

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, VESTRY HALL, CRANBROOK
ON THURSDAY 10TH MAY 2018**

Councillor Veitch welcomed everyone to the meeting.

PRESENT: Cllrs. Beck, Bunyan, Clifford, Cook, Fermor, Fletcher, Holmes, Swann, Veitch & Warne. KCC & Borough Cllr. Holden and Borough Cllr. Dawlings.

APOLOGIES: Cllrs. Fairweather, Hall, Hartley, Smith and Borough Cllr. 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.

1/18: Election of Chairman:

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

2/18: Election of Vice Chairman:

Cllr. K. Fletcher – Proposed by Cllr. Veitch, seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed.

3/18: Election of Chairman of Policy & Resources:

Cllr. B. Swann – Proposed by Cllr. Veitch seconded by Cllr. Cook and agreed.

4/18: Election of Committees and Delegates:

Although not present at the meeting, Cllrs. Fairweather and Smith had indicated which committees they would like to join.

Planning and Preservation Committee:

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

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

Burials and Properties Committee:

Committee: Cllrs. Bunyan, Clifford, Cook, Fairweather, and Holmes.

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

Environmental Management Committee:

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

Chairman: Cllr. Fairweather - Proposed by Cllr. Veitch, seconded by Cllr. Holmes and agreed.

Neighbourhood Development Plan Committee:

Members: Cllrs. Cook, Fletcher, Kemp, Smith, and Warne.

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

The Chairmen of the above Committees form the Policy and Resources Committee along with 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:

Cllrs. Holmes and Swann.

Delegates to Cranbrook Museum:

Cllr. Holmes.

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 500th Anniversary Committee – Cllrs. Cook and Veitch

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.

5/18: Confirmation of next year's Parish Council Meeting.

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. Cook and agreed. Meeting cards will be handed out to Members following this evenings meeting.

6/18: Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

The Chairman, Cllr. Veitch proposed that the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 12th April be adopted as a true record. This was seconded by Cllr. Fletcher and agreed.

7/18: Confirmation of Banking Arrangements:

All Parish Council Bank accounts will continue to be held by HSBC and Lloyds. Variable direct debits would continue to be the payment method for items such as the business rates and BACS would be used for the payment of salaries. This was proposed by Cllr. Veitch, seconded by Cllr. Swann and agreed.

8/18: Approval of the Annual Governance Statement 2017/2018

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. Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2017/18 Part 3 was signed by the Chairman and the Clerk

9/18: Approval of the Accounting Statements 2017/2018

The Chairman proposed that the Accounting Statement for the Annual Return as put before Members this evening, be approved, this was seconded by Cllr. Swann and agreed. Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2017/18 Part 3 was signed by the Chairman.

10/18: Presentation of KALC Community Award:

Cllr. Veitch presented Mr Phillip Mummery with a KALC Community Award and explained that the Council had chosen to nominate him for being a motivating force for the community and businesses, a well-known and entertaining figure with legendary organisational skills, for his attention to detail and the ability to get things done. Mr Mummery was delighted to receive the award and paid tribute to his long suffering wife without whose help and support he could not have done half the things he had!

11/18: Solicitors Quotes:

The Chairman explained that this agenda item has been carried forward from the last Parish Council meeting as councillors felt that they were unable to make an informed decision. A fuller summary of the quotes had been circulated to all Members along with the solicitor's brief. The full quotes had been made available to anyone who wanted to see them ahead of this meeting.

As a result of a question from one councillor, she suggested that our consideration be restricted to the appointment of a solicitor to handle just the first part of the brief, i.e. the land transfer items. We could then at a later stage and if necessary, instruct the same or another solicitor to handle any of the other items listed in the brief.

In summary, we need a solicitor to advise us on any land transfers and rights of access documents relating to part of Wilkes Field and the Toilet Block. These documents will obviously come before the Parish Council for approval before being signed giving the opportunity to discuss any of the details therein.

Cllr. Veitch stated that in her view, there will only be the one chance for the Parish Council to acquire such an important piece of land in the centre of Cranbrook for community use, and a piece of land that abuts land that we already own, i.e. the Crane Valley and Nature Reserve, a vital green space in Cranbrook. If we did not acquire this land then a vital opportunity would be lost for ever and she was sure this would be seen, at the very least, that the Parish Council had no leadership and no vision for the future of Cranbrook, being nothing but a set of people that are all talk and no action. She considered it very important to the future of the community that solicitors were instructed to advise us, so that we can acquire these pieces of land.

