

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE  
COUNCIL CHAMBER, VESTRY HALL, CRANBROOK  
ON THURSDAY 8TH OCTOBER 2015**

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.

No interests were registered.

**PRESENT:** Cllrs. Bunyan, Cook, Fermor, Franks, Goodchild, Hall, Hartley, Holmes, Smith, Swann and Veitch. Borough Cllrs. Dawlings & Hannam. Kent County Councillor & Borough Cllr. Holden.

**APOLOGIES:** Cllrs. Clifford, Fairweather, Kemp & Rook

Cllrs. Clifford and Rook were unwell and the Clerk had sent Get Well Cards on behalf of Members and Staff.

**ALLOTMENT HOLDERS AWARDS:**

118: The Chairman congratulated Mr. Baldwin on 1st place, Mr. Freeman on 2nd place and Mrs. Heyward on being awarded the novices cup. Unfortunately all had given apologies for tonight but she was sure that they would all call into the office to collect their cups and certificates.

**MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:**

119: The Chairman, Cllr. B. Veitch proposed that the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 10th September be adopted as a true record. This was seconded by Cllr. Goodchild and agreed.

**CIVIC AMENITY REFUSE VEHICLE:**

120: Letters from Paul Shipley – TWBC Contract Services Manager regarding the Civic Amenity Vehicle had been circulated to all Members. This related to an adjustment to a monthly alternate collection of residual and garden waste for Sissinghurst and a fortnightly alternate collection of residual and garden waste for Cranbrook. This would mean six of each collection for Sissinghurst and twelve for Cranbrook per annum. The total cost being £407 for Sissinghurst and £814 for Cranbrook. The letter implies that this was agreed at the Parish Chairman's group meeting on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015. The Chairman invited comments.

Cllr. Cook stated that at this point of time we do not know if other parishes are going to agree or opt out. The Chairman confirmed that we have not yet received the Minutes of the September meeting; there was no vote taken at the meeting and she has only been attending since May and felt that some discussions had taken place before that time. Cllr. Holmes stated that he was not entirely comfortable with decisions being made at a Chairman's meeting and then when the issue is visited by the Parish Council that we were given a fait accompli.

He reminded Members that the contract for waste disposal in the Borough was undertaken on a fixed term contract which included the civic amenity refuse vehicle. There does not appear to have been any discussion with the Contractor to reduce the cost or the option of taking it out of the contract to enable other contractors who might have a licence to take it on. The fixed term might be up in a year or so and he suggested we should wait until that particular time to assess the situation. Cllr. Veitch thought the contract was for a ten year period commencing in 2013. Borough Cllr. Dawlings confirmed that he did not know how long the contract ran for – he had lobbied hard for the retention of the civic amenity vehicle. The Benenden view was that this may have been agreed at a Chairman's meeting but it had not been agreed by the Benenden Parish Council. He suggested that the savings to the Borough by recuperating half the costs from the parishes was not significant in Borough terms – the main cost is sending all the waste to landfill. He thought the best approach was to do more recycling so that the landfill amount would be significantly decreased. Cllr. Dawlings reminded Members that it was a forty mile round trip to the tip in Longfield Road. The reason we were given the option of the civic amenity vehicle was due to the fact that the Christmas Pie tip at Flushingurst was closed. The main thing that people perceive that the Borough have the responsibility for is the collection of waste.

Borough Cllr. Holden stated that Cllr. Dawlings had summed things up well, he suggested speaking to the other parishes, and he did not think it acceptable to charge the parishes. He agreed with Cllr. Dawlings that the cost savings to the Borough were not significant and that there were other alternatives.

Borough Cllr. Hannam reminded Members that the Borough have put funds i.e. £15,000 aside which will be parcelled out to parishes – there is a working group meeting later this month. This will then be put to the November Chairman's meeting. Cllr. Dawlings suggested that this funding was not for the amenity refuse vehicle.

Borough Cllr. Hall stated that she had raised this issue seven years ago and Cllr. Dawlings is right – there would be minuscule savings to the Borough especially considering they could find £1.5m to refurbish the theatre. Cranbrook has the amenity vehicle once a week yet Benchley also have it once a week – they should not have it as often as Cranbrook. Benenden has the service once a fortnight, Curtisden Green once a month. A promise was made that the service would be retained in perpetuity for the rural areas.

Cllr. Swann made the point that garden waste can only be disposed of once a month and if the lorry turns up at noon and if lorry becomes full up by 1 p m then it will leave. There is not only the question of the money but also the change to collections. Cllr. Bunyan going on the figures provided stated that the cost to the Parish would be around £1,200 which would mean 50p per household per year.

