



Chevening Parish Council

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council
held on Monday 5th February 2024 at 7.30pm
at the Pavilion, Chipstead Recreation Ground Chevening Road Chipstead TN13 2SA.**

Present:	Mr N Williams	Chairman
	Mr A de Turberville	Councillor
	Mr J Eastwood	Councillor
	Mr J London	Councillor
	Ms J Nielsen	Councillor
	Mrs L Weavers	Councillor
	Mrs V Woodruff	Councillor
	Mrs J Hayton	Clerk
	Cllr M Alger	SDC
	Cllr S Robinson	SDC
	Members of the Public	2
Apologies	Mr J Firmager	Vice Chairman
	Mr J Jarrett	Councillor

17 **Apologies and Absences**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Jarrett and Firmager and duly accepted by the Chairman

18 **Declarations of interest or lobbying**

There were no declarations of interest or lobbying from members of the Council

19 **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting on 8th January 2024 which had previously been agreed by email were formally resolved by the Council and signed by the Chairman as a true record

20 **Updates from KCC.**

The Council expressed concern that Cllr Chard had not attended a meeting in many months. The Clerk was asked to contact Cllr Chard to ensure he was well and to express the Council's disappointment that he has not attended a meeting or submitted any reports or updates in that time

21 **Updates from SDC**

Cllr Alger is on the Cleaner and Greener Committee and her input concerning waste collection is under agenda item 25.

Cllr Alger had been asked by a member of the public about the proposal for a crossing at Bessels Green. This was an initiative from the SDC Councillors who raised it at the Parish Council in February 2023 and is not a Parish Council driven or funded initiative. Cllr Williams (in his SDC capacity) had sent out an update on progress and stated that that Cllr Chard from KCC was positive about its eventual implementation.

Part of Minute 22 6th February 2023 states:-

The Council debated whether to support the District Councillors in their desire to have a crossing. It is recognised that the proposed siting of the crossing will be KCC's responsibility and the whole proposal will be subject to public consultation before any final decision is made.

The Council voted unanimously to support the proposal subject to the satisfactory conclusion of the public consultation as to the location of the proposed crossing

Cllr Robinson has updates concerning agenda item 27 and her comments are contained there

Signed as a true record

4th March 2024

22 **Questions from the Public**

A member of the public enquired about the progress of the Local Plan and their comments are minuted in item 27. A member of the public mentioned the trees overhanging the telephone wires on the “eyebrow” in Chipstead Lane. The “eyebrow” is owned by KCC and the land behind by the property owners in Chipstead Park and therefore nothing to do with the Parish Council. The member of the public stated that only Open Reach can touch trees near the telephone wires. The Clerk will endeavour to contact Open Reach on behalf of the Parishioner. A member of the public mentioned that 2 traffic signs on Chipstead Lane and Westerham Road were turned the wrong way round. The Clerk will report to Kent Highways.

23 **Open Spaces**

Open Space Inspection

The Council resolved to book one day a month to ensure the handyman is available for Parish Council jobs

Playground Inspection

There are no reported issues with the playground

24 **Chipstead Green and Sailing Club Road.**

The state of the bin store on Sailing Club Road was discussed and it was agreed that it looks dreadful. The Clerk was instructed to contact Harvey’s Brewery to ask them to either sort the store out or have it removed as it is on Parish land

The Clerk was also instructed to contact Chipstead Football Club concerning their removing the sign which has been left on Chipstead Green for 3 months although little football has been played and only then on Saturday afternoons

25 **SDC Plans for Recycling Sacks – Implications for the PC**

Cllr Alger gave an update concerning the issuance of sacks as she is on the Cleaner and Greener Committee. SDC plan to stop issuing free waste sacks to households. They will be available to buy. Residents will be provided with a free reusable weighted bag for kerbside recycling. The Clerk commented that at the Clerk’s forum it was suggested Parishes could sell black and clear sacks to residents. The Parish Council does not have an office or any petty cash and therefore the Council resolved this would not be practical. The Council debated the changes which are proposed and it was agreed that communication and being able to get messages to all residents would be key. The Clerk noted that since the changes to Christmas Tree collections 5 trees were fly tipped on Chipstead Green for which the Parish Council had to pay for disposal.

26 **New Salt Bin for Motorway Bridge**

It was resolved to order a new salt bin for the south side of the motorway bridge on Chevening Road

27 **Local Plan**

A member of the public asked Cllr Williams to give an update on the passage of Option 2 Pedham Place and the rejection of the Back Lane and Moat Farm sites. Cllr Williams stressed there was a long way to go before the plan was adopted but that it was vital to have a plan in place to prevent developers being allowed to win planning appeals by reason of having no plan in place. He also stated that there was a lot of rumours and conjecture about the Plan much of which was untrue, including that KCC Highways had expressed preference for Option 1. Cllr Williams confirmed that it would be many months before the plan is finalised and it’s first draft is scheduled to be presented to Development & Conservation Advisory Committee (DCAC) on 26th March. Cllr Robinson has had confirmation that KCC Highways are unhappy with the inclusion of the Back Lane site. She also mentioned a CPRE study which stated that where green field sites in Kent have been used for housing 85% of the properties go to people from outside of Kent.

