

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, VESTRY HALL, CRANBROOK
ON THURSDAY 10TH JANUARY 2019**

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

APOLOGIES: Borough Cllr. Dawlings

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.

168/18: Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

Cllr. Veitch referred to the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 13th December and proposed adoption as a true record. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. Cook and agreed.

169/18: Precept Demand:

Cllr. Veitch thanked Cllr. Swann for his work on the budgets and in calculating the precept demand. Cllr. Swann presented the figures for the 2019/20 precept demand which showed an overall increase of £3,600. Due to an increase in the amount of people living in the parish this represented a reduction of nine pence per year to the cost of a Band D property. He highlighted that £10,000 had been included for the provision of public toilets when we eventually assume responsibility for them, this had been achieved by making reductions elsewhere in the budget. He invited questions, as none were raised he proposed that the precept demand be set at £336,800, this was seconded by Cllr. Cook and agreed.

170/18: Approval of Audit Programme 2019/20:

Cllr. Veitch advised that amendments to the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2006 requires the Council to consider and approve an internal audit plan. All Members had been provided with a copy of the plan. As no issues were raised she proposed the plan was approved as presented, this was seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed. The Clerk confirmed that the approved plan would be uploaded onto the website.

171/18: Libraries, Registration and Archive Draft Strategy Consultation:

Cllr. Veitch had mentioned the consultation in her Chairman's Report last month and all Members were encouraged to respond as individuals. It was agreed that a collective response from the Parish Council would be discussed at this evening's meeting. A full discussion followed, concerns were raised regarding the intention to reduce the opening hours from 42.5 hours to 28 hours. There had been no consideration given to the increase in housing expected. It was felt that the data on which the recommendations had been produced had not been conducted at appropriate times so should not be relied upon. Cllr. Cook commented that unlike most rural areas we have a high density of young people in Cranbrook with 700 pupils attending Cranbrook school and a further 300 at the High Weald Academy, all of which require library facilities. Cllr. Clifford felt that other local groups that use the facilities should also be encouraged to respond to the consultation.

It was agreed that Cllr. Veitch would respond on behalf of the Council reflecting the comments and concerns raised by Members. The deadline for responses is 29/01/2019.

172/18: Chairman's Report:

Cllr. Veitch had very little to report this month. She did advise that she had signed up to attend training on Trust and Charity Law for Local Councils being provided by Kent Association of Local Councils at the end of January.

Cllr. Cook congratulated the Town on the successful display of Christmas trees and lights which are funded by individual businesses. The trees and lights in Sissinghurst are paid for by the Sissinghurst Fete Committee.

Reports from Committees:

173/18: Policy & Resources:

Cllr. Swann gave a report of the meeting held on 8th January and highlighted the item on a Road Transport Plan. A KCC Highways representative had attended the Parish Chairman's meeting in December and suggested that all parishes should devise a list of priority projects they would like undertaken as and when funds were available. It was agreed that the Clerks would devise a template on which councillors could list their top five priorities. Cllr. Swann agreed to collate the responses for discussion at the February Full Council meeting. Cllr. Holmes was concerned that with the financial constraints that KCC are under, that they may not be serious about doing anything other than what is already their statutory responsibility. Cllr. Veitch felt it would, at the least be an interesting exercise and thought process and that our County Councillor could pursue the top priorities on our behalf.

Cllr. Clifford referred to item 110/18 in which the relationship between the Parish Council, the NDP and the CVLT was discussed. He did not feel that the minutes reflected either the notes he had taken or his recollection of the discussion at the meeting. Other members present at the meeting concurred that the minutes were an accurate representation of the discussion. Cllr. Veitch was confident that all Members would declare support for any organisation that aims to provide affordable accommodation, however the legal advice received had confirmed that the CVLT is a corporate entity that should remain separate from the Council. We cannot be seen to favour one organisation over another. Cllr. Kemp, a director of the CVLT said they had also received legal advice stating no conflict of interest and that the organisation should be viewed as an alternative to local housing authorities. Cllr. Smith felt that at this particular stage of the evolving NDP when sites are being allocated, if the CVLT are looking at sites then this will be perceived as a conflict of interest. Cllr. Veitch concluded by stating that if the CVLT wanted to host a meeting to help educate people on their structure, aims and objectives, then she would be happy to allow them to use our facilities if they were available.

