

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBER, VESTRY