The Chairman suggested that from the points raised, she assumed it was probably the principle which was more important. Cllr. Smith stated that Paddock Wood and Pembury can get quite easily to the Longfield Road tip. The civic amenity refuse vehicle is an essential service and we should not have to pay for it. We already contribute in our council tax. Cllr. Holmes thought it would be valuable to have sight of the Minutes of the Chairman's meeting. Cllr. Cook suggested we should follow up Cllr. Holden's views and talk to other parishes, if we all took the same line it will be better.

The Chairman agreed to relay the comments made by Members to the Borough Council.

#### **CHAIRMANS REPORT:**

121: The Chairman congratulated the winners of the allotment prizes stating that she was full of admiration of the hard work, dedication and skill of the prize winners. Congratulations also go to Cranbrook in Bloom and all their volunteers. They were awarded Gold this year by South East in Bloom and also won the Best Small Town category. We have all appreciated their efforts and all Members have all been invited to their Thank You Evening which is being held in the Vestry Hall on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> October commencing at 6 pm.

Cllr. Veitch reported that she had visited the Appledore Reception Centre in Swattenden Lane together with Cllrs. Cook and Goodchild and notes on the visit had been circulated to Members. We were made very welcome and it was a very interesting visit.

She had also attended Helen Grant's Speedwatch meeting in Maidstone, again notes had been circulated to Members. The formal notes had also now been circulated. She thought it strange that there was no Cranbrook Speed Watch group.

A discussion had been taking place with Cllr. Holmes and Graham Edwards, Chair of Cranbrook Business Association on how the Association can be given a new purpose and lease of life. The Chairman stated that she would keep Members informed on progress.

On Friday, all Members are invited to attend the Citizens Advice Bureau AGM at the Vestry Hall commencing at 6 pm. The Chairman informed Members that she had been asked to give an update on the Community Centre on which they have a particular interest.

Carrie Beach - Head Teacher, High Weald Academy is coming to the December Council Meeting to talk about their Peace Fields in Flanders initiative. Their exam results were excellent and they have welcomed parents of potential students not only from the local area but also Marden, Staplehurst and Pluckley.

The Chairman reminded Members that she had planned that Cllr. Rook would be taking photographs of councillors tonight for the updates for the website. Unfortunately he is still recuperating from his recent hip operations, so the photographs will have to be postponed until the November meeting. She wished both Cllr. Rook and Cllr. Clifford a speedy recovery. Some Members had forwarded their biopics and she looked forward to receiving all biopics by the November meeting. She suggested that if they wished, Members could write less than she had suggested, 200 words, with a maximum of 300. The Clerk is investigating potential conflict between the needs of privacy and the minimum requirements of the Quality Standard.

Cllr. Veitch stated that the topic of the Cranbrook Engineering site is not on the agenda and it will not be in order to open any discussion at tonight's meeting. However, as part of her report she informed Members that together with Cllr. Bunyan, as Chair of Planning and in Cllr. Rook's absence, she had attended a meeting last Friday called by William Benson, Chief Executive of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. He had explained to us and the Developers the details and impact of the inclusion of the Hospice in the Weald buildings on the Local Heritage Asset Register. We were led to believe that the buildings would be included on the Register, although at the time of the meeting the decision had not been fully ratified.

Finally, the Chairman reminded Members that the Apple Fayre/ Apple Regatta is to be held on Saturday and she hoped everyone would attend and enjoy themselves.

**COMMUNITY CENTRE COMMITTEE:**

122: Cllr. Veitch referred to the report of the meeting held on the 15<sup>th</sup> September and invited questions. She clarified that she was not expecting approval of the risk assessment which was attached for information only, it was only the Minutes. No questions were raised. The Chairman then proposed that the report be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed.

**POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE:**

123: Cllr. Goodchild referred to the report of the meeting held on the 6<sup>th</sup> October and he pointed out a typographical error under 46/15, which was amended. He invited questions, no questions were raised. Cllr. Goodchild then proposed adoption of the report; this was seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed.

**PLANNING & PRESERVATION COMMITTEE:**

124: Cllr. Bunyan stated that two meetings had been held and the Minutes circulated. With regard to the Cranbrook Engineering applications, this was revised details and it was an archaeological report on which Members made no further comments. She mentioned the Frittenden Rifle Club at Golford and reminded Members that several applications for a dwelling on the site had been refused and the plan now was to rebuild the rifle club building for use as a rifle club and other community uses. With regard to the Gladman Appeal on land in Common Road, the Borough Statement of Case was attached to the Minutes for the interest of all Members.

