

Chiddingly Parish Council
www.chiddingly.gov.uk

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19th February 2020

Minutes of the Chiddingly Parish Council meeting held on 18th February 2020 at 1930 hours in Chiddingly Village Hall.

Present: Cllr Richards (Chairman), Cllr Tolhurst, Cllr Strong, Cllr Welsh, Cllr Marchant, Cllr Mikelis, Cllr Newham, WDC Cllr Draper, Claudine Feltham (Locum Clerk) and Julie O'Donnell (new Clerk from 27th February 2020)

Four members of the public were present at this meeting.

Cllr Richards read the following statement: This meeting may be recorded, the parish council do not record the meeting, but you are at liberty to record should you wish. Cllr Richards explained that this statement would be valid for each meeting, but he would not necessarily repeat it at each meeting.

MINUTES

1. Apologies and reasons for absence.

Apologies were received from ESCC Cllr Bennett, Cllr Best and Cllr Allan.

2. The Chairman will invite Councillors to declare any interest they may have in the following agenda items.

No declarations of interest were made.

3. Minutes of 21st January 2020 Parish Council Meeting to be agreed and signed as a true record.

Minutes of 21st January 2020 were agreed and signed.

At 1933 hours the meeting was suspended for the Public to express a view or ask a question about any item on the following agenda.

A member of the public spoke in connection with Speedwatch, and how he would like for the parish council to liaise with ESCC Highways to request that the 30mph speed limit sign, which is currently placed at The Street, to be moved to the end of Highlands Lane. There

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has been much development on Highlands Lane, including three new houses, so the residential area has extended and as such the 30mph speed restriction should also be moved.

This parishioner also volunteered that he and his partner would volunteer for Speedwatch.

The meeting re convened at 1935 hours.

4. Clerk and Councillor reports arising from the minutes 21st January 2020 not covered elsewhere in the agenda:

5. Councillor Reports:

5.1. Cllr Draper (WDC) – There is a full Wealden council meeting tomorrow, and they are expecting some issues. The Local Plan has been refused by the Inspector last week the cabinet agreed to recommend to full council that the plan be withdrawn, rather than challenge the Inspectors decision. Cllr Draper disagrees with this way forward, for various reasons. ‘I wish that WDC would fight vigorously to prove the Inspectorate wrong, on many grounds. However, we will have to deal with the outcome if we withdraw. It may take 2 to 4 years to create a new plan. There will be speculative developments coming back to cause issue. I would urge all parish councils to look at proposals both for their own parish area and their neighbouring councils, because everything that happens within a few miles will affect other parish councils. If a neighbouring parish council have a development that may be to the detriment of our own parish council, then the parish council should not hesitate to put in their planning objections. I regret the current situation muchly, it was before my time when the plan was worked on, but as your district councillor I will be fighting to have an input on the next plan’.

Cllr Draper has also done some background investigation with planning officers dealing with the proposal for Nash Street. He was unable to obtain any information about a collaboration with another industrial unit. This application would be one that would need to go to a WDC Planning Committee meeting.

Cllr Tolhurst advised that he is attending a meeting with Horam Parish Council soon to discuss collaborative methods to keep a lid on any developments.

Cllr Draper commented that he was pleased that Chiddingly Parish Council has attended the WDC Parish Panel meeting about Local Plan.

Cllr Richards queried if WDC had to withdraw the plan? Cllr Draper advised the options were to withdraw the plan or challenge the Inspector and government on the reasons why WDC do not agree with their recommendations. The government do have the right to take over the planning decisions from Wealden, totally, irrespective of what WDC want. So, this is a dangerous threat if we do not go along with a revised plan.

Cllr Strong: having read the reports I understand that the issue of failing on their duty to co-operate was another main reason for the plan’s failure. Cllr Draper advised that WDC had tried to co-operate with Eastbourne, but they did not accept their quota of houses and so this has a knock-on effect to neighbouring districts.

Cllr Strong: but there were other neighbouring areas that they did not fully co-operate with too. Cllr Draper confirmed that there were many meetings with neighbouring areas.

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Cllr Draper: we now need to look to move forward. The way forward is to be decided tomorrow, but believe it will be to withdraw the plan, and then get a new plan in place.

Cllr Strong at the last WDC planning committee meeting they gave permission for over 1000 dwellings in Hailsham, so the plans failure is already having an effect on the district.

Cllr Richards: it seems there are many people that feel very let down by WDC.

5.2 Cllr Nick Bennett (ESCC). Cllr Bennett had sent his apologies for not being able to attend this meeting.

6. Correspondence:

6.1 NALC Spring Conference 2020, 17 March, London. NALC Spring Conference 2020 is an essential event for the local government sector, bringing local (parish and town) councils together with other sectors to share, celebrate and advance the crucial work local councils do to build stronger communities. The conference will focus on one of NALC's key campaigns for 2020, health and wellbeing, and how local councils can create healthier communities.

Update: if anyone wished to attend then they are welcome to and report back.