She advised members that this was not the appropriate time to raise history or restate known positions and reminded them that email is not the proper forum to discuss Parish Council matters. She also requested that they restrict their discussions to the agenda item.

A full discussion followed on the four quotes that had been received including the location and reputation of each of the practices. Cllr. Clifford queried how the figures had been calculated and Cllr. Holmes raised concern that there appeared to be a sizable discrepancy between the figures for each task. Cllr. Cook was wary of appointing a single practitioner. In response to Cllr. Swann, Cllr. Veitch confirmed that the toilet block transfer referred to the land rather than the toilet block itself. Cllr. Fletcher felt that whoever was chosen should provide a clear management structure and a clear pricing plan as opposed to rather loose costings. Members agreed that the appointment should be restricted, in the first instance to the land transfers only, with this in mind, Cllr. Clifford proposed that Buss Murton be appointed, this was seconded by Cllr. Fermor, nine Members voted in favour with one abstention.

12/18: Chairman's Report:

The Chairman thanked Members for their support in electing her as Chairman for another year. She would do her best to fulfil the role and enable the Parish Council to succeed in all its activities.

She and Cllr. Beck had been looking how they could help the Clerks prepare for the May GDPR legislation and have agreed to undertake the Information Audit, which involves cataloguing all the information we hold. As Chairman of the Burial and Properties, Cllr. Clifford would also be heavily involved, and it was hoped to also have the advice of Peter Mellor, when we consider what may be better held elsewhere to facilitate access and to ensure safe storage. All decisions will be brought to the appropriate committee for consideration.

Over the summer months there will be times when one or other of the clerks takes holiday, she requested that Members bear that in mind when asking the clerks to undertake specific tasks.

Cllr. Veitch requested that all Chairman of Committees check the description of their Committee on the Committee Structure section of our website and advise the Clerk if they think the description requires updating.

Reports from Committees:

13/18: Policy & Resources:

Cllr. Swann referred to the minutes of the meeting held on 8th May, he highlighted the annual subscription payment to KALC and advised that all councillors had been provided with an Information Pack from KALC detailing the services they provide. He proposed adoption of the Minutes, seconded by Cllr. Warne and agreed.

14/18: Planning & Preservation Management:

Cllr. Bunyan referred to the minutes of the meeting held on 17th April and 1st May and invited questions. Cllr. Fletcher referred to the application on Hemstead Forest Golf Club and enquired as to whether any plans had been submitted for the remainder of the land? Cllr. Bunyan confirmed that she was not aware of any plans.

15/18: Burials & Properties:

Cllr. Clifford gave a report of the meeting held on 24th April and invited questions. Cllr. Swann enquired whether the donation given for the regular use of Galford Chapel would be sufficient to cover the additional heating costs. Cllr. Clifford was confident it would. Cllr. Veitch pointed out the minutes were missing some numbers, the Clerk agreed to rectify this. Cllr. Clifford proposed adoption of the minutes, this was seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed.

16/18: Environmental Management:

Cllr. Veitch was confident that we could look forward to an update from Cllr. Fairweather on the Committee's activities next month.

17/18: Neighbourhood Development Plan:

Cllr. Warne gave a report of the meeting held on the 23rd April. She advised that we were still awaiting the results from the Housing Needs Analysis. In his capacity as a borough councillor, Cllr. Dawlings had been asked to chase this on behalf of Benenden and would be happy to do so on behalf of Cranbrook as well. In his opinion the numbers we would be asked to take would be well in excess of any numbers identified in the HNA.

Cllr. Warne advised the first meeting with David Huggett of Persimmon Homes would take place on Monday when it was hoped it could be established what Cranbrook could gain from the development. She proposed adoption of the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd April, this was seconded by Cllr. Cook and agreed.

Reports from Delegates:

18/18: Cranbrook Conservation Area Advisory Committee:

Cllrs Bunyan and Swann advised the next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 23rd May.

