

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN  
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, VESTRY HALL, CRANBROOK  
ON THURSDAY 18TH MAY 2017**

Councillor Veitch welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**PRESENT:** Cllrs. Bunyan, Clifford, Cook, Fairweather (part), Fermor, Fletcher, Goodchild, Hartley, Holmes, Kemp, Smith, Swann, Veitch & Warne.

**APOLOGIES:** Cllr. Hall, Borough Cllrs. Dawlings and Hannam.

The Chairman read out the following statement.

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. She notified those present that the meeting was being recorded as a Clerk's aid. A member of the public declared they were also recording the meeting.

The Chairman handed over to the Clerk for the Election of Chairman.

1/17: Election of Chairman:

**Cllr. B. Veitch** – Proposed by Cllr. Goodchild, seconded by Cllr. Fermor. There were no further nominations, 12 voted in favour of the proposal, 2 councillors abstained. As the motion was carried, Cllr. Veitch was elected Chairman and took the Chair, she signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office Register.

2/17: Election of Vice Chairman:

**Cllr. K. Fletcher** – Proposed by Cllr. Veitch, seconded by Cllr. Goodchild, 12 Councillors voted in favour of the proposal, 2 abstained.

3/17: Election of Chairman of Policy & Resources:

**Cllr. P. Goodchild** – Proposed by Cllr. Veitch seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed.

4/17: Election of Committees and Delegates:

Planning and Preservation Committee:

**Committee:** Cllrs. Bunyan, Cook, Fermor, Kemp, Smith and Warne.

**Chairman:** **Cllr. Bunyan** – Proposed by Cllr. Cook, seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed.

Burials and Properties Committee:

**Committee:** Cllrs. Bunyan, Clifford, Cook, Fairweather, Hall, Holmes and Goodchild.

**Chairman:** **Cllr. Clifford** – Proposed by Cllr. Fairweather, seconded by Cllr. Cook and agreed.

Although not present at the meeting, Cllr. Hall had expressed a wish to join the Committee.

Environmental Management Committee:

**Committee:** Cllrs. Clifford, Fairweather, Fermor, Fletcher, Holmes, Smith, Swann, and Veitch.

**Chairman** Cllr. **Fairweather** - Proposed by Cllr. Holmes, seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed.

Neighbourhood Development Plan Committee:

**Members:** Cllrs. Cook, Fletcher, Hartley, Kemp, Smith, Veitch and Warne.

**Chairman:** Cllr. Warne – Proposed by Cllr. Cook, seconded by Cllr. Kemp and agreed.

Cllr. Cook raised the issue that the Terms of Reference of that Committee stipulated how many councillors could be voting members of that committee and that we may have exceeded that number. Cllr. Warne stated she would look into this but was confident she could find a role for all those that were interested even if they were not voting members of the Committee.

The Chairmen of the above Committees form the Policy and Resources Committee together with Cllr. Swann who undertakes the internal checking of finances, plus the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council and as such are authorised to sign cheques.

Delegates to the Kent Association of Local Councils:

Cllr. Veitch – Reserve Cllr. Fletcher

Delegates to the Cranbrook Conservation Area Advisory Committee:

Cllrs. Bunyan and Swann.

Delegate to the Cranbrook Tourism Group:

Cllr. Holmes.

Delegates to Cranbrook Museum:

Cllrs. Holmes and Warne.

Delegate to the Citizens Advice Bureaux:

Cllr. Smith.

Delegate to Age Concern:

Cllr. Warne.

Delegate to the Transport Accessibility Group:

Cllr. Holmes.

Delegate to The Hop Pickers Line:

Cllr. Holmes

Tree Warden:

Cllr. Fermor.

Cllrs were asked to confirm their representation on various charities as follows:

Elizabeth Wood Charity – Cllrs. Cook and Veitch.

King George V Playing Field - Cllrs. Fermor, Holmes and Smith.

John Spicer's Apprenticing Trust – Cllr. Fermor.

Thomas Adrian Veitch Memorial Fund – Cllrs. Cook and Veitch.

St. George's Institute – Cllrs. Fairweather and Smith.

