

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN
THE PARISH ROOM, SISSINGHURST
ON THURSDAY 9th MARCH 2017**

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 welcomed everyone to the Meeting and reminded Members of the Public that this was a meeting to which they are invited but it was not a public meeting. If a member of the public wished to speak on an item on the agenda then she would close the meeting to allow them to speak but reserved the right to request that any significant questions be submitted in writing.

Cllr. Veitch advised that the meeting was being recorded as a Clerk's aid and that it was also being recorded by a Parishioner for their personal use.

PRESENT: Cllr. Veitch (in the Chair), Cllrs. Bunyan, Clifford, Cook, Fairweather, Fermor, Goodchild, Hartley, Holmes, Smith, Swann & Warne.

APOLOGIES: Cllrs. Hall & Kemp, Borough Cllrs. Dawlings, Holden & Hannam.

234: MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

The Chairman proposed that the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 9th February be adopted as a true record. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. Smith and agreed. She also proposed the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on the 23rd February be adopted as a true record, this was seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed.

235: PRESENTATION FROM TWBC PLANNING DEPARTMENT:

Cllr. Veitch welcomed Stephen Baughen – Development Manager and Nancy Redgrove -Principal Planning Officer. They delivered a Power Point Presentation on the general processes surrounding the submission of planning applications, a copy of which is filed with these Minutes. Questions were invited:

Cllr. Warne referred to an NDP bill being considered by Parliament and if successful, what implications it would have on planning legislation?

Response: The current requirement for a 5 year land supply could be cut to 3 years if an NDP was in place.

Loss of view is not currently a material consideration, she had been informed that may change?

Response: It may be considered if the proposal has an impact on the wider landscape.

She also asked if Tunbridge Wells had any intention of replacing the S106 Agreements with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). If a Neighbourhood Plan exists the percentage you can request increases.

Response: The government are pushing local authorities to towards CIL's however TWBC have not made that decision but they will continue to review it every couple of years.

Cllr. Cook asked how long it would be before we had a 5 year land supply in place?

Response: Getting the Local Plan adopted and sites allocated was the quickest route. It was estimated it would be about 3 years.

Cllr. Smith felt that the lack of the land supply left the area vulnerable to all development. Why do we not have one and why does it take so long to establish one?

Response: The reason that the Gladman appeal was successful was that in 2015 in accordance with the NPPF, a requirement to look at future growth was introduced by the government.

The need was deemed to be much greater under different assessment criteria. It is possible for more speculative development to be submitted.

In response to Cllr. Clifford's question, Stephen Baughen advised that on the Planning Portal website there is a great deal of general advice available and guidance on if a planning application is necessary. He would forward the links to the relevant advice on the TWBC and Planning Portal website to the Clerk for circulation.

Cllr. Hartley asked why TWBC does not publish pre application advice they have given, which is contrary to government advice?

Response: The information given in pre application advice is not published due to commercial confidentiality reasons.

The Chairman closed the meeting to allow parishioners to ask questions.

A parishioner highlighted their concerns of vulnerability for the area and queried if over development would ever be considered? One parishioner also questioned the amount of green space marked for allocation in the newly published Site Allocation Plan 2016.

Stephen Baughen agreed to take back the concerns raised by councillors and parishioners to senior colleagues at TWBC.

The Chairman reopened the meeting and expressed thanks to Stephen and Nancy for attending the meeting and giving such an informative presentation.

236: PROJECT STEERING BOARD:

Cllr. Veitch stated she had received some comments in response to the draft Terms Of Reference that she had circulated, a copy of which is filed with this Minutes. Cllr. Holden, had declined an invitation to be a formal member on the Board, but was happy to support the project in other ways.

Cllr. Veitch advised Members that we had received conflicting advice regarding if a non councillor member would have voting rights on the board particularly in regard to decisions with financial implications. This would need to be clarified before any TOR could be agreed.

Cllr. Warne expressed a desire to include a specific requirement for the project to respond to the findings of the NDP.

The Chairman advised that discussions with KCC Libraries were ongoing however they did not feel in a position to commit themselves until we had a design agreed, in which to move forward with.

Cllr. Hartley stated that he felt, the need for a community centre had still not been established. The Carole Wanless report had endorsed the need for proper engagement and the NDP would be a good vehicle for this. He also wanted some assurances that the Vestry Hall would remain in community use.

Cllr. Smith felt it unnecessary to constrain ourselves with stating that the Community Centre must be built on Wilkes Field. He felt it was the best option at present but did not see the need to have it included in the TOR.

It was suggested that a Sissinghurst parish councillor should represent the village on the Board. It was agreed that the need for non councillor members should be widely advertised to encourage people to come forward. Cllr. Veitch agreed to look into what each nominated person could bring to the Board. A decision on Board Members could be made at the next meeting.

237: CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

The Parish Newsletter for March was now available, and she hoped everyone would enjoy reading it.

She had received a letter from Helen Hunt, in which she had thanked the Chairman for her letter of condolence to the family on the recent death of Peter Jempson. Helen had asked for a representative of the Parish Council to speak at the Thanksgiving service on Saturday 8th April at 2pm. After speaking to some past chairmen Cllr. Veitch had decided that she would speak, but would include memories given to her by councillors past and present.

