

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN  
THE PARISH ROOM, SISSINGHURST  
ON THURSDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER 2017**

**PRESENT:** Cllr. Veitch (in the Chair), Cllrs. Bunyan, Clifford, Fletcher, Goodchild, Hartley, Kemp (part), Smith and Warne.

**APOLOGIES:** Cllrs. Cook, Fairweather, Fermor, Hall, Holmes and Swann.

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.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Meeting and reminded the members of the public that this was a meeting to which they are invited but it is not a public meeting. Members of the public are invited to address the Council at the end of the meeting but she reserves the right to request that any significant questions be submitted in writing. She also advised everyone that the meeting was being recorded as a Clerks aid.

**74/17: Minutes of the Previous Meeting:**

Cllr. Veitch referred to the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> August, Cllr. Holmes had requested that in 72/17 the word ‘schools’ after ‘No5’ be inserted. It was also noted that the item numbered 57/17: Report by Borough Councillor James Hannam should be numbered 73/17 and a typographical error in the same paragraph was corrected. With the amendments addressed, she proposed the Minutes be adopted as a true record. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. Goodchild and agreed.

**75/17: Chairmans Report:**

The Chairman hoped that everyone had enjoyed the summer and the Sissinghurst Bank Holiday Fete. The weather this year had been glorious, which contributed to everyone’s enjoyment and the success of the event. She thanked all the organisers and participants, which included all of our hard-working Sissinghurst councillors and some from Cranbrook, notably Cllr. Warne on the NDP stand.

She had attended the Parish Chairman’s meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> September. There were presentations on the Local Plan and the Civic Centre project. The presentation on the Local Plan has already been circulated to councillors, a hard copy was with the Clerks. A copy of the Civic Centre Project Presentation will be available from the Clerks. We were told that the ‘Garden Village Settlement’ option is being given serious consideration, with external consultants undertaking a Feasibility Study, due to be completed at the end of November. Apparently some developers are suggesting that they have the site for such a settlement, but this is just their speculation. Half of the TWBC team are currently analysing the responses to the Local Plan consultation, the rest are analysing the sites suggested for allocation for housing.

Along with Cllr. Bunyan and Kent County Cllr. Sean Holden, she had met with the Co-operative Group’s South Eastern Property Manager, James Carter, to try and progress the Rights of Access permissions to Wilkes Field. His stated reason for preferring the construction access to be via Stone Street is concern for the pedestrians in the Regal car park, and believing that the Stone Street access would be safer. We put forth alternative arguments. These are being incorporated in a further letter to the Co-operative Group senior management to be sent by William Benson. She remains optimistic that agreement will be reached. In response to Cllr. Hartley she advised that a verbal indication that no fee would be requested to grant permanent access to a Community Centre on Wilkes Field had been given.

A temporary solution to the closure of the public toilets had been agreed with TWBC. Security shutters would be installed on the ladies and gents, the single disabled toilet would be refurbished for public use.

A reminder that the Recycling Site at North Farm will be closed from 18<sup>th</sup> September for 10 weeks for repairs consequential on the recent fire at the depot.

She congratulated the Parish Cake team, for yet another successful issue.

The Apple Fayre is on the Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> October.

Reports from Committees:

**76/17: Policy & Resources:**

Cllr. Goodchild gave a report of the meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> September and proposed adoption of the Minutes, this was seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed. Under agenda item 38/17, Cllr. Veitch confirmed that she and Cllr. Fletcher would be looking at the template from the Kent Resilience Forum to ascertain if it is necessary to create a Community Emergency Plan. She referred to the Great Storm of 1987 and suggested that a list of willing volunteers could be useful.

**77/17: Planning & Preservation Management:**

Cllr. Bunyan, referred to the minutes of the meetings held on 15<sup>th</sup> August and 5<sup>th</sup> September. She highlighted the draft list of desirable recommendations for new dwellings and conversions and asked members to make suggestions for consideration. She reiterated that although these could not be made compulsory they could be incorporated into design policies of the NDP and used as information to be shared with applicants of planning applications.

Cllr. Fletcher raised concerns regarding the application in Chalk Lane and the loss of commercial space in the parish. Businesses had highlighted the lack of space available for expansion when answering a recent NDP questionnaire.

**78/17: Burials & Properties:**

Cllr. Clifford advised the next meeting was on 17<sup>th</sup> October. The tree work scheduled for Sissinghurst Cemetery would start and the concluding tree work in St. Dunstan's Churchyard would also be undertaken in October. The repainting of the Howitzer at the War Memorial was also in hand.

**79/17: Environmental Management:**

In the absence of Cllr. Fairweather, Cllr. Veitch advised that the next meeting was on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September. She also advised that essential tree maintenance work was being undertaken on 21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> September in the Tanyard Car Park, during this time parking would be restricted.

**80/17: Neighbourhood Development Plan:**

Cllr. Warne advised that Cllr. Clifford had been elected as the new Vice Chairman to represent Sissinghurst.