Cranbrook School 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee – Cllrs. Cook and Veitch

Cranbrook Literature Festival – Cllrs. Clifford and Hall.

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman are ex-officio members of all committees. The Vice-Chairman of each committee will be elected at the first meeting of the said committee.

5/17: Parish Council meetings will continue to be held on the second Thursday of each month at 7.30p.m. This was proposed by Cllr. Veitch, seconded by Cllr. Goodchild and agreed. Meeting cards will be handed out to Members following this evenings meeting.

6/17: All Parish Council Bank accounts will continue to be held by HSBC together with a daily current account held by Lloyds in Cranbrook. This was proposed by Cllr. Veitch, seconded by Cllr. Swann and agreed.

7/17: Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

The Chairman, Cllr. Veitch proposed that the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 13<sup>th</sup> April be adopted as a true record. This was seconded by Cllr. Cook and agreed.

8/17: Approval of the Annual Governance Statement 2016/2017

The Chairman proposed that the Annual Governance Statement for the Annual Return as put before Members this evening be approved. This was seconded by Cllr. Cook and agreed.

9/17: Approval of the Accounting Statements 2016/2017

The Chairman proposed that the Accounting Statement for the Annual Return as put before Members this evening, be approved, this was seconded by Cllr. Cook and agreed.

10/17: Update on Access to Wilkes Field from TWBC Officers Jonathan White & Kevin Hetherington:

Kevin Hetherington introduced himself as Head of Services at the Borough Council for a variety of hub projects. He is working alongside Jonathan White who is a Project Manager and who also works for KCC. Their current projects include the Cultural Hub in Tunbridge Wells, the Community Hub in Southborough and the TN2 Project in Sherwood.

He explained that they were focusing on the rights of access and ownership of the land. A meeting is scheduled next Friday between the Co-Op, Jonathan White and Chief Officer of the Borough, William Benson. He was confident that a solution could be found but it could take time. The draft proposal on the transfer of land from the landowner has a claw back clause after five years, which is not acceptable to the Borough Council. He is again confident that a solution can be agreed.

Jonathan White stated that they were happy to work with everyone around the table to deliver the project, utilising resources from both TWBC and KCC. They invited questions.

Question – Cllr. Clifford - Revenue costs had been mentioned, could this be clarified?

Response – Projects like this can cost from £65 - £100 per square meter to run, we need to ensure that we can bear the cost of running this project going forward.

Question – Cllr. Goodchild - Is the issue of land ownership a realistic problem?

Response – There is a lack of trust by the landowner that the Parish Council can deliver this project, we will need to solve this to maximise fundraising.

Question – Cllr. Warne - In the worse case scenario, what if nothing happens within the five years, what happens to the planning permission? The demolition of a historically significant building was permitted because of the substantial benefit to the community?

Response – This cannot be undone because the developer would have already built the residential units, however this question would be better directed to the planning policy creators.

The area of land has been zoned for D1 use only, so the developer will be keen to seek a solution as the land would be worthless as so far as if no community centre is built there will be no access rights and the land will be effectively land locked.

Question – Cllr. Hartley - Did the Borough carry out any valuation on the value of the access rights on behalf of the ratepayers?

Response – It is a car park, which is useful, and valuable to the residents however there is no potential loss in terms of its current use or any unlikely potential for development.

Question – Cllr. Hartley - What if a car park is no longer needed due to self-drive cars, the Borough Council is being very presumptuous not to get a valuation on behalf of the ratepayers?

Response – There is a long term lease with the Co-Op with no opportunity to break so no potential for future development. It is difficult to foresee the future but they are confident they are not prejudicing the Borough Council at all.

Cllr. Fermor stated that she had spoken to a member of staff in the store who had been informed that contrary to recent rumours that the store was closing, it was to be given a £7 million refit.

Question – Cllr. Clifford - In reference to the meeting scheduled for next Friday, did they expect to reach a resolution?

Response – That is not expected, it is to allow for continuing discussion although there is a clause in the lease with the Co-Op that states they must deal with this issue in a timely manner and they will be reminded of this.