6.2 South & South East in Bloom, the region's largest environmental competition, introduced Parishes in Bloom in 2018. The idea being to encourage Parishes to become involved in South & South East in Bloom. 20 Parishes entered in 2019, and we are hoping for more this year all achieving either a Silver, Silver Gilt or Gold award. Proving Parishes are thriving and being well managed with the environment in mind and working with local people and business to make their community attractive and well maintained for all to see.

There is no expectation for Parishes to be awash with hanging baskets and window boxes just an honest approach to caring for their Parish and its environs. For further details please go to www.inbloom.org.uk

Cllr Richards – I feel that the village already does reasonably well with keeping the village looking attractive.

Cllr Mikelis – There was email from WDC (since publication of this agenda) with regards to an Emergency Climate action day. Think this would be a relevant meeting to attend: Cllr Mikelis will attend this 2nd April. Cllr Welsh also expressed an interest. **Action:** Clerk to re send this information to Cllr Welsh and book Cllr Mikelis onto the action day.

7. Jubilee Play Park – update on the muddy area at the entrance to the field – Cllr Newham: Plenty of dog walkers are still using this entrance, it is very wet and muddy, as most areas are. **Deferred:** item will be added to next month's agenda for further assessment when it is drier.

8. Jubilee Garden – no new issues to report.

9. Councillor Reports:

9.1 Saturday Morning Market: Update from Cllr Tolhurst. A parishioner reported a number of potholes breaking up the road in Swansbrook Lane close to Gun Hill. **Action:** Locum Clerk to ensure Highways are aware.

Cllr Marchant is due to attend 7th March 2020.

10 Footpaths – any new issues to report? Cllr Newham received no new reports.

Cllr Welsh a parishioner reported that there a number of low hanging branches from trees on the footpath between Green Farm and the cricket field. Believe the land is owned by Tony Penrose. **Action:** Locum Clerk to email Tony Penrose.

11 Highways

11.1 Stream Mill bridge – damage due to recent flooding – Cllr Mikelis

Cllr Mikelis showed a series of photos of Stream Mill Bridge and updated: with time and large volumes of rain lots of stones and bricks have fallen and there are signs of erosion.

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The wooden bridge above the original bridge is a temporary structure, which was put in about 2007-2009 by ESCC, as they would not fix the bridge at that time.

Above the damaged bridge there is the support of the wooden bridge, supported at two ends. If this area erodes further, it will damage the supports of the wooden bridge.

Cllr Mikelis fears that ESCC will decide to close bridge, many walkers use this bridge and if it was closed it would lose the connection from north west to north east of the village.

Cllr Mikelis has a meeting with parishioner Stuart Garland. We need to prove that the bridge was used before 1803 as a public highway, if so, then it will be responsibility of ESCC.

In 2008 there was an assessment of works required with an estimate at £80,000.

However, another parishioner thought this was an over-estimate and would possibly cost half the amount. There could be alternative solutions, but the bridge is listed.

Stuart Garland – appears that this was never conclusively rejected by ESCC when considered previously. First thing would be to try to change mind of ESCC and get them to consider financial assistance. If that does not work, then would need to look at funding options. Cllr Newham: if you own something, can't you be forced by law to repair it?

Surely the absentee owner has a responsibility of it. Stuart Garland: there is something called an urgent works notice, but unsure if this is applicable as it is used mainly for dwellings but will see if there is any additional information that he can find on this.

Cllr Mikelis: the owner previously agreed to sell the bridge for £1 to Chiddingly Preservation Society, but he refused to pay the legal fees, and so the sale did not proceed.

Cllr Newham – maybe temporary protection should be considered? **Action:** Cllr Mikelis to visit site together with Cllr Newham and then to liaise with Stuart Garland for suitable dates for the Clerk to set up a meeting with ESCC Rights of Way.

11.2 Chiddingly – please drive carefully signs – Cllr Newham. **Resolved:** the new signs have been installed.

The Burgh Hill Road 30mph sign has blown over. This has been reported via website by Cllr Newham and Cllr Allan.

11.3 Potholes on the approach to the church and outside Field View Cottages. Both of these items have already been reported to ESCC Highways. **Action:** Clerk to chase ESCC.

12 Financial Matters

12.1 To approve the Bank reconciliations for January 2020. **Resolved:** the bank reconciliations for January 2020 were approved by full council.

12.2 To approve and authorise accounts payable (as detailed on the payment list). **Resolved:** the parish council reached a unanimous decision to approve payments of cheques 102434 to 102438 totalling £1925.48+ VAT.

12.3 To receive the RBS reports; **Resolved;** the parish council acknowledge receipt of the RBS reports (Cash and Investment reconciliation and Receipts and Payments for the year to date).

12.4 To confirm appointment of Keith Robertson as Internal Auditor for Chiddingly Parish Council accounts - year ending 31st March 2020. **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 31.3.2020.

13. Capital projects expenditure; project update from Cllr Allan on the possible electric car charging point in the village car park, any information received from AiRS and consider the

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costings for installation. **Deferred:** for March 2020 as Cllr Allan was not present at this meeting.

14. Village Shop for the parish council to consider possible ways for improving the liaison with the Village Shop Committee and the parish council.

