

Chiddingly Parish Council
www.chiddingly.gov.uk

Chairman

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17 February 2021

Minutes of the Chiddingly Parish Council meeting held on 16th February 2021 at 1930 hours via Zoom conferencing.

Present: Cllr Richards (Chairman), Cllr Mikelis, Cllr Newham, Cllr Allan, Cllr Marchant, Cllr Luke, Cllr Tolhurst, Cllr Welsh, Cllr Draper (WDC), Cllr Bennett (ESCC), Andy Barnes (Tree warden), Julie O'Donnell (Clerk)

No members of the public were present online at this meeting.

Minutes

1. Enquire whether anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting and ask if any member of public present has any objections to being filmed by a third party.
No members of the public present
2. Apologies and reasons for absence.
Apologies received from Cllr Best.
3. The Chairman will invite Councillors to declare any interest they may have in the following agenda items.
No interests were declared.
4. Minutes of 19th January 2021 Parish Council Meeting to be agreed and signed as a true record.
Resolved: Minutes were agreed and will be signed by Cllr Richards

As no members of the public were present, the meeting was not suspended.

5. Clerk and Councillor reports arising from the minutes 19th January 2021 not covered elsewhere in the agenda:
Fingerposts – ESCC have confirmed 50% funding for the repair of two fingerposts in Chiddingly. A purchase order has been raised for £159.20 which will be set against the repairs of Gun Hill/Stonehill and Chalvington Road/Sheepcote Lane.
Council acknowledged the information. Clerk confirmed that the parish council can claim for two repairs per financial year.

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6. Councillor Reports:

6.1. Cllr Draper (WDC).

Cllr Draper was interested in how Chiddingly found the Cluster planning meetings, did we find them useful and helpful?

Cllr Tolhurst confirmed they were. The Central East parishes always arrange a meeting together to discuss any issues or plans before they meet with WDC. Cllr Tolhurst advised that individual parishes tend to send a representative rather than attend as a collective group.

Cllr Draper advised that it is very important to attend and be able to have an influence from the beginning of the process.

He mentioned the large development at East Hoathly and how this will affect the surrounding villages. He feels that this is not always considered, and he ensures he makes this point at the Committee meetings.

6.2. Cllr Nick Bennett (ESCC)

Cllr Bennett sent a report to the council which was circulated prior to the meeting. He advised he has nothing more to add.

With regards to the road conditions in and around Chiddingly he confirmed that he did drive out and have a look. He reported his findings to the Highways Steward who has been out. Highways have already made some repairs but due to the amount of surface water they have not been able to repair all. If there are cases where the repairs are not good enough, we need to report them to ESCC Highways. The contractor will re-do them at their own cost.

Cllr Allan mentioned Highlands Lane, this has been repaired but not adequately and seems to be more dangerous. Cllr Bennett asked that photographs of the repair are sent to him and he will raise with Highways.

Action: Cllr Newham to send photographs to the clerk to send on to Cllr Bennett.

7. Correspondence:

- i. Update from SSALC – information previously circulated.

At the recent clerk forum Trevor Leggo assured the clerks that there would be no change to the service provided wef from 1st April. Advice and guidance would continue for Surrey and East Sussex. The training programmes will continue as published. He is pleased to say that all East Sussex parishes are members of SSALC.

- ii. Minutes of the January CSAG (Community Safety Action Group) – previously circulated

8. Tree Warden Report – Andy Barnes to update the council - report previously circulated.

Andy Barnes discussed the contents of his report. He has met with Cllr Marchant at Jubilee Field and discussed the wildflower garden and central mound area.

He has written an article for the Parish News which has been sent on to the editor by the clerk.

There have been no changes since his previous report. There are a few initiatives which could be followed up, there is the memorial garden, the orchards fund and the branching out scheme. It would be worth finding out what funding is available to Local Authority.

We have until Autumn this year to apply for funding or donations of saplings. There is still some time to consider what the council wishes to apply for.

There have been several news articles regarding village climate change groups. This is a village initiative where local landowners have been contacted and in one example over 150 trees have been planted with a commitment for a further 200.

