fissenden, Hampkins Hill Road, Chiddingstone TN8 7BA - single storey side extension. Members had no comment to make on this application.

ii. SE/26/01427/FUL: Pucknells, Camp Hill, Chiddingstone Causeway TN11 8LE - single story structure comprising of a self contained multifunctional room with a separate bathroom for the purposes of a two person holiday let. The Planning Committee to view the plans and agree a response.

1 member of the public left the meeting at 8.04pm

ii. To report SDC notifications of planning decisions

- SE/26/02073/WTCA: Chiddingstone Primary School, The Village, Chiddingstone TN8 7AH - Works to Trees in a Conservation Area: removal of Ash tree. Application withdrawn.
- SE/26/01201/FUL: Castle Lodge, Hill Hoath Road, Chiddingstone - erection of self-build dwelling and carport with associated development and landscape enhancement. Application approved.
- SE/26/01487/HOUSE: Hale Farm, Hale Oak Road, Chiddingstone - proposed demolition of existing single storey elements and erection of a single storey rear extension and two storey extension with associated works. Application withdrawn.

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 regarding the SDC Draft Local Plan and Regulation 19 consultation
Cllr Roper reported that the Chiddingstone Parish Council approved response was submitted before the deadline, and there is a timetable for the next steps in the process.

v. To hear update on the Chiddingstone Neighbourhood Plan
Cllr Nunn reported that the draft policies have been sent to the Steering Committee for comment and will now be sent to the Parish Council for their comments prior to the November Parish Council meeting. The Draft Neighbourhood Plan will then sent to SDC for comments as part of the Regulation 15 process and, at this point, the Neighbourhood Plan becomes an emerging statutory planning document. Members agreed that a professional overview may be needed prior to submission to SDC to ensure that it is compliant with local and national planning legislation. Clerk to contact Neighbourhood Plan consultant who spoke at the KALC Planning Conference attended by Cllr Roper and the Clerk.
Cllr Nunn reported that he had a zoom meeting with Pennon Group, who owns SES Water to discuss in particular the reservoir which is a valuable resource for the community.

vi. SDC Street Naming and Numbering: Application by St Christopher Homes to name the development at the Former Dukes Factory, Chiddingstone Causeway 'Cricket Gardens'. Members approved.

53. Finance

i. To hear update on the Chiddingstone Interim Internal Audit

The Clerk reported that the interim internal audit took place yesterday, and the report will be sent through. One item that was discussed is the need for Data Protection training for councillors and the Clerk which must be done before end financial year. KALC is offering the following dates for Data Protection Training for Councillors:

- Monday 30th November at 6.30pm on zoom
- Tuesday 15th December at 6.30pm on zoom
- Monday 11th January at 6.30pm on zoom

Members to let the Clerk know which date they can do. The Clerk is booked onto a Clerk's training event on Monday 11th January at 1pm.

ii. To discuss and approve Earmarked Reserves

Members approved the following transfers to and from reserves.

	Project	Earmarked Reserve at 1 Apr 26 £	Transfer to Reserves £	Transfer from Reserves £	Earmarked Reserve at 31 Mar 27 £
1	PWLB Repayments	0.00			0.00
2	Election costs	200.00	200.00		400.00
3	Grants & Other Projects	0.00			0.00
4	Infrastructure Projects	22,115.27	5,000.00		27,115.27
5	Professional Fees	16,473.00	8,000.00	-1,950.00	22,523.00
6	Chiddingstone Car Park	0.00			0.00
7	Neighbourhood Plan (CIL Funding)	7,454.23			7,454.23
	TOTAL Earmarked Reserves	**46,242.50**	**13,200.00**	**-1,950.00**	**57,492.50**
	TOTAL General Fund	**31,491.66**			**20,241.66**

iii. To approve list of payments

Cllr Shamwana 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.

54. 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 on Bassetts:

"Frustratingly there was very little movement on the S106 Agreement through the summer but things are slowing moving forward.