Cllr. Cook asked the Borough Councillors present what was the Borough attitude to retrospective planning applications, citing the recent applications received from the National Trust and Cranbrook School. All four present thought it regrettable, Cllr. Holden stating that this was not a criminal offence unless it affected a listed building; Cllr. Hall confirmed that it was voiced in the committee meeting that it was disappointing if retrospective.

The Clerk reported that Gladman Developments Ltd has been granted permission for the development of 95 dwellings and associated landscaping in Ifield, West Sussex, against the decision of Horsham District Council. Further consideration was given to the appeal after the Council acknowledged that it was unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

Cllr. Swann referred to the revised details on Cranbrook Engineering, this was a very important application and he suggested we should have commented. Cllr. Veitch clarified that this was a minor revision. Cllr. Bunyan confirmed that we had made a comment on the original plans but had to register our interest due to our involvement with Wilkes Field. Cllr. Hall confirmed that no date had yet been given for when the application will go to the Borough Planning Committee.

**BURIAL GROUNDS & PROPERTIES COMMITTEE:**

125: Cllr. Bunyan, in the absence of Cllr. Clifford, informed Members that the next Committee Meeting would be rescheduled from the 13<sup>th</sup> October to a later date yet to be agreed.

#### **ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE:**

126: Cllr. Holmes referred to the report of the meeting held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September and invited questions. No questions were raised so he proposed adoption of the report. This was seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT:**

127: Cllr. Holmes, in the absence of Cllr. Rook, referred to the report of the meeting held on the 15<sup>th</sup> September and invited questions. Cllr. Swann informed Members that he had met with Bartholomew Wren from TWBC on the 7<sup>th</sup> October. He had presented a cycle route to the last Policy & Resources meeting which was not considered suitable; this was from the Primary School via Carriers Road to the High Street. Cllr. Veitch had also attended on the 7<sup>th</sup> October for part of the discussion. They had looked at a route from Cranbrook to Sissinghurst via the public right of way system through farmland and Buckhurst. However, this was not considered suitable and would be very expensive to develop. Another route was looked at which was from Angley Road via Causton Road to the High Street or via Oatfield Drive. TWBC are very keen to include a cycle route in Cranbrook into one of their policy documents.

Cllr. Cook asked for the history of the demise of the allotment gardens at Sissinghurst Castle under item 12/15. Cllr. Holmes was able to explain how the allotments had materialised, the management issues and why the Trust had finally issued the notice to quit to the one remaining allotment tenant. Cllr. Swann had been made aware that one of the issues for tenants was that the Trust had insisted on organic gardening.

Cllr. Bunyan mentioned the Winter Strategy for the car parks and explained that due to the costs involved it had become unviable to grit the car parks. Cllr. Veitch confirmed that this had been the case, however a survey had been undertaken of the salts bins and two or more were added to help the situation. Unfortunately shovels could not be provided as these tended to disappear.

Cllr. Holmes proposed that the report be adopted, this was seconded by Cllr. Goodchild and agreed.

Cllr. Veitch stated that the next Committee Meeting was scheduled for the 17<sup>th</sup> November but this would be rescheduled at a date to be agreed with Cllr. Rook. All Members had been invited to the licensing and institution of the new vicar for St. Dunstan's on the 17<sup>th</sup> November.

#### **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:**

128: Cllr. Smith informed Members that due to other commitments he was no longer able to Chair the Neighbourhood Plan Committee. Cllr. Veitch informed Members that this would be an agenda item for the November Council Meeting. She confirmed to Cllr. Smith that he could hand over any information which he had already collated to the Clerk.

#### **CRANBROOK CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE:**

129: Cllr. Bunyan referred to the minutes of the meeting held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September and invited questions. Cllr. Hall referred to item 4 and comments made at a recent parish council meeting regarding Tim Kemp. She called for a public apology. Cllr. Swann confirmed to Cllr. Hall that these were draft minutes and in his view incorrect and he would be challenging the minutes at the next CCAAC meeting.

Cllr. Holmes enquired whether the constitution of CCAAC allowed for “rolling” chairmanship. Cllr. Veitch suggested this was for them to decide.

**KENT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS:**

130: Cllr. Veitch, in the absence of Cllr. Clifford stated that she plans to attend the next meeting in November.

**ACTION WITH RURAL COMMUNITIES IN KENT:**

131: There was nothing to report.