There is also an initiative from the Royal Horticultural Society, they are inviting people to plant trees in memory of people who have died from Covid. The scheme 'roots to remembrance' is available to Parish Councils and we could apply for a grant.

Andy suggested the council think about and decide which initiatives they would like to take up.

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Cllr Richards will contact ESCC to find out whether they would be interested in offering schemes. Cllr Allan mentioned the Orchard fund would be a benefit to MOSAG and the Community Orchard. Andy Barnes will contact them and discuss the initiatives.

Cllr Newham mentioned the central mound clearing that is required in Jubilee Fields. He thinks it is a large job which will require machinery and a contractor.

Cllr Marchant advised that we could plant memorial trees in another section of the field.

Cllr Welsh and Cllr Marchant feel that a working party group could get together and clear it without the need for contractors.

Cllr Marchant asked whether item 14 could be discussed at this point and it was agreed it could.

Cllr Marchant advised that there has been a delay with the delivery of the trees and hedgerows due to Covid and instead of March these would now be arriving sometime in April.

He has continued to clear some of the area and will be putting up at least 6 nest boxes.

The clerk will send the application form to the Sussex Lund for a grant. Cllr Marchant asked that the grant be used for stump removal and tree clearing around the pond. We will apply for £700 towards the cost.

Cllr Marchant will organise a working party once the weather improves.

Andy Barnes also mentioned resurrecting the previous tree planting scheme and to use Jubilee Field for it. He will re-circulate the previous plans to the council for discussion.

Action: Cllr Richards to contact Cllr Bennett regarding tree planting schemes for East Sussex

Action: Clerk to complete Lund application

Action: Cllr Marchant to organise a working party once the weather improves

Action: Andy Barnes to re-circulate previous tree planting plans

9. Review the frequency of the parish council meetings to allow more time to consider planning applications – new dates previously circulated.

Resolved: The council voted unanimously to make the changes to the meeting dates.

Action: Clerk to update website and circulate new dates to the parish.

10. Parish maintenance quotes – to consider the amended quotes received and confirm the Parish contractor for 2021 – updated quotes previously circulated.

Resolved: Following discussion and a review of the final quotes the council voted by a majority to offer the one-year contract to Vince Fisher and the grass cutting of Jubilee Field will be offered to Barcombes.

The clerk will raise the clearing of the leaves in the car-park with Vince.

Action: The clerk to confirm the contract with Vince Fisher and Barcombes

11. IT scoping exercise

11.1. To consider the quotes, clerks report and recommendation from the IT scoping group

Resolved: Following discussion and review of the clerk report the council unanimously voted to award the IT support contract to Uniserve. Uniserve will provide Microsoft 365 mailbox system to the council and the clerk will have the full Microsoft 365 package. The price includes all hosting, back up, archiving and support. They will also provide training material and telephone support should anyone require it. Cllr Allan will also be able help any councillors with set up problems if required.

The website will be migrated to Wordpress, this will resolve the accessibility issues and allow Uniserve to host the website. The council will also purchase an SSL certificate for the website.

The council agreed to the changeover as soon as possible.

Action: Clerk to instruct Uniserve to start work with a view to providing IT support wef 1st March 2021.

11.2. Broadband at the village hall – Cllr Tolhurst

Cllr Tolhurst has been approached by the church to possibly upgrade the broadband speed at the village hall and share the costs. This will allow the church to broadcast worship and services.

He asked whether the council could investigate this?

The clerk has asked the current broadband provider to quote for upgraded broadband and a copy was circulated to the council during the meeting for comment.

Cllr Allan queried why the parish council was paying for broadband at the village hall. Cllr Tolhurst advised it was originally installed at the village hall by the parish council as the parish council needed it for meetings.

Cllr Richards asked who should be responsible for the broadband. Cllr Allan suggests the village hall take on the responsibility and costs for it. This could then be split with the church and the church pay the village hall directly. The broadband is used by people who hire the village hall, and the password is not actually advertised outside of this. The broadband cost should be part of the hiring fee and absorbed through this by the village hall. He strongly feels the village hall should pay for the broadband.

Cllr Newham suggested the cost is split three ways, between the parish council, village hall and the church. They can upgrade to fibre and increase the speed.

Cllr Richards agreed with Cllr Newham, he also feels the three responsible bodies in the village should pay a third each.