19/18: KALC:

Cllr. Veitch advised Members that if they wished to seek advice from KALC, they should do so through the Clerks. She advised that the next meeting was scheduled for 23rd May and would be held at Goudhurst. If any Member required her to raise any issues then please let her know. The Clerk would circulate the agenda and minutes for the last meeting to all Members.

20/18: Elizabeth Wood Charity:

Cllr. Cook advised another interesting application had arrived today which he was confident the charity would be looking to support.

21/18: Cranbrook Museum:

Cllr Holmes advised that the museum had thanked Cllr. Hall for securing a £100 community grant which would help to cover the cost of audio room guides. The museum are also taking part in the Cranbrook Goes Nuts in May.

22/18: Hop Pickers Line Heritage Group:

Cllr. Holmes advised that the next meeting was scheduled for 15th May. The photographic exhibition at the museum comes to an end on 31st May.

23/18: Transport Accessibility Group:

Cllr. Holmes reported that he had been unable to attend the last meeting but was not aware of any issues raised. The next meeting is scheduled for 22nd June.

24/18: Tourism Group:

Cllr. Holmes advised the meeting scheduled for 9th May had been postponed, a new date has yet to be confirmed.

25/18: St. Georges Field:

Cllr. Holmes advised the AGM had been held on 16th April. The trustees are satisfied the St. George's Field is financially viable.

26/18: Clerk's Report:

There were no issues to report.

27/18: Correspondence:

The Clerk advised that an email from Christine Newman had been received, thanking the Parish Council for the recent grant of £400 that had been awarded.

28/18: Reports from County and Borough Councillors:

Borough Cllr. Dawlings thanked everyone that had supported him in the recent election and to those that did not he wished to reiterate that he did live in the ward and was wholly committed to this ward. He advised that he had attended a recent tour of buildings that may go in the Civic Centre regeneration project and although he did not advocate the scheme he did support it as he believed it would bring the regeneration of Tunbridge Wells Town Centre needed and in the days were central government funds were slowly being withdrawn this sort of investment and ways of generating money in the future was necessary. Two major organisations that are investing in the Town, the owners of the cinema site and the owners of the Royal Victoria estate were very impressed by the ambitions of TWBC.

He also advised of a recent meeting he had attended in regard to Providence Chapel and reported that three people were actively interested in the building. He would give further updates when available. In response to Cllr. Clifford, he advised that no decision on the future of the Town Hall and Assembly Hall had been made as yet, but assured him as listed buildings they would be maintained.

KCC and Borough Cllr. Holden advised that he had not thought the Civic Centre Project was a good idea and he had not voted in favour of it at the December meeting. He did not think people in this area should help pay for a building and theatre in Tunbridge Wells. He suggested that Cranbrook was an eighth of the size of Tunbridge Wells but the urban area was getting a hundred times more in monetary value.

The £11m pothole blitz was underway, approximately 1400 had been filled in this borough. It would cost £620m to repair all the potholes in Kent. He felt that people would be happy to pay a small increase in tax if the money were set aside to improve the roads.

Cllr. Holden pointed out that this year was the 100th anniversary of the victory of World War I, he advised of many parishes that were placing silent soldier statues to commemorate the event, he was happy to consider funding these from his members fund and if the Council would like to place one in Cranbrook and one in Sissinghurst then if the Clerk emailed him he would forward this to the person that administers the fund.

He referred to the decision of the Joint Transport Board in reference to the painting of heritage yellow lines or removing all lines completely in Cranbrook and relying solely on signage. He has asked that the Parish Council are consulted before a final decision is made.

29/18: Items for Information:

Cllr. Veitch advised everyone of the forthcoming Cranbrook goes Nuts in May event on the 22nd May and the Fairport Convention concert in St. Dunstan's Church on Saturday 26th May.

Cllr. Clifford advised that there had been several problems reported, regarding the delivery of Parish Cake. He asked that if people did not receive their copy by 10th June, then please let him know so he could take this up with Royal Mail.

Cllr. Swann asked members to support the Cranbrook Town Band, they were giving a concert in St. Dunstan's on Saturday 12th May.

The meeting was closed.

Questions and comments from Parishioners:

A parishioner raised concern over the choosing of the solicitor and the voting that followed.

A parishioner voiced concern that the gift of land for the Community Centre needed to remain free of any conditions to enable successful fundraising.