Funding – I am pleased to confirm that Homes England approved grant funding for the scheme, ahead of planning permission being secured, which is unusual and represents a significant milestone for the project. The grant application was supported by an extremely positive statement from the SDC Housing Enabler and the Planning Officer, which undoubtedly assisted Homes England in reaching an early decision.

S106 Agreement – Progress on the Section 106 Agreement has been slow, with the draft agreement continuing to bounce between KCC and SDC for review. However, aside from a small number of formatting and drafting points, our solicitor is optimistic that the version currently with SDC will be acceptable to all parties. The SDC Housing Enabler, is also liaising with her legal team to keep up the momentum. We will continue to press for a swift resolution so that the draft agreement can be released to our solicitor for review and comment at the earliest opportunity.

Planning - Completion of the Section 106 agreement will enable the planning officer to issue the planning decision under delegated authority.

Tender – A B Canham have been selected as our preferred contractor for the development and will be commencing pre-construction and design activities under a letter of intent which we await the planning approval.

"Programme – Given the delays in progressing the Section 106 Agreement, the programme has been revised as follows:

Section 106 concluded	October/November 2026
Planning approval granted	November 2026
Completion of land purchase	November/December 2026
Start on site	April 2027

Archaeology – I have appointed our archaeological consultant who has prepared the Written Scheme of Investigation. This is ready for submission immediately upon receipt of planning permission, with the aim of completing the required archaeological fieldwork during the autumn.

Both our solicitors and I remain focused on completing the S106, the Deed of Variation and securing planning consent and I am working closely with all parties to progress the remaining matters as quickly as possible. While there are still several steps to complete, I am encouraged by the recent progress."

ii. To discuss measures to mitigate flooding in Redleaf Close

The Clerk reported that a meeting is arranged with the Deputy Chief Executive & Corporate Director of Communities, Place and Economy at SDC, and WKHA. Cllr Roper, Cllr Outlaw and the Clerk to attend.

54. 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 a meeting has been arranged to review the Highways Improvement Plan. Cllr Roper will join the meeting. He said previously that the Camp Hill speed restriction should be in place by the end of October.

ii. To hear update on Chiddingstone SpeedWatch

The Clerk reported that the SpeedWatch volunteers haven't been out this month. Clerk to chase.

iii. To hear update regarding the route of PROW SR518, The Rectory, Chiddingstone

The Clerk reported that the original route of the footpath is restored and the path is open.

iv. To hear report of fault on PROW SR496 between Somerden and Horsehsoes

The Clerk reported that the stile is very unstable at the railway line and she has reported this to Kent PROW.

55. To adopt the KALC Community Award Scheme 2027

Members adopted the 2027 KALC Community Award Scheme and the Parish Council will seek nominations for people who have undertaken some worthwhile community causes. The nominations will be discussed at the December Parish Council meeting.

56. 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: SDC re: Local Government Reorganisation: "The Minister maintains that the Government remains committed to LGR and implementing unitary councils across all areas of England. But they say the decision to pause was necessary following updated and privileged legal advice, which requires them to review the decisions they made around seven weeks ago. Whilst not giving an absolute commitment, it is the current view that LGR will be delayed for one year, with new unitary councils taking effect from 1 April 2029. This would require elections to the shadow unitary councils to take place in May 2028. We are now expecting to hold elections to SDC in May 2027 alongside the Town & Parish Council elections. Whilst these are the expected timelines, the Government has made it clear that the implementation date for LGR and the term of office for Councillors due to be elected in 2027 are matters that will be confirmed through their "rapid review" of the LGR decisions. We do understand that this may have implications for Town & Parish Councils and we will keep you updated should we receive any further information. It is also still being stated that unitary council elections may still be possible in some areas in 2027. This would require a very rapid decision on LGR structures to allow Structural Change Orders to pass through Parliament which are essential to being able to hold an election for a new unitary council. Whilst this may be unlikely, it has not been categorically ruled out. It has also become clear that the details of what the 'rapid review' of LGR will consider, and how the process will be undertaken, is still to be concluded.

