

MINUTES OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 8TH MARCH 2016

PRESENT: Cllr. Goodchild (in the Chair), Cllrs. Bunyan, Clifford, Rook, Swann and Veitch.

APOLOGIES: Cllr. Holmes. Members wished to record the welcomed return of Cllr. Clifford.

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.

85/15: Internal finance check:

Cllr. Swann confirmed that he had carried out the internal check of the accounts for February and everything was in order. Cllr. Goodchild informed Members that he had taken a call from a parishioner complimenting the clarity of the budget in the latest newsletter.

86/15: Audit Plan 2016/2017:

The Clerk tabled the Audit Plan received from our internal auditors, Kent County Council. Cllr. Goodchild proposed the Internal Audit plan for 2016/17 be accepted, this was seconded by Cllr. Swann and agreed.

87/15: Authorisation of payments made after the February meeting:

A list of payments made after the February meeting, is filed with these minutes.

88/15: Cheques for payment:

Cheques for March were signed for payment as per the list filed with these minutes. It was proposed by Cllr. Goodchild, seconded by Cllr. Swann and agreed to authorise payment of the cheques as presented.

These included:

Policy and Resources	13,371.99
Burial and Properties	4,525.13
Environmental Management	<u>259.66</u>
Total	£18,156.78

Cllr. Swann proposed that authority be given to pay invoices prior to the next meeting, in order that they are cleared before the end of the financial year and any utility invoices that would otherwise incur late payment charges. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Veitch and agreed.

89/15: Acceptance of Quotes:

The Clerk explained to Members that a CCTV engineer had examined our equipment after several faults were identified. The report he produced advised that the DVR recordable box needed replacing along with the cable to the existing monitor.

Cllr. Rook proposed the quote for £658.89 be accepted, this was seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed. A quote had been received from Hurstway to repair the flat roof in the courtyard of the Information Centre, the condition of the toilet below was deteriorating rapidly. Cllr. Clifford proposed the quote of £1950.00 plus VAT be accepted, this was seconded by Cllr. Rook and agreed.

90/15: Grant Applications:

A request had been received from Cranbrook Farmers Market for financial assistance in the form of a grant of £52 to cover the cost of their subscription to the Kent Farmers Market Association which would get them listed on the associations website and mentioned via social media and is considered excellent advertising value for local farmers markets. Cllr. Clifford felt the market was a valuable resource for Cranbrook and should, where possible be supported, he proposed the grant of £52.00 be awarded, this was seconded by Cllr. Veitch and agreed.

91/15: St. George's Institute, Sissinghurst: Refurbishment/Funding

Cllr. Clifford wished for it to be recorded that he had resigned as Chairman of the St. George's Institute Committee last summer so was now free to enter discussions on this item. Cllr. John Smith had in his position as the current Chairman of St. George's, via email, given an update on the St. George's Institute refurbishment. He explained they were at least 24 months away from any construction starting which remained subject to obtaining funding. A fundraising sub-committee has been set up. Planning permission has been granted for the extension and improvements and the project had been put out to tender last year. Three quotes had been received varying between £175,000 and £250,000. The Business Plan was in the process of being finalised. Any further development spend was on hold pending land ownership matters being resolved and funding being secured. Cllr. Smith had supplied Members with information published by Action with Communities in Rural England which suggests ways in which the Parish Council could assist with monies for the project and asked for this to be considered. Members discussed the support they could give at great length, however they felt until all the outstanding legal matters regarding land ownership etc had been resolved a decision cannot be reached on the level of financial support given. Cllr. Clifford proposed that Cllr. Smith in his role as Chairman of St. George's Institute be invited to the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting in May to give us all the information we need in order to make a decision, this was seconded by Cllr. Veitch and agreed.

92/15: Cranbrook Rugby Club: Update on Clubhouse/Lease

The Clerk tabled an email from Mark Scott, Leader of the Grounds Committee at the Club which gave an update on the design of the proposed new clubhouse and their fundraising efforts. The Architects on the project were advising that the position and footprint of the building could be changed to allow visitors to view the games from the veranda, this would require a variation in the current lease with the Parish Council. Their appointed planning consultant has presented a pre application of their intentions to TWBC planning department and were awaiting their feedback. Members agreed that the Clerk could reply to Mr Scott informing them that we had no objection in principle but would need to see a formal request before giving permission to a variation in the lease.

93/15: Promotion of Parish Council:

Cllr. Rook informed the Committee that in recent correspondence to Ilkey Parish Council he has enquired as to whether they use Facebook as a medium for disseminating information. They replied that they did and had not encountered any issues.

The Clerk stated that during her investigations she had learned that many parish councils use Facebook but there were currently insufficient office hours to consider this as an option unless it replaced our commitment to “Be in the Know”. Cllr. Clifford proposed that in our current position of limited resources our efforts should remain with the tried and tested method of “Be in the Know”, this was seconded by Cllr. Veitch and agreed.

Cllr. Clifford confirmed that he was happy to lead on promoting the Parish Council and his offer to prepare a proposal for consideration on how our profile could be enhanced for the meeting in May was gratefully accepted by Members.

The Clerk reported that Cllr. Kemp had been unable to secure a speaker on Neighbourhood Plans for the Annual Parish Meeting at Sissinghurst. After a full discussion Members agreed that Cllr. Veitch would invite Julia Newman, Leader of the Neighbourhood Development Plan group for Hawkhurst Parish Council to share their experiences of Neighbourhood Planning.

94/15: Items for Information:

Cllr. Rook stated that the litter pick on Sunday had been successful with around eleven people participating. Several residents regularly complete litter picks, Members felt their efforts should be applauded.

Cllr. Bunyan informed Members that Mark Stephenson, Conservation Officer for Tunbridge Wells had confirmed he would be attending the Parish Council meeting in April in relation to the Providence Chapel.

Cllr. Veitch reminded Members that Charles Church were hosting a presentation for their proposals at Brick Kiln Farm. Borough and Parish Councillors were invited to a specific session between 2pm and 3pm on Friday 11th March in the Vestry Hall.

Cllr. Goodchild confirmed he would be attending Major Clark House on behalf of the Parish Council to welcome the new residents.