

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, VESTRY HALL, CRANBROOK
ON THURSDAY 11TH OCTOBER 2018**

PRESENT: Cllr. Veitch (in the Chair) Cllrs. Beck, Bunyan, Clifford, Cook, Fairweather, Fermor, Fletcher, Hartley, Holmes and Smith.

APOLOGIES: Cllrs. Hall, Kemp, Swann and Warne. KCC & Borough Cllr. Holden.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and 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.

108/18: Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

Cllr. Veitch referred to the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 13th September, she advised that a few minor typographical errors had already been amended. Cllr. Fermor requested 'Royal' is included when referring to the Royal British Legion as it is the correct title of the organisation. With the amendments made, Cllr. Veitch proposed adoption as a true record. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed.

109/18: Community Centre:

Motion proposed by Cllr. Fletcher, seconded by Cllr. Beck:

“The Parish Council is given authority to sign the legal documents for Rights of Access and Land Transfers relating to the Community Centre on Wilkes Field”

Cllr. Veitch referred to the report and governance flow chart that Members had received with their agenda. She explained that she would Chair the Community Centre Board, Cllr. Fletcher would Chair the Steering Group, where the majority of the work would be done. She reported that Cllr. Kemp, although unable to attend, had expressed his support of the Motion being put forward. Cllr. Cook requested that the vote on the Motion be recorded.

Cllr. Fletcher explained that he had written the report to ensure all Members were aware of the current status of the project and the history behind how we had arrived at this point. The NDP had acknowledged the need for a community building in the centre of Cranbrook and we were in the enviable position of being gifted this piece of land on Wilkes Field. The position of the land would allow us to use the Orange Land as outside space for the Community Centre.

He explained how the majority of work would be undertaken by a Project Manager under the direction of the Steering Group. The Steering Group would form part of the Community Centre Board along with other stakeholders. The Board would report to the Parish Council at each RIBA stage. Stages 1 – 4 being the preparation and design stages, Stage 5 the construction phase.

Once the legal documentation is complete and signed we will need to go back to the original brief and look carefully at how we can develop a building for the site. He reassured everyone that the legal documents which included land transfers, access agreements and licences for construction traffic would all be signed simultaneously.

As soon as this is done we can look at appointing a Project Manager and begin to move forward and look at fund raising. Jonathan White (TWBC) and David Rivers (Mr Johnson's representative) were introduced to the meeting as future members of the board.

Questions were invited.

Cllr. Clifford enquired when an architect would be appointed, Cllr. Fletcher advised that as soon as the Project Manager was in place, an architect would be sought, using TWBC or KCC procurement platforms. These would be used to ensure the project adhered to Parish Council financial rules.

Cllr. Hartley wished his concerns surrounding the whole project be recorded. He had grave misgivings that the Parish Council were prepared to press ahead, without addressing important factors such as what would become of the Vestry Hall complex and other premises, and issues raised in the funding report commissioned by the Parish Council. If the project turned into a 'white elephant' he wanted those involved held to account. Cllr. Fletcher responded to all the concerns raised and added that he intended to work closely with the Rugby Club to ensure the plans for their expansion do not conflict with this project.

Cllr. Bunyan asked Jonathan White if other community centres he is involved in, have come across similar opposition, to which he replied they had initially but using the same governance that is being proposed for Cranbrook, Paddock Wood is now at RIBA stage 3 and Southborough at RIBA stage 4.

In response to a question on how we would appoint a Project Manager, Cllr. Fletcher confirmed we would place an advert in the Wealden Advertiser, and make use of the Public Contracts expertise at KCC and TWBC. In having KCC and TWBC representation on the Board and adopting their formal management methodology we can utilise their expertise in helping us select the right candidate. He also confirmed that all the legal documentation had been agreed by solicitors acting on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllr. Veitch confirmed that all parties were in fundamental agreement although there were a few minor issues still to be addressed.

Cllr. Fletcher proposed the motion as detailed on the agenda, seconded by Cllr. Beck, a vote was taken, 10 Members voted in favour, with Cllr. Hartley the only councillor voting against and therefore the motion was carried.

Cllr. Veitch closed the meeting and invited members of the public to comment.