**CLERKS REPORT:**

132: The Clerk had nothing to report. She had mentioned the information regarding Gladman Developments Ltd under the Planning heading.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

133: There was no correspondence to report.

**ITEMS FOR INFORMATION:**

134: Cllr. Veitch urged all Members to sign up for “Be in the Know” and to spread the word to parishioners. She had learnt of the closure of Chapel Lane which would affect her personally; it was very useful.

135: Cllr. Cook referred to the recent visit to the Appledore Unit in Swattenden Lane. The population changes rapidly – every six to eight weeks. It is an assessment centre. Five a side football matches and such things would need to be a recurrent programme. Cllr. Veitch stated that the figures given for unaccompanied minors in Kent were raising at speed – from 200 to 700 and now it is 1,000 + putting pressure on the County. Responding to a question from Cllr. Bunyan who asked whether Tunbridge Wells were taking any refugees, noting that Ashford had signed up for 200, the Borough Councillors present this evening had no knowledge regarding the stance of Tunbridge Wells.

136: Cllr. Hartley gave Cllr. Kemp’s apologies for this evening. He had been delayed at a site visit.

137: Cllr. Smith had concerns on the volatility of some of the discussions. It appeared to be a regular occurrence and he hoped that it would not continue. He hoped that the discussions would be more constructive and that Members would work more together.

138: Cllr. Swann encouraged all Members to attend the licensing for the new vicar of St. Dunstan’s which had already been mentioned.

139: Cllr. Holmes informed Members that he had attended the Bramley & Teale official opening event. They employ nine people and were a holiday cottage letting company for Kent & Sussex. He had come into contact with some tourists from Holland who were staying in the George Hotel and they were impressed with the area and our delightful town. Cllr. Veitch stated that she had also attended the event and spoken to the Tourism South East Group and had encouraged them to include more promotion for Cranbrook.

140: Borough Cllr. Tom Dawlings stated that during the Borough Planning Committee tour they had visited the former Council Offices site now Horsley Place and it was just as fantastic inside as it was outside. With regard to the Gladman Appeal in Sissinghurst, the outcome of the Hawkhurst Inquiry will be very important. He then gave a brief update of the finances of the Borough with regard to the cuts from Central Government, most services have remained unchanged mainly because they have invested their reserves much better. He mentioned that they intended to build new offices on a car park site which they owned which would free up the Town Hall. This is due to be discussed at next Cabinet Meeting. Responding to a question from Cllr. Cook on the possible likelihood of another derelict site opposite the cinema site, he pointed out that the privately owned cinema site was difficult as it had a railway line running underneath it.

141: Borough Cllr. Hannam mentioned the 20mph limit outside schools. There is support – there are six in the Maidstone area and if they are successful they will be extended.

142: Borough Cllr. Holden endorsed what Cllr. Dawlings had said regarding finances and new buildings etc. He had also visited the Appledore Unit at Swattenden and of the 37 minors there were 8 from Syria with others from Iran, Egypt and various other countries. The Unit have been hugely impressed by help from the town and the community. Cranbrook School has set up a programme to work with them as have others. He agreed with the numbers stated by Cllr. Veitch – there are approximately 1,100 unaccompanied minors. Following assessment – none will be placed in Kent – there is no more capacity in Kent.

He had also attended the Rural Speed Meeting which was very encouraging. Following the last meeting, Kent Police had been asked to look at the perceived abandonment of enforcement. They were asked to look at fixed speed cameras and help and support to the speed watch groups. Kent Police have now come back and will support the speed watch volunteers with fixed cameras and will take the data from the volunteers and look at the hot spots. He was pleased to see a police officer supporting the Speedwatch team on the Leeds Castle road. Sandhurst among other areas are also looking to start up a group and like Cllr. Veitch, he was surprised that Cranbrook did not have a team of volunteers.

With regard to the Cranbrook Engineering site, he had also attended the meeting last Friday called by William Benson but he was not prepared to comment this evening.

On the five year housing land supply – Fowlers Park was dismissed because the site was in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the developers were able to convince the Inspector that there wasn't a sufficient robust housing supply. With regard to Highgate Hill, Jane Lynch was confident that there was a five year housing supply due to the Knights Park development. TWBC is now not quite so sure and this could be worrying for the Gladman Appeal. Cllr. Hall stated that the Gladman site in Sissinghurst is not protected by the AONB.

Cllr. Holden stated that he was doing his bit for tourism – his B/B was on the front cover of Kent Life.

The Chairman closed the meeting. There were no comments made by members of the public.