Cllr Robinson offered to forward her submission concerning the Local Plan to the Clerk for future reference. The Clerk had raised potential questions for the Council to consider concerning the previous iteration of the plan which was rejected by Central Government under Duty to Co-operate. Cllr Williams stated that many of the sites in the plan from 2019 may well have been built on which explains their exclusion from the new plan. He had sent the comments to the planning officers who had given detailed responses (the questions and responses are contained in Appendix 3) Cllr Robinson confirmed she had spoken to the Town Clerk and that the response given from the Planning Officers as to the reason for Sevenoaks Town Council preferring Option 4 was incorrect. The Council and members of the public were invited to read the responses from SDC and present any further questions or challenges to the responses to the Clerk

28 **Correspondence Received and General Issues**

Concerns had been raised about the goal areas on Chipstead Common which have been covered in plastic fencing for many months with no activity taking place. Additionally, as no childrens football has taken place on the Recreation Ground since early November, the normal ground maintenance also has not taken place. The Council asked the

Clerk to contact the Football Club concerning the removal of the sign (agenda item 24); the goalmouth on Chipstead Common; and to obtain the accounts for the Football Club, their Development Plan for the Club and plans for Ground Maintenance. As the Council had agreed to pay more towards ground maintenance it is essential to understand both the financial health of the Football Club, how they plan to take it forward and what their plans are for maintenance. The Council also requires to know who makes the decision as to what maintenance is required and obtains quotes before instructing the work to be carried out.

29 General Information and proposals for Future Agenda Items

Cllr Nielsen confirmed that the War Graves Commission wished to put a plaque on the wall of the Churchyard to signify that there are Commonwealth War Graves present there. As it is a closed Churchyard and the Parish Council took responsibility for its upkeep, formal permission is sought for the sign. The Council resolved the erection of the sign on the Churchyard wall.

30 Finance

Income Received and Cheques Payable – to approve the payments for February and to review the Payments and Receipts for January

31 Planning Applications

Applications considered by the Council

27 Bullfinch Lane – No objection

The applications granted or refused were reviewed

Appendix 1
Payments & Receipts for January

12/01/2024	HMRC VTR, XWV126000106443	£3,415.12
25/01/2024	WELHAM JONE BARBER FROM WELH FUNERAL	£440.00
04/01/2024	GOCARDLESS REF KENTCABLES-77MEMBH, MANDATE NO 0008	£30.00
08/01/2024	EDF ENERGY REF 673109647889, MANDATE NO 0009	£8.00
10/01/2024	CHARGES FROM 2023-11-22 TO 2023-12-21	£7.50
10/01/2024	PAYMENT BY CHEQUE WITH SERIAL NO 022154	£20,000.00
10-Jan-24	Judith Hayton	-£21.65
10-Jan-24	Sevenoaks District	-£800.28
10-Jan-24	Judith Hayton	-£1,292.06
10-Jan-24	MDH Horticultural	-£1,830.07
10-Jan-24	DRM Trees	-£600.00
10-Jan-24	MDH Horticultural	-£386.10
12-Jan-24	Chipstead Pavilion	-£2,227.50
12-Jan-24	HMRC	-£607.79
22/01/2024	CASTLE WATER LTD REF 546134, MANDATE NO 0011	£5.99
25/01/2024	VALDA ENERGY LIMIT REF VALDAENERGY, MANDATE NO 0014	£13.30
29/01/2024	VEOLIA ES UK LTD REF 04937801, MANDATE NO 0010	£29.74

Payments for February

1204	MDH Horticultural Services	Monthly Open Spaces Maintenance	£1,525.06	£305.01	£1,830.07
1205	HMRC	Tax & NI	£607.79		£607.79
1206	J Hayton	Salary	£1,292.06		£1,292.06
1207	MDH Horticultural Services	Gang mowing	£321.75	£64.35	£386.10
1208	J Hayton	Expenses	£258.46	£49.60	£308.06
1209	Newlands Nurseries	Christmas Tree	£120.00	£24.00	£144.00
					£4,568.08

Appendix 2

Planning Applications

Planning Applications for Consideration at the Meeting

24/00061/HOUSE	27 Bullfinch Lane Riverhead Kent TN13 2EB	Proposed single-storey outbuilding in the garden with rooflight.	No objection	12/02/2024	

Planning Decisions

23/03141/HOUSE	12 Witches Lane Riverhead Sevenoaks Kent TN13 2AU	Demolish part of existing garage and overhang. New single storey side extension with mono-pitched roof with rooflight. New hip roofed open porch. Alterations to fenestration. Re-rendering and oak detail. Landscaping and driveway extension.	No objection providing the planning officer is satisfied that the visual appearance of the front of the house will not adversely affect the street scene	Nigel	Granted
23/03359/HOUSE	40 Woodfields Chipstead Kent TN13 2RB	Two storey front extension with entrance porch. Alterations to existing garage and fenestration.		Jamie	Granted
23/03447/HOUSE	30 Woodfields Chipstead Kent TN13 2RA	Demolition of existing garage, external store and carport to be replaced with two-storey side extension. Single storey rear extension with roof lights. Replacement front porch. Changes to elevation treatments. Alteration to fenestration.	No objection	Jason	Granted
23/03523/HOUSE	51 High Street Chipstead Kent TN13 2RW	Demolition of existing utility room. Single storey extension with new rooflight and new lantern rooflight replacing existing rooflight.	No objection	Allan	Granted

Judith has put some very interesting and searching questions forward regarding Plan 2040. I have asked, as chairman of our Parish Council for officers of the District Council, to furnish us with some answers to these which you will find below.