She would be conducting the annual appraisals of the Clerks next week with Cllr. Goodchild (as chairman of Policy and Resources). If any councillor wishes to provide input, please will they do so by emailing her before close of business on Monday.

The deadline for the calling of an election for the fulfilment of the Parish Council vacancy has now passed, and so we are now advertising for people to submit themselves to the co-option process. Several people have expressed serious interest. The deadline for written submissions is 3rd April.

Cllr. Veitch informed members that she would be attending the Parish Chairman's meeting on Tuesday 14th March, the agenda had been circulated. The civic amenity vehicle was an agenda item, if any councillor wished her to raise any points regarding this or any other item on the agenda, please let her know before Tuesday.

Cllr. Veitch advised that Matthew Scott - Police & Crime Commissioner had been invited to a Parish Council meeting in July, we are awaiting a response from him.

Cllr. Veitch apologised for inadvertently misleading everyone when she had said that if we chose to charge for car parking we would have to release 50% of the profits to TWBC. This is incorrect.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

238: POLICY & RESOURCES:

Cllr. Goodchild referred to the meeting held on the 7th March. He highlighted the forthcoming launch of the new and exciting parish magazine entitled Parish Cake. He handed over to Cllr. Clifford to update everyone on the project to date.

Cllr. Goodchild wished to record his thanks to Cllr. Swann for all his help with the financial responsibilities of the Committee and to the two Clerks who have been extremely busy lately. Cllr. Goodchild proposed adoption of the report; this was seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed.

239: PLANNING & PRESERVATION:

Cllr. Bunyan referred to the Minutes of the meetings held on 21st February and 7th March. She invited questions, none were raised. She advised that the plans for the land off of Common Road were available to view in the Parish Office. We were intending to display them on Saturday 18th March in St. George's Institute from 11.00am – 3.00pm. Following on from this the Parish Council would be submitting their comments to TWBC on March 22nd. She encouraged everyone to make their individual comments.

240: BURIALS & PROPERTIES:

Cllr. Clifford advised that several concerns had been raised regarding the work being carried out on the trees in St. Dunstan's Churchyard. These had been brought the attention of the contractor and the TWBC Tree Officer, it was hoped that work would continue soon. He stated he was appalled at the recent spate of vandalism in the parish.

241: ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY:

Cllr. Holmes referred to the minutes of the meeting held on 21st February and invited questions. None were raised, therefore he proposed adoption, this was seconded by Cllr. Fairweather and agreed.

242: ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT:

Cllr. Holmes advised that following the resignation of Cllr. Rook, he would be chairing the next meeting on 14th March.

243: NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLANNING:

Cllr. Warne advised that the Sissinghurst Visioning Event would be in St. George's Institute on Wednesday 22nd March from 7.30pm and Cranbrook's would be on Thursday 23rd March in the Cranbrook Sixth Form Centre, Cranbrook School. She referred to the minutes of the meeting held on 27th February and proposed adoption, this was seconded by Cllr. Smith and agreed.

244: CCAAC:

Cllr. Bunyan advised the next meeting was on Wednesday 22nd March.

245: KALC:

Cllr. Veitch stated that she would circulate the minutes from the latest meeting once she was in receipt of them.

246: CLERK'S REPORT:

There were no issues to report.

247: CORRESPONDANCE:

The Clerk read out letters of thanks from 1st Cranbrook Rainbows, Cranbrook Primary Out of School Club and St. Dunstan's Messy Church, all of whom had recently received grants from the Parish Council.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION:

248: Cllr. Veitch stated that she had given the Clerk the minutes from the Cranbrook Literature Festival Committee meeting held in February if anyone wanted to see them. She had asked for dates of future meetings and was looking for a volunteer to attend.

249: Cllr. Swann advised everyone that a great deal of work had been done in the Crane Valley Nature Reserve and it was worthy of a walk round.

250: Cllr. Holmes gave the disturbing news that Arriva had confirmed they are intending to withdraw the No 5 Sunday service from Cranbrook to Hawkhurst and return. He had attended a meeting of the Transport Accessibility Group last month where it was stated that the service was commercially run and loadings were poor, this was no comfort to those that rely on it. The group are going their best to get the decision reversed and are being backed by KCC Sean Holden.

251: Cllr. Smith advised that a Village Litter Pick had been arranged for Saturday 25th March, meeting at 10.30am at the Milkhouse car park.

252: Cllr. Fairweather was pleased to report that a new litter bin had been placed next to the bus stop in Common Road. He was disappointed to read the article in the Sissinghurst Parish magazine which failed to mention the financial contribution the Parish Council made to the new play equipment in Jubilee Field and thanked the Parish Council on behalf of the village.

He also mentioned that St. George's Institute had agreed to site the new defibrillator on their front wall allowing public access 24/7, he would be arranging the viewing of a training video on its use shortly.

The Chairman closed the meeting and invited questions from parishioners.

Four questions were submitted to the Chairman in writing which she was able to respond to at the time.