She also reported that a grant application for £9,000 had been submitted and she had been advised to apply for a further £6,000 for technical support as we could be identified as a 'complex' parish and could be assessing some sites of allocation ourselves. We should be informed in a few weeks if the application is successful.

The task groups are working at a pace and the current questionnaire deadline has been extended to 29<sup>th</sup> September to allow parishioners more time to submit their responses.

Matt Warne, the task group leader for infrastructure had recently met with residents of Paley Lane and with the assistance of KCC have applied to have fibre broadband installed down the lane, the template used for the application could be amended for other rural areas in the parish.

Richard Eastman would be coming to Cranbrook on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September and would make himself available to any of the task group leaders.

In response to Cllr. Veitch, Cllr. Warne agreed to remove a sentence from the minutes stating that Cllr. Veitch had a list of residents and a map, as this was factually incorrect.

Cllr. Veitch also referred to the Co-Op exit that had been discussed under 'Heritage' and advised that numerous conversations to address the issue had taken place over many years without a successful outcome.

Cllr. Warne proposed the Minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> August be adopted, this was seconded by Cllr. Fletcher and agreed.

**81/17: Cranbrook Conservation Area Committee:**

Cllr. Bunyan advised there was a meeting scheduled for later this month.

**82/17: KALC:**

Cllr. Veitch referred to the Parish News that had been circulated. She reported that the Parish Chairman's meeting had been postponed until October, she would be happy to raise any issues on behalf of members.

**83/17: Cranbrook Tourism Group:**

In the absence of Cllr. Holmes, the Chairman advised Councillors that the meeting arranged for 15<sup>th</sup> August had to be cancelled due to the lack of members able to attend. Another meeting would be scheduled shortly. It was hoped that an expert from South East Tourism would come and advise on what steps could be taken to improve tourism. Cllr. Fletcher referred to the retail changes in Cranbrook including the new toy shop and a restaurant in Stone Street, and the opening of a micro-brewery in the High Street, all of which will serve as attractions for Cranbrook.

**84/17: Clerk's Report:**

There were no issues to report.

**85/17: Correspondence:**

A letter had been received from Cranbrook Bowls Club thanking the Parish Council for the recent grant of £800 towards the replacement of the ditch liners around the bowling green.

**86/17: Items for Information:**

a) Cllr. Clifford referred to the Alison Weir event in the Vestry Hall on the 27<sup>th</sup> September, details of which are on our website. He also reported that the planning for next year's Literature Festival is well under way.

b) Cllr. Veitch reminded Members that they had all been invited to the opening of the Sunshine Café and sensory room at the Primary School next Wednesday.

c) Cllr. Kemp advised that in his position within the Crane Valley Land Trust, he had met yesterday with delegates from the Architectural & Heritage Fund and Historic England to look at future funding and the constraints faced to bring the Providence Chapel back into public use. They are currently looking for an anchor tenant for the building. He will keep members updated on progress. Other projects are also being looked into but are commercially sensitive so he is unable to give further information at this time.

d) Cllr. Bunyan reminded everyone that the Sissinghurst Flower Show is being held in the Primary School this Saturday afternoon.

e) Cllr. Smith advised that the accounts from the fete were published and would be available to view in the village shop and in the next edition of the parish magazine, there was a profit of approximately £1200 after costs.

Cllr. Smith also referred to the disruption caused by Milk Fest and felt the Parish Council should be supporting the residents in making representation to the appropriate authorities. Many parishioners had complained to him especially regarding traffic and parking, the noise impact had been deemed as better than last year. He tabled photographs taken by a resident of both an ambulance and police vehicles being caught up in the traffic chaos. Cllr. Veitch would liaise with Cllr. Smith on how best to support the residents and avoid unnecessary disruption prior to next year's event.

**The meeting was closed.**

In response to a question from a member of public, Cllr. Clifford confirmed that delivery of Parish Cake through Royal Mail is undertaken by post code selection, which is the most cost effective method. He hoped that the few residents outside the parish that received it, enjoyed it. The contract with Royal Mail specifies that the magazine will be delivered over a two week period.

Borough Councillor James Hannam arrived and was given permission by the Chairman to give his report:

He advised that a Councillors Convention was being held tomorrow morning at the Town Hall, to which all borough councillors and parish chairmen had been invited. They would be addressed by Greg Clark, the Secretary of State for Business. Cllr. Hannam stated he would be asking about the government's housing policy. He hoped more light could be shed on where the 13,000 new homes Tunbridge Wells Borough are being asked to accommodate, were likely to go.

Work on the new waste contract due in 2019 was underway. TWBC are trying to raise as much money as possible to build a new theatre. One suggestion was to charge £25 - £30 for garden waste collections, this move is being resisted by some councillors. Rather than spend £70m on a new theatre he would like to see £15,000 spent to reinstate a more regular civic amenity vehicle service. He was aware of an increase of fly tipping incidents, particularly in the Frittenden area which is not accounted for in TWBC figures, because they had occurred on private land.