These are early days in what is to be an extensive and thorough process. Let's as a Parish Council, keep our fingers on the pulse and keep asking questions when necessary.

Nigel.

I believe the Parishes and residents were given somewhat "misleading" guidance from the Planning Officers as to how to respond to the Local Plan. The message clearly delivered was 'A vote for Option 4 "None of the above" was a wasted vote'. Therefore by voting for either option 1 or 2 residents and parishes were endorsing building on both Green Belt and AONB – just not AONB or Green Belt near them. In fact a vote for Option 4 would have sent the clear message that the planners need to think again and address low performing areas of green belt outside of the AONB.

- The 'none of the above' selection was a valid selection to make and one that 1400 people (approximately 29% of respondents) did make, demonstrating that it was seen as an option. Officers did not attempt to sway this selection but did communicate to Members, Town and Parish Councils and residents, the potential benefits and/or issues of each option. This included the fact that the 'none of the above' scenario does not meet the development needs for the District and the difficulties which this presents, as was evidenced at the Local Plan examination in 2019.

The Planners are insisting these are the only options (and miraculously have become low performing Green Belt which they never have been in the past) – and the consultation has been heavily slanted to endorse that conclusion.

- The current Development Plan for Sevenoaks District (which consists of the Core Strategy and Allocations and Development Management Plan) had an urban focus and did not look to allocate land in the Green Belt, meaning that an assessment of the District's Green Belt was not required at this time. The emerging local plan intends to meet the District's development needs in full, which includes a very real and acute housing need (particularly affordable housing). Last year's Part 1 Regulation 18 consultation rightly focused on land within urban areas, and we continue to investigate options for maximising this through density work and a settlement capacity study. However, it is clear that urban sites alone will not meet our full development needs and therefore some limited Green Belt release must be considered. Exceptional circumstances must exist to allocate land in the Green Belt and for Sevenoaks District, this is suggested to be a site being weakly performing Green Belt, in a sustainable location adjacent to a top-tier settlement, coupled with the District's high housing need. A 2 Stage Green Belt assessment was undertaken to identify areas of weakly performing Green Belt adjacent to our most sustainable settlements. This does not present a sudden change in Green Belt performance, but instead forms a review of boundaries which have been place in for many decades. The performance of some areas against national policy tests may have changed since the Green Belt was first established, for example due to physical features changing or changing detail in national policy, which means that it was prudent to update the

Council's evidence base on this matter. The assessment of all sites considered within the Green Belt assessment can be found here by scrolling to the Green Belt & Environment section: [Plan 2040 – Evidence Base documents | Sevenoaks District Council](#).

I would expect EVERY District Councillor to ask questions of the Plan (hopefully they have already) in terms of:-

Why are these the only options being considered

Why have the areas of Green Belt and AONB previously designated as higher performing now been downgraded – has the classification changed and if so why have all the other green belt sites not been regraded accordingly

Were these the only sites submitted under the call for sites – if not, what is the green belt classification of the other sites

- District Councillors have had opportunities to ask questions both formally at committee meetings, and at any time to officers, which they have done and continue to do so.
- As set out above, the release of Green Belt land is considered to be the only way meet our development needs because urban land alone does not come close to doing so. We are also constrained by what land is available i.e. what land is being promoted for development.
- The Green Belt assessment should not be seen as a downgrade of land but a review of it against current national policy. The Stage 2 Green Belt assessment looks in finer-grain detail at available sites on the edge of our higher-tier settlements. Therefore, there are some areas which would have been considered as strong-performing Green Belt in the initial district wide, Stage 1 assessment, which looked at broad areas, but when the assessment has drilled down to smaller, individual parcels, the assessment has clarified the Green Belt performance of these sites.
- The sites consulted upon were not the only sites submitted to us. Approximately 370 sites were submitted to us, but only those within or adjacent to one of the 8 higher tier settlements were assessed further, as set out within the Development Strategy presented in the consultation.. Using the same link as above, the individual site assessments can be found by scrolling to Housing and selecting the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment. At Appendices E, F and G you can find the sites which were submitted but not included in the draft plan. For a high level spatial view of all the site submitted to us, the interactive map can be found here: [Plan 2040 \(arcgis.com\)](#).

Interestingly I understand Sevenoaks Town Council went for Option 4 – because their Neighbourhood Plan did not endorse building on the Green Belt and I think they believe that protecting Green Belt and AONB is important enough to force the Planners to think again

- The Sevenoaks Town Council response does not explicitly object to the inclusion of Green Belt land. They state that they selected 'none of the above' because they did not wish to comment on sites outside of the town area, which all the options included.