It was suggested by the Chairman that any further questions should be emailed to the Clerk for forwarding onto Kevin and Jonathan. She thanked them both for attending tonight.

#### 11/17: South Eastern Rail Franchise Public Consultation Response:

Members had received a copy of the consultation. Any responses were required to be submitted by Tuesday. The Chairman stated that every individual was entitled to make their own submission but she had included it on tonight's agenda so they could decide if a response should be submitted on behalf of the Council. She had begun to draft a letter but there were seventeen questions that required answers, it would not be possible to go through each question this evening due to time restraints. She suggested that Councillors email her with their thoughts, which she would collate in the office on Monday morning. She highlighted a response from KCC, which stated that the London to Ashford service should retain its current timetable of stops and that any new franchise awarded should commit to the current service. She suggested that we could support that statement. It was also suggested that the link to the consultation be sent out via 'Be in the Know' with a request for to share with fellow commuters with encouragement to send in a response. Cllr. Cook voiced his frustration that although the ticket office at Staplehurst was manned it was rarely open to buy tickets. It was proposed by Cllr. Cook, seconded by Cllr. Goodchild and agreed to delegate a response to the consultation to the Chairman following a collation of all Councillors' opinions.

Cllr. Holmes was concerned that there was nothing in the consultation regarding co-ordination between bus and train services, which is essential in the rural area. Cllr. Warne felt we should be working with neighbouring parishes in lobbying for an improvement in bus services. Cllr. Veitch offered to take this to the next KALC meeting scheduled for 30<sup>th</sup> May.

12/17: Chairman's Report:

The Chairman thanked Members for electing her; she appreciated the honour and responsibility given to her by asking her to serve as their Chairman for another year. She would continue to do her best for the Parish Council and the community.

She had attended the defibrillator training at the Fire Station with Cllr. Swann. This was an excellent session, very informative and enjoyable. There was some disappointment amongst the organisers that more councillors had not been able to attend. She recommended it to others should another opportunity be offered.

There was a Community Centre introductory session on 2<sup>nd</sup> May, which was attended by four members of the community and seven councillors. She believed people found it useful. It was agreed to include the questions about the need for the Community Centre in the NDP sessions, so she delivered a short presentation for that purpose on Day 1. It has also been suggested that a questionnaire be included in the first edition of Parish Cake, however the first edition is already very full and time restrictions on receiving copy has already passed but the idea could be revisited for a future edition.

She attended the Armed Forces Services Day service at St Dunstons. This was an excellent service, although she was disappointed that she was the only councillor in the pew assigned to the Parish Council. Cllr Cook was there as he officiated.

Unfortunately she had been unable to attend any of the Local Plan presentations.

She thanked everyone for all their hard work on the Neighbourhood Development Plan this last month.

Reports from Committees:

13/17: Policy & Resources Committee:

Cllr. Goodchild referred to the Minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May and highlighted the Committee's decision to put the Economic and Community Committee into abeyance until further notice. He pointed out that in accepting these minutes this decision would be ratified. He also pointed out the recent Ofsted report where Cranbrook Primary School had obtained 'Good' which had been a great encouragement to the staff and governors. Cllr. Cook suggested that a letter of congratulations be sent. Cllr. Warne also asked for a letter of thanks to be sent to the three pupils that delivered a presentation at the NDP event, she would supply their names to the Clerks. Cllr. Clifford updated members on 'Parish Cake', which was on schedule for delivery the first week of July. He thanked Buss Murton for agreeing to be a major sponsor for the magazine and to Cllr. Fermor for the amount of time she had spent putting pen to paper for the articles. Cllr. Goodchild wished to record his thanks to the Clerks and Cllr. Swann for their input in reviewing the policies and procedures. Cllr. Holmes drew attention to item 110/16 the insurance renewal. It had been delegated to himself and Cllr. Veitch to review the responses received from the brokers, which he had received yesterday, he confirmed that he had been satisfied by the responses and had recommended that the renewal quote was accepted. The premium had raised slightly due to the addition of the new play equipment in Sissinghurst and to an increase in Insurance Premium Tax that was unavoidable. Cllr. Smith raised a point regarding earmarked funds on contingencies, which Cllr. Swann noted. Cllr. Goodchild then proposed adoption of the Minutes, this was seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed.

