

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, VESTRY HALL, CRANBROOK
ON THURSDAY 12TH OCTOBER 2017**

PRESENT: Cllr. Fletcher (in the Chair), Cllrs. Bunyan, Clifford, Cook, Fermor, Goodchild, Hall, Kemp, Swann and Warne. Borough Cllr. Hannam.

APOLOGIES: Cllrs. Fairweather, Holmes, Smith and Veitch.

The following statement was read out:

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.

74/17: Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

Cllr. Fletcher proposed that the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 14th September be adopted as a true record. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. Goodchild and agreed.

75/17: Allotment Competition Presentation:

Cllr. Fletcher presented the Novice Award to Ms. Shirley Humphrey. The award is given to the allotment holder that is judged to be the best amongst all the novice tenants.

76/17: Visit from Laurence Hernandez, Manager of Cranbrook Co-op Store:

Laurence Hernandez introduced himself as the Store Manager and had been in post for approximately five months. He reported that his organization had donated £34,000 to Cranbrook charities in the last two rounds of grant awards. The most recent round which ends on the 11th November has seen grants awarded to the Cranbrook Drama Society, Cranbrook Museum and the local scouts group. He explained that when a membership card is swiped, 1% of the sale of Co-Op own brands are put into grant monies. Nominations can be made online and can come from anyone although the recipients must be in possession of a registered charity number. Once the application has been screened to meet criteria, it is filtered down to the staff to have a say in which charities are supported. Cllr. Hall congratulated the Co-Op on the level of their generosity.

In response to a question on the refit of the store, Mr. Hernandez advised that the store is on a list for a proposed £2m refit although it is by no means guaranteed at this stage. He stated that he was in the process of trying to further promote more fresh local produce, however this involves an increase in due diligence. He advised the meeting that preliminary discussions with Cllr. Veitch on the possibility of installing electrical car charging points and increasing the public toilet facilities were ongoing.

The meeting was closed to allow Members of the public to ask questions.

A concern was raised on the temperature inside the store for the benefit of the staff and customers, Mr. Hernandez advised that recent conditions were due to a vehicle hitting the gas main thus rendering the heating system unsafe to use, he was doing his best to expedite the necessary repairs.

A parishioner requested confirmation that the Co-Op would be supporting the Community Centre and was assured that a meeting was scheduled with James Carter to discuss the health and safety concerns regarding the construction access.

The meeting was reopened.

In response to Cllr. Hall, Cllr. Fletcher advised that the Community Centre Fundraising Steering Group had been placed into abeyance until the access issues were resolved.

77/17: Chairman's Report:

In the absence of Cllr. Veitch, Cllr. Fletcher read out her report, in which she thanked him for chairing the meeting and for Mr. Hernandez for attending to introduce himself.

The Clerks had circulated the interesting presentation given by William Benson at the Councillors Convention last month. This was a useful event, and she was pleased to have been able to attend.

The minutes from the recent Parish Chairmans meeting were provided with the papers for this meeting. If anyone has any questions, please send them to her via email.

With Cllrs. Clifford and Fletcher, she had met with Borough Cllr. Tracy Moore, the member of the Tunbridge Wells Cabinet responsible for the communications for the new Civic Centre. Cllr. Moore intends to visit several parishes, and has decided to come to Cranbrook first. She will have a stall at the Farmers Market on Saturday 28th October.

The first meeting of the Car Parks Working Group was held, members had been provided with notes for information.

The Mayor of Tunbridge Wells presented the prizes at the recent Cranbrook in Bloom celebration. She would have presented the allotment prizes, but unfortunately none of the winners were present, although their names were announced. She congratulated Cranbrook in Bloom and all their volunteers for winning Gold this year.

The Apple Fayre on October 7 is always a joyful event. She hoped that everyone had enjoyed it.

Reports from Committees:

78/17: Policy & Resources:

Cllr. Goodchild gave a report of the meeting held on the 10th October and invited questions. Cllr. Hall raised concerns over the Committee's decision to record only successful quotes believing that it did not promote transparency. Cllr. Fletcher felt there was a crossover between public interest and commercial sensitivity if all quotes were published and stated that unsuccessful quotes would be given feedback if requested. He reiterated that although we strive to obtain 3 quotes for any work in excess of £5,000 it is not always possible. We are not obliged to accept the cheapest quote, it is the responsibility of the various Chairs to ensure that their committees take all aspects of quotes into consideration. Cllr. Bunyan reminded Members, although not necessarily published, the quotes are not confidential so are subject to Freedom of Information requests.

Cllr. Warne referred to the item in which she reported on the success of the grant application of £9,000 and thanked the Clerks for their help in completing the due diligence. In response to Cllr. Fermor she confirmed that the grant had been obtained to assist with consultant's fees and for publicity for the forthcoming public events.

Cllr. Goodchild proposed adoption of the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th October, this was seconded by Cllr. Clifford and agreed, one member abstained from voting.

79/17: Planning & Preservation:

Cllr. Bunyan gave reports of the meetings held on the 25th September and 3rd October. She advised that both the large applications discussed, Brick Kiln in Cranbrook and land rear of The Street in Sissinghurst were recommended for refusal. In response to Cllr. Clifford she described the process of submitting comments on behalf of the Parish Council.

80/17: Burials & Properties:

Cllr. Clifford reminded Members that the next meeting was on Tuesday 17th October at 5pm in the Addison Room, when the Committee would be considering the budget.