A parishioner felt that when the design was considered it should be as diverse as possible and not include planning constraints that would restrict its use.

A member of the public expressed concern that the Parish Council were spending money in gaining access to benefit the developer. David Rivers was able to assure them that if the Community Centre was not built, access across the Regal would not be necessary, as there were already two other approved access points.

Cllr. Fletcher stated that the legal agreements enabled the Community Centre project to start as the Parish will have ownership of a sizeable plot of land, in the centre of town, to which many of the users would walk.

The meeting was reopened.

110/18: Chairman's Report:

Cllr. Veitch thanked Cllr. Fletcher for chairing the September meeting in Sissinghurst. She had attended the Parish Chairmans meeting in Tunbridge Wells and the Clerk had circulated the Powerpoint presentations. The minutes of the meeting would be circulated when available. Mike Whiting of the Highways department would be attending the December meeting, so if anyone had any issues they wished her to raise, please email her.

She and Cllr. Beck were making good progress with the Information Audit.

The WWI Commemorations were also progressing well, she hoped that members would be able to attend the various events and service that would be taking place.

The Apple Fair on Saturday 6th October was a great success, she thanked everyone that had been involved.

Cllr. Bunyan asked if the cabinet in the Vestry Hall could have the display changed for the WWI commemorations, Cllr. Veitch agreed to speak to the Museum Curator.

Cllr. Cook commented on the success of Cranbrook in Bloom securing a gold award in the South East in Bloom competition. Cllr. Veitch would write a letter of congratulations to them, she would also be attending their celebration evening and presenting the allotments winners with their trophies.

Reports from Committees:

111/18: Policy & Resources:

Cllr. Fletcher gave a report of the meeting held on 9th October and proposed adoption with the addition of 'Royal' to all references to the British legion, this was seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed.

112/18: Planning & Preservation Management:

Cllr. Bunyan referred to the minutes of the meetings held on 18th September and 2nd October and invited questions. In response to Cllr. Fairweather she clarified the location of one of the applications in Common Road.

113/18: Burials & Properties:

Cllr. Clifford advised the next meeting was scheduled for 30th October. Quotes had been obtained for severe pruning of the hedgerow behind the War Memorial which had become very overgrown. He was seeking approval from Full Council to accept a quote of £375 to enable the work to be carried out prior to Remembrance Day. His proposal was seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed unanimously. He also advised we would be looking to remove a dead chestnut tree from Sissinghurst Cemetery subject to the necessary permissions and embarking on a long term plan for replacement trees.

114/18: Environmental Management:

Cllr. Fairweather gave a report of the meeting held on 25th September and invited questions. He clarified to Cllr. Bunyan that a report listing the ROSPA recommendations would be devised, so that each one could be ticked and signed off by the contractor completing the work to improve our management procedures.

Cllr. Holmes raised concern that in granting permission for the erection of a polytunnel it would create a flurry of applications. Cllr. Fairweather advised these were specific circumstances and any future requests would be considered on a case by case basis. Cllr. Fermor requested that on item 14/18 (d) that TPO be added before the word trees. With the amendment made, Cllr. Fairweather proposed adoption of the minutes, seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed.

115/18: Neighbourhood Plan:

Cllr. Smith advised that he had not been able to attend the last two meetings so was not in a position to give a report.

Reports from Delegates:

116/18: Cranbrook Conservation Area Advisory Committee:

Cllr. Bunyan referred to the minutes of the meeting held at the end of September and reported that Cranbrook's waiting restrictions had been discussed at length. Bryn Kemp, the senior officer at TWBC responsible for the scheme has been invited to the November meeting.

A location for a plaque commemorating Cranbrook's Quakers had also been discussed. Cllr. Cook suggested if a central location was required then Fenton House may be considered as suitable. The Chairman offered to write to Mr John Badcock, who was retiring from CCAAC following the meeting to thank him for the contribution he has made to the organisation and the community.

117/18: KALC:

Cllr. Veitch encouraged members to consider the various training opportunities circulated by the Clerk. We do need to ensure regular training is undertaken to comply with our Quality Status. Cllr. Clifford reported that the last three editions of Parish Cake had been sent to KALC to ensure it remains compliant with our Quality Status too.