14/17: Planning & Preservation Committee:

Cllr Bunyan referred to the Minutes of the meetings held on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> May. She highlighted the item on the Countryside site in Common Road, and drew attention to the responses received from Countryside. They could not address some of the comments sent in, as they were not within their responsibility. The Committee had sent correspondence to the Planning Officer responsible for the application stating that we were happy with the responses received to date and that subject to a solution being identified to the playground issue we would be minded to now approve the application. Cllr. Clifford suggested that the Parish Council organise a public display of the comments sent in and responses received. Cllr. Bunyan agreed to discuss the best way to achieve this at the next planning meeting.

Cllr. Bunyan gave an update on the Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation and tabled the suggestions that TWBC are considering for where development should be assigned in the Borough. Cllr. Swann felt that inadequate information had been supplied in order to make a reasonable response to the questions being asked. It was agreed that the Planning Committee and the NDP would co-ordinate a response on behalf of the Parish Council.

15/17: Burials & Properties Committee:

Cllr. Clifford informed members that he is awaiting a quote for some remedial work necessary on the paths at Golford Cemetery and also for redecoration of the Vestry Hall entrances, both of which will be discussed at the next meeting. He also mentioned the organ in the Chapel, which had been bequeathed many years ago and was in desperate need of playing. He had invited several schools to come along and play it but was happy to extend that invitation to anyone that was interested. On Cllr. Veitch's suggestion, he agreed to contact the local churches organists to see if they had any interest in playing it. He proposed adoption of the Minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> April, with a small amendment to a description, this was seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed.

16/17: Environmental Management Committee:

As the outgoing Vice Chair of the Committee, Cllr. Holmes reminded Committee Members that their first meeting would be a site meeting so to bring their wellies along.

17/17: Neighbourhood Development Plan Committee:

Cllr. Warne stated that she had attended the briefing on the Local Plan – Issues and Options along with the Clerks, She had also been liaising with Kelvin Hinton, Richard Eastman, Mark Stephenson and Debbie Maltby. There are on going issues with the Brick Kiln site and she had met with David Huggett of Persimmon Homes who regrettably did not feel the need to engage in the NDP process.

Following on from the 3-Day Design Forum, she had written a report summarising the event for all those that could not attend. A video would be uploaded to the NDP website shortly. It was hoped that the interim report from FERIA would be available towards the end of June. The next part of the process would be a broadening and deepening of all the evidence gathered to date.

Cllr. Smith reiterated that the evidence and suggestions gathered from the events so far were visionary and only ideas that would need to be honed down to form a plan, he referred in particular to the Invicta Self Build presentation, that had caused some concern.

Cllr. Warne proposed the Minutes from the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> April be adopted, this was seconded by Cllr. Smith and agreed.

18/17: Cranbrook Conservation Area Advisory Committee:

Cllrs. Bunyan and Swann advised there was a meeting scheduled for next week.

19/17: Kent Association of Local Councils:

Cllr. Veitch advised there was a meeting scheduled for Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> May, which she would attending.

20/17: Clerk's Report:

There was nothing to report.

21/17: Correspondence:

A letter of thanks for the Section 137 grant had been received from Kent, Surrey, Sussex Air Ambulance.

Items for Information:

22/17: Cllr. Veitch stated that she had received a letter of thanks from Francis Rook his parting gift. She had completed a review of councillors' attendance at meetings for the years 2015-16 and 2016-17 and congratulated Cllr. Bunyan on being the councillor that had stood out as having attended by far, the most meetings.

23/17: Cllr. Cook thought it should be celebrated that local girl Pippa Proud had been awarded the Queen's Commendation for her services. He suggested a letter of congratulations should be sent.

24/17: Cllr. Holmes raised the issue of the public toilets still being closed which is a major concern and does not create a good impression to visitors of the Town.

25/17: Cllr. Warne reminded everyone of the 'Cranbrook Goes Nuts in May' event due to be held on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> May and encouraged all to attend.