Cllr Mikelis did not agree and had concerns over the VAT aspect if the costs were split as the parish council can claim VAT back. This would be difficult to manage through the three contributions.

Cllr Richards suggested Cllr Tolhurst speaks to the CVHMC regarding the suggestions made by the council and reports back at the next parish council meeting.

The current provider will remain in place for now.

Action: Cllr Tolhurst will take the proposal to the Village Hall Management Committee for discussion and report back to the council at next month's meeting.

12. Highways – Cllr Allan to update

Cllr Allan has reported all the previous issues discussed to Highways; they have repaired some of the problems. Highways have noted 8 specific areas for repair and repairs will be made within 28 days.

Rosemount has also been reported and Highways have advised there is nothing that can be done at this time.

Cllr Mikelis mentioned litter and rubbish in the verges. It was suggested we organise a spring clean type initiative and ask parishioners. This will be done once Covid sanctions have been lifted.

The clerk will report the littering to WDC.

Action: Clerk to contact WDC regarding littering.

13. Jubilee Fields play park check – Cllr Newham to report any issues.

Nothing new to report. The ground is still too wet to improve the entrance. The fencing repair is still to be done.

14. Jubilee Field rewilding project – Cllr Marchant to update.

This was discussed under agenda item 8.

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15. Donation of Peace sculpture – Consider the contents of the email received from the sculptor – previously circulated.

The clerk had previously circulated the latest email from the sculptor. He wanted it to be displayed outside rather than the village hall. The shop could be interested in displaying the piece outside of the shop, but nothing has been confirmed. The preferred place would be the village hall, but the village hall cannot find a suitable location. Following a risk assessment done by the village hall they feel it is not suitable for placement there.

Cllr Allan suggested we approach MOSAG who already have a sculpture garden and they may be interested in the piece. The sculptor could then be put in contact with MOSAG to discuss suitable location.

Cllr Tolhurst agreed to speak to MOSAG committee.

Action: Cllr Tolhurst to discuss the proposal with MOSAG and report back to council

16. Financial Matters

16.1. To approve the Bank reconciliations for January 2021.

Resolved: the parish council unanimously agreed to approve the current account reconciliation and the savings account reconciliation for January 2021

16.2. To approve and authorise accounts payable for February 2021 (as detailed on the payment list).

Resolved: the parish council unanimously agreed to approve the accounts payable, cheque numbers 102559-102563 totalling £1568.69

16.3. To acknowledge the RBS reports circulated by the Clerk – Summary Receipts and Payments and Cash and Investment Reconciliation.

Resolved: the parish council acknowledged the RBS reports circulated by the clerk and no questions were raised

16.4. To confirm appointment of Keith Robertson as Internal Auditor for Chiddingly Parish Council accounts - year ending 31st March 2021.

Resolved: The parish councillors had all been sent the Internal Auditors Terms of Reference prior to the parish council meeting and the parish council reached a unanimous decision to appoint Keith Robertson as Internal Auditor for the financial year ending 31.3.2021.

17. Car park fencing – any update Cllr Welsh and Cllr Newham

Cllr Newham obtained 4 quotes and circulated these prior to the meeting for the fencing of the car park.

The council unanimously voted for Ivan Vincent to undertake the work. He has already been instructed to repair the small tarmac and pathway as discussed at previous parish council meetings. It was agreed that it made sense for him to also replace the fence.

Action: Cllr Newham will instruct Ivan Vincent to start work to replace the fence

- *The next virtual parish council Tuesday 9th March 2021 at 7.30p.m. via Zoom conferencing.*
- *The next virtual planning meeting Tuesday 23rd February 2021 at 7.30p.m via Zoom conferencing.*

For information.

Below is a note of items that are under consideration by the council prior to Covid19 lockdown. These are currently underway or have been discussed for action by the council previously. This is not an

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exhaustive list but enables council members to see what is going on and members of the parish to see and make comment should they wish.

- Stream Mill bridge
- Speedwatch
- Mobile Phone Mast
- Lighting at entrance to the village car park
- Maintenance of Bus shelters
- Spring Clean – postponed until further notice
- Funds for Chiddingly Primary school outside area match funding

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