

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 1st DECEMBER 2015**

PRESENT: Cllr. Holmes (in the Chair), Cllrs. Hartley, Rook and Swann.

APOLOGIES: Cllrs. Clifford, Fairweather, Franks, Goodchild and Kemp.

Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying: `

Members are required to declare any interests, dispensations, predetermination or lobbying on items on this agenda. Members are reminded that changes to the Register of Interests should be notified to the Clerk.

Cllr. Rook declared an interest in item 12/15 – He was working on the redesign of the Heritage Trail leaflets and it was likely his company would be printing them.

11/15: Welcome Packs:

In the absence of Cllrs. Clifford and Fairweather no update was available. The Chairman asked for a volunteer to assist in moving forward with the project until Cllr. Clifford's health improves. Cllr. Rook stated that he was looking to reduce his hours at work after Christmas so would be happy to help and would liaise with Cllr. Fairweather direct.

12/15: Heritage Trail Leaflets:

Cllr. Rook apologised to the Committee for not completing the proof leaflet in readiness for this evening's meeting as he had been recovering from an operation and had not been well enough, however he now felt able to move forward with it. He was concerned that as he was not using original artwork that the quality of the leaflet would be less than he would normally find acceptable. Members agreed that when the document is reduced to actual size the images would be sharper and perfectly acceptable in terms of quality.

13/15: Market Research/Cranbrook Barometer:

In the absence of Cllr. Franks no update was available. Members expressed their disappointment that we did not appear to be any further forward as they had all been in agreement that it was an excellent idea. Cllr. Rook was concerned that initially the schools had shown a lot of enthusiasm to become involved but if it lost momentum it would be a missed opportunity. The Deputy Clerk agreed to email Cllr. Franks to see how he was progressing with the production of a draft questionnaire.

14/15: Feedback from Local Businesses:

Cllr. Holmes stated that Members had each agreed to speak to three local businesses and he had reminded them several times at recent Full Council meetings. However, to date he had only received three written responses. If we are to judge the mood of the business community then it is essential that we get out there and speak to them, he reiterated the necessity of receiving the responses. Cllr. Rook stated that of the businesses he spoke to none had an online presence, he also felt that they were not promoting all they offer. Cllr. Holmes felt it more important that we focus on what we can do as a Parish Council, to help. The Deputy Clerk confirmed there is a list of local businesses on our website.

Cllr Hartley reported on the businesses he had canvassed. He also mentioned that he had spoken to Emma Wood who has launched a website forum "Into the Weald" and wondered if we might use it to gain valuable feedback although he did admit to encountering some technical problems when logging onto the site. Mrs Wood had told him that she belongs to the 'Pudding Club' and that due to a huge increase in popularity they were now looking for bigger premises in which to host their meetings. Cllr. Holmes informed Members that he regularly attends the Pudding Club, and that it had been in existence for around five or six years, he felt that some of the sudden increase in membership was due to invitations to join being extended to include businesses from Tenterden. The Deputy Clerk confirmed there was a meeting scheduled in December between Cllr. Veitch and the Cranbrook Business Association to discuss regeneration. Members discussed how we might improve the profile of local businesses, it was decided that the Deputy Clerk investigate with our website designer the prospect of adding a tab for a 'business directory' on the home page rather than where it currently sits which is somewhat buried in 'local information'.

15/15: Budget and Five Year Plan:

The Five Year Plan was discussed and several amendments were made. A copy is filed with these Minutes. Cllr. Swann had prepared the budget in draft form for discussion by Members and the Budget sheets were circulated to members. Members fully discussed the budget figures put forward and amendments were made where necessary. Cllr. Holmes proposed that the Economic and Community Budget 2016/2017 as presented with a precept of £8000 be agreed, a copy of which is filed with the Minutes. This was seconded by Cllr. Rook and agreed.

16/15: Items for Information:

Cllr. Holmes informed Members that he had recently welcomed two new businesses to the town - Bramley & Teal, a holiday cottage letting company and Kingsford Solicitors. He also hoped we would soon receive some positive news from the owners of the former Windmill Pub on their future plans for the site.