81/17: Environmental Management:

In the absence of Cllr. Fairweather, Cllr. Fermor gave a report of the recent meeting. She thanked the two residents of Sissinghurst that had repaired the play equipment in the Jubilee Field. Cllr. Bunyan suggested that some of the bark needed topping up and asked if anything could be done about the safety surfaces as they are becoming quite slippery and she was aware that a person had recently suffered injury when falling over. The Clerk advised that Cllr. Fairweather was looking to see if anything could be done to improve the surfaces, and she would be speaking to the Parish Warden regarding topping up the bark. With the correction of a typo on item 16/17, Cllr. Fermor proposed adoption of the Minutes, this was seconded by Cllr. Swann and agreed.

82/17: Neighbourhood Plan:

Cllr. Warne reported that there had been two meetings, the various task groups were meeting and gathering evidence. Cllr. Fletcher and Lee Hatcher were in the process of collating the responses from the enterprise questionnaire circulated to businesses in the Parish. There was an exhibition being held in the Vestry Hall on 22nd – 23rd November, it was hoped that it could move to the library the following week although she was still awaiting confirmation of this. In response to Cllr. Clifford, the exhibition could also move to Sissinghurst if a suitable location could be identified.

Cllr. Fermor enquired if there was any update on the Providence Chapel. In his role on the C.V.L.T. Cllr. Kemp advised that meetings had been held with Historic England, members of the Architectural Heritage fund and the owners of the Chapel. The C.V.L.T are in the process of producing a plan for the building which must be viable and completed quickly, due to the current condition of the building. Jonathan Dunn, the architect from Rye responsible for the conversion of the old school to a Kino cinema has suggested it would be possible to dig out the basement to allow for a similar scheme. Historic England appear to be prepared to consider this, as the majority of constraints apply to the upper floors. Cllr. Warne applauded Cllr. Kemp's tenacity in finding a solution for the building as it had been identified in the Neighbourhood Plan as being very important to the community.

Cllr. Warne proposed adoption of the Minutes of the meeting held on 25th September, this was seconded by Cllr. Cook and agreed.

Cllr. Warne advised that the additional meeting held on the 3rd October had been necessary to discuss whether or not the Steering group should take on the Site Assessments. It had become evident from the grant application that we could be eligible for an additional £6,000 for technical assistance from AECOM (architecture, engineering, construction, operations and management, if we were to undertake the site assessments alongside a Housing Needs Analysis. Discussions with TWBC on how it could work are ongoing. The site assessments would need to be completed during November to be ready for a report for consideration by the end of November.

In response to Cllr. Hall, Cllr. Warne confirmed that we would be looking at the sites submitted in the recent call for sites and we would also be identifying additional sites to help fulfil the amount we are expected to accommodate. We would need to engage sensitively with the owners of any suitable land. Cllr. Warne proposed adoption of the Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd October and highlighted that in adopting them, Members are ratifying the decision of the Steering Committee to undertake the current SHELAA site allocation assessments for the Parish, this was seconded by Cllr. Cook and agreed, one member abstained from voting.

83/17: CCAAC:

Cllr. Bunyan reported on the meeting held in September. There had been a presentation from Stephen Baughen, TWBC's Head of Building and Development Control. He had advised that the NPPF was in the process of being updated, this would delay the finalisation of the Local Plan.

The former Windmill Pub had been discussed, Cllr Kemp made a plea for CCAAC to apply to have the building listed, which would give TWBC more power to act in preventing further deterioration.

84/17: KALC:

There was nothing to report.

85/17: Cranbrook Tourism Group:

In the absence Cllr. Holmes, the representative on the Group, there was nothing to report.

86/17: Clerks Report:

The Clerk had nothing to report.

87/17: Correspondence:

No correspondence had been received that needed to be reported.

88/17: Items for Information:

- a) Cllr. Fletcher reported that the painting of the howitzer should start this weekend.
- b) Cllr. Bunyan referred to the Minutes of the Parish Chairman's Meeting, and requested clarification on the decision by TWBC to amend the constitution in regard to members 'calling in applications'. Cllr. Hall confirmed that the rule allowing members to call in an application if there was significant public concern had mysteriously disappeared from the constitution and members had voted to have it reinstated.
- c) Cllr. Cook requested that letters of congratulations be sent to Cranbrook in Bloom for receiving the Gold in the South East In Bloom Competition and to the organisers of the Apple Fair for another successful event.
- d) Cllr. Swann reminded Members of the Remembrance Service and Parade on Sunday 12th November.
- e) Cllr. Kemp reported to Members that the C.V.L.T has been awarded £30,000 in funding from D.C.L.G, it was the first wave of funding to specifically address the shortfall in truly affordable housing.
- f) Cllr. Hall extended her apologies for her late arrival at tonight's meeting.

The meeting was closed

Borough Cllr. Hannam was invited to give his report which included the rumours surrounding the location of the 'new garden village'. He also reported that he had met with the promoter of the self-build site in Sissinghurst, but would be guided by the Parish Council on his official view of the proposal. He reported on the extensive debate at Full Council on the new theatre development and expansion of the car parks. The stage 3 RIBA report is eagerly awaited, it will include the financial figures and information on how the money will be raised. The Five Year Plan had been tweaked in response to comments received that it had all focused on Tunbridge Wells and had ignored the rural area. His proposal to help KCC identify a new recycling site in the east of the borough was narrowly defeated by 21- 18 which had been disappointing. In response to Cllr. Fletcher he clarified the rules in regard to the collection and retention of business rates.

The Chairman invited comments from the public.

A member of the public gave an interesting history lesson on the founder of the Providence Chapel and suggested it may be an interesting article to feature in Parish Cake.

A parishioner thanked the Parish Council for their efforts in pressurising TWBC to reopen the public toilets in Crane Lane, however felt that the refurbishment should have been completed to a higher standard. The Chairman agreed to pass on her comments.