Cllr. Swann proposed adoption of the Minutes of the meeting held on 8th January, this was seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed. Cllr. Clifford abstained from voting.

174/18: Planning & Preservation Management:

Cllr. Bunyan gave a report of the meeting held on 18th December and invited questions. None were raised. She advised the next meeting would be 15th January.

175/18: Burials & Properties:

Cllr. Clifford advised the next meeting was scheduled for 22nd January.

176/18: Environmental Management:

Cllr. Fairweather advised the next meeting was scheduled for 19th March. In response to Cllr. Veitch he confirmed that no date had been set for the next litter pick although it would mostly likely be after the next meeting.

177/18: Neighbourhood Plan:

Cllr. Warne advised the next meeting was scheduled for 28th January. She reported that a delegated team from the steering group are currently undertaking the site allocations. Cllr. Veitch thanked those involved for their time and effort in undertaking the task.

Reports from Delegates:

178/18: Age Concern:

Cllr. Warne advised the next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 23rd January.

179/18: Cranbrook Conservation Area Advisory Committee:

Cllr. Bunyan advised the next meeting was also scheduled for Wednesday 23rd January.

180/18: Transport Accessibility Group:

Cllr. Holmes advised the next meeting was scheduled for 1st February.

181/18: Cranbrook Museum:

Cllr. Holmes reported that a meeting had been held last week but he had been unable to attend. He had spoken to the Curator who had advised him that the museum had been offered the opportunity to purchase a watercolour by F.W Hardy, one of the Cranbrook Colony artists, which they are hoping to buy.

182/18: Hop Pickers Line Heritage Group:

Cllr. Holmes advised the next meeting was scheduled for 15th January.

183/18: Cranbrook Tourism Group:

Cllr. Holmes advised the next meeting is scheduled for 16th January.

184/18: KALC:

Cllr. Veitch reminded Members that the December newsletter had been circulated by email and highlighted the training opportunities available to us as Members.

185/18: Clerk's Report:

There were no issues to report.

186/18: Correspondence:

There was no correspondence to report.

187/18: Items for Information:

Cllr. Cook asked if any Members were aware of where the Colony artists lived other than Webster House, where a plaque already exists, he wondered if there would be any mileage in erecting plaques where artists Hardy or Horsley lived? Cllr. Holmes said the Tourism Group were exploring the possibility of adding local information to the street names with the help of the museum. He would see if they had any information on the Colony artists so he would put the suggestion forward to the Tourism Group.

Cllr. Holmes mentioned a story he had heard on the BBC on 18th December regarding the government's waste strategy which listed a number of things the government were aiming to implement, one of which was to instruct local councils to scrap the charge for garden waste as it inevitably ended up in landfill and produced methane, a powerful greenhouse gas. He wondered if this would have an effect on whether TWBC go ahead with their plans to charge for garden waste. Cllr. Veitch asked him to forward on the details and she would ensure that it got to the correct department at TWBC.

Cllr. Swann advised Members a meeting had been scheduled with Paul Shipley, Contract Services Manager at TWBC and the new waste contractors to discuss the litter clearing contract on our recreation grounds, which would be attending with the Clerk.

188/18: Reports from Borough and County Councillors:

Report from Cllr. Dawlings:

In his absence, Cllr. Veitch read his report, in which he stated that he was confident from the Finance and Governance meetings he had previously attended, that TWBC would be able to produce a balanced budget. The funds that TWBC used to receive from central government (£5m plus in 2011) had been steadily reduced each year, to zero in the current year. The threat of a negative Revenue Support Grant for next year with TWBC being required to pay revenue received to central government, no longer existed. He was not aware of any budget implications on Cranbrook & Sissinghurst or Benenden Parishes beyond those already known (e.g. the future funding of the WIC).

He also confirmed that TWBC would contribute to the cost of the adverts that had been placed in several editions of the Wealden Advertiser to promote events and attractions in Cranbrook.

The meeting was closed.

There were no questions raised by the members of the public present.