118/18: Katharine Elizabeth Wood:

Cllr. Cook reported that an increasing number of grants are being awarded to worthy applicants.

119/18: Cranbrook Museum:

Cllr. Holmes had attended a meeting of the museum sub-committee on 2nd October. They are proposing to erect a notice board at the end of the drive, he advised they pop in and see the Clerk to obtain advice as to what permissions if any were required.

120/18: Hop Pickers Line Heritage Group:

Cllr. Holmes reported that the presentation at the Horsmonden Nostalgia Day had taken place, however he had been unable to attend so was awaiting an update on how it had gone.

121/18: Transport Accessibility Group:

Cllr. Holmes reported that unfortunately he had missed the meeting on 14th September and was still awaiting the minutes. He was aware of a change of service provider of the Tunbridge Wells to Tenterden 297 bus service, which was now being provided by Ham's Coaches. He had contacted KCC to obtain further details, but is yet to receive a response. Cllr. Cook as a user of the service, advised there had been notices displayed on the bus, advising passengers that due to unforeseen circumstances that Ham's would be providing the service for an undetermined time and the timetable would remain unchanged. The Group's next meeting is scheduled for 7th December.

123/18: Cranbrook Tourism Group:

Cllr. Holmes referred to the final full page advert in the Wealden Advertiser which was promoting the Apple Fair and the main attractions in Cranbrook. Work on the promotional film was ongoing hopefully with some help from Cranbrook School students.

124/18: Citizens Advice Bureau:

Cllr. Smith referred to the newsletter that had been circulated by the Clerk, which highlighted the general increase in demand mainly on housing, debt and drugs.

125/18: St George's Institute:

Cllr. Smith referred to the minutes of the meeting of Jubilee Field Trustees and the plans for a replacement building. He advised the next meeting of the St. George's Institute was scheduled for 8th November after which he hoped to give a more comprehensive update.

126/18: Clerk's Report:

There were no issues to report.

127/18: Correspondence:

The Clerk advised that a letter had been received from Sissinghurst Flower Show Society thanking the Parish Council for the grant of £250 in support of their village flower box planting.

128/18: Items for Information:

Cllr. Veitch advised she had spoken to the Headmaster at Cranbrook School and he was happy to encourage staff and pupils to park at Bigside to alleviate parking in the town centre car parks. She had also raised the issue of increased evidence of drug paraphernalia in the Crane Valley and was assured that the Crane Valley is out of bounds to Cranbrook School pupils, any reports to the contrary should be reported to the school. He would also follow up on the idea of a Youth Council which had stalled recently as the High weald Academy no longer had a sixth form.

Cllr. Fairweather reminded Members of the litter picks taking place in Cranbrook and Sissinghurst on Saturday 20th October, both starting at 10am. Volunteers will be warmly welcomed, meeting outside the Milkhouse for Sissinghurst and the Vestry Hall for Cranbrook. He also asked Members to support the latest COD's production of Guys and Dolls with performances on 25, 26, 27th October, tickets are selling fast.

Cllr. Clifford wanted to express his thanks to Borough Cllr. Hannam for all his hard work in Sissinghurst as he understood that Cllr. Hannam would not be standing at the next election.

Cllr. Holmes informed Members of a meeting with Cllr. Tracy Moore, the portfolio holder for Economic Development and Communication who had expressed particular interest in Parish Cake and wanted to know how the content is decided and how we publish it, which he was able to clarify. He also took the opportunity to impress upon her the importance of this area and how we should collaborate more to promote tourism into this area from visitors to Tunbridge Wells. Cllr. Clifford advised that Cllr. Moore has been commissioned to write a piece for the next edition of Parish Cake. Cllr. Fairweather felt that Tunbridge Wells should be reminded that Sissinghurst Castle Gardens is one of the largest tourist attractions in the South East and definitely the biggest in the Borough.

129/18: Reports from Borough and County Councillors:

There were no reports given.

The meeting was closed to allow members of the public to address the Council.

A query regarding traffic wardens was raised.

A concern at the lack of police presence in Sissinghurst was raised.