Cllr Mikelis: half of the Village Shop Committee have recently resigned, and the shop Manager also left. The Village Shop Committee had suggested the following in order to strengthen communications between the Committee and the Council:

- A Monthly Surgery to be held by a Parish Council Member in the Village Shop every third Saturday.
- A member of the Shop Committee could attend Parish Council meetings if a matter needed to be discussed/clarified.
- Any member of the Parish Council can volunteer in the shop during the week.
- A member of the Village Shop committee to attend and talk at the Parish Council Annual Assembly.
- If any member of the Parish Council is a Community shop Shareholder. they are welcome to attend our shareholder meetings and to stand for nomination onto the Community Shop Management Committee.

Cllr Marchant commented that he recently attended the shop and the service was not very good. Parish Cllrs then spoke about the Village Shop at Ripe and how well this is run, albeit they have different facilities there.

Stuart Appleton advised that a new shop manager has been appointed and feels that continued good contact between the village Shop and Parish Council would be beneficial.

Cllr Richards: the parish council feel the shop is an asset to the village.

Action: Cllr Richards will make contact with Chairman of shop committee.

15. Jose Losemore memorial bench. **Update** from the Clerk: the bench has been delivered and is in a temporary position in the Community Orchard. There will be a working party for members of MOSAG and the Community Orchard in March 2020 and then the bench will be moved to a more suitable permanent position. Jose' birthday would have been 4th July – so maybe that would be a good time to show the bench to the family.

16. Spring Clean – to appoint a Cllr to co-ordinate this years' Spring Clean and set a date/weekend date for the Spring Clean to take place. 20th March – 13th April 2020 is the period for the Great British Spring Clean. **Resolved:** Cllr Strong will lead on this.

A parishioner volunteered to do Gun Hill – Cllr Strong will liaise.

17. Adoption of the amended Co-option policy. **Resolved:** The Parish council approved the adoption of this policy. **Action:** Clerk to add this to the website.

18. Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer – update from Cllr Richards. Cllr Richards introduced Julie O'Donnell to those present at this meeting and advised that there will be training and then handover period from Claudine to Julie.

19. Speedwatch. **Update** from Cllr Marchant: further information has been received from Sussex Police. We would need a co-ordinator and approx. 4-6 volunteers. We have Stuart Appleton and Stuart Garland who have already volunteered, and Stuart Appleton would be willing to be co-ordinator. **Action:** Clerk to send the information from Sussex Police to Cllr Marchant and Stuart Appleton.

20. Mobile phone mast. Cllr Allan was not present at this meeting. **Deferred:** to be added to next month's agenda.

21. Tree planting in the village – Cllrs Welsh, Allan and Marchant. Cllr Welsh: There was a news article which indicated that there would be some funding available. Will look to put an article in the parish magazine to ask landowners to come forward if any trees could be planted on their land. Cllr Marchant: it would be nice to have some ornamental trees planted

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opposite the school. Cllr Welsh: there is a Government initiative to have more tree planting in the street. Cllr Newham: we did try this before and ESCC Highways would not allow a license for planting on the Jubilee Verge.

22. Lighting at entrance to village car park. Cllr Welsh: had a brief look at this. Would like for a high-level light to be placed at the entrance to the car park to shine down on the entrance area. Could possibly run an extra electric cable from the light in the corner of the car park.

Cllr Tolhurst commented that this may not be a popular choice for the nearby neighbours.

Action: Cllr Welsh said he would obtain some quotes.

23. Consideration of purchasing adult exercise equipment for the Jubilee Field using CIL funds. Cllr Strong – think the smaller set at approximately £4000 plus a bike. Cllr Newham thinks we should look into this further. **Action:** Clerk to speak to the company and ask for an on-site inspection and quotes for further consideration. Cllr Newham volunteered to be a point of contact for a site meeting.

‘Cllr Welsh said that the e-mail system needed to be amended to support both the “pop3” and “imap” protocols and that individual councillors be allowed to choose whichever suited them best, to this end he suggested that Cllr Alan could implement such changes on individual devices, it is imperative that any such changes do not impact on the other existing system users. This must be completed in association with CITTA who would be responsible for any server changes that will be required’.

Action: Clerk to speak to Mike Goss to see if the conversion is complete and what actions need to be taken.

24. Any items for inclusion on next month’s agenda:

- Potholes in entrance to village car park – to consider a more permanent repair and obtain quotes for this work to be carried out during the drier weather.
 - Jubilee Play park entrance
 - Stream Mill bridge
 - Capital projects expenditure; project update from Cllr Allan on the possible electric car charging point in the village car park
 - 30 mph speed restrictions in Highlands Lane for discussion with Cllr Bennett
 - Adult exercise equipment for the Jubilee Field
 - Speedwatch
 - Bus shelters
 - Mobile phone mast
 - Parish Council email system
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- *The next planning meeting will take place on Tuesday 25th February 2020 at 7.30 p.m. in Chiddingly Village Hall.*
 - *The next parish council meeting will take place on Tuesday 17th March 2020 at 7.30 p.m. in Chiddingly Village Hall.*

Meeting closed at 2102 hours.

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