"We expect an update from Government by mid-October which may provide some of the clarity that Councillors and Officers across all tiers of local government are asking for. Should we receive any further information from Government in advance of October, we will ensure you are kept updated."

ii. Item 3: NALC Keeping Plans on Track: the next chapter for Neighbourhood Plans event online 16th December 12-1.15pm. Cost £35 + VAT per delegate. Clerk booked on this.
NALC Next Generation Leadership: Building inclusive parish and town councils online 28th October 2026 12-1.15pm. Cost £35 + VAT per delegate. Cllr Outlaw booked on this.

iii. Item 4: NALC: "Our groundbreaking new AI-powered assistant is designed specifically for parish and town councils. NORA gives you a faster and simpler way to find our information and guidance, helping you get to the information you need without having to know what search terms to use. Unlike general-purpose AI tools that draw on information from across the internet, NORA is grounded in trusted NALC resources.
How NORA can help you: whether you have a question about council meetings, governance, employment, finance or another council matter, NORA can help you. NORA is currently included as part of your membership. It is available to logged-in users from parish and town councils in membership and county associations, subject to fair use."

iv. Item 7: Email from River Truth regarding the recording of storm-overflow, water-quality and river-levels every hour. There would be an annual charge of £588. Members did not wish to proceed.

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

i. Chiddingstone Carpark
The Clerk reported that a meeting has been requested with the trustees and waiting to hear a date.

ii. Bough Beech car parking area at Chequers Cottages
The Clerk reported that she and Cllr Vicary met a contractor on site in order to obtain a quote. He has provided an estimate for the work. Clerk to request that he now provides a firm quote. The quote will be discussed by BBRAT at their AGM on 23rd November, and then the Parish Council will discuss at their December Parish Council meeting. Clerk to confirm with SDC that the approval for permitted development previously given is still valid and that SDC is still willing to transfer the ownership of the land to the Parish Council. Clerk to write to the residents to see if they are in favour of the proposal.

iii. Chiddingstone Parish Tree Survey
The Clerk reported that this will be carried out in November.

iv. Hedgelaying the hedge opposite the school
The Clerk reported that this is booked to take place during school half term. Cllr Nunn has successfully applied for a grant and has been awarded £1,700 from Farming in Protected Landscapes towards the project.

v. Litter Pick
The next litter pick will be on Saturday 17th October at 9.30am meeting at The Wheatsheaf in Bough Beech, at the Castle Inn in Chiddingstone, on the green in Chiddingstone Hoath and in Richards Close in Chiddingstone Causeway.

vi. Rural Swathe Cutting Contract
The Clerk reported that the second cut is underway and the standard of work is good.

58. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda
None.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday 11th November 2026 at 7.30pm in St. Luke's Parish Room, Chiddingstone Causeway.

The meeting closed at 9.08pm.

Chiddingstone Parish Council – 14th October 2026

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

Payment			Amount	
881	14.10.26	Clerk – salary inc back dated increase	£1,846.00	
882	14.10.26	HMRC – PAYE	£593.21	
883 SO	14.10.26	Kent County Council – pension contribution	£450.99	
884	14.10.26	Kent County Council – additional pension contribution	£110.31	
885	14.10.26	Clerk – mileage, petty cash - September	£80.55	
886	14.10.26	Clerk – mileage, petty cash – October	£96.28	£4.40
887	14.10.26	NALC – Next Generation training event KO	£42.00	£7.00
888	14.10.26	Hever Landscapes Ltd – maintenance of parish areas July	£813.60	£135.60
889	14.10.26	National Trust – Community Garden lease	£50.00	
890	14.10.26	Sevenoaks District Council – dog bin emptying Jul-Sep'26	£124.80	£20.80
891	14.10.26	KLM – Regulation 19 planning consultancy	£2,340.00	£390.00
			£6,547.74	**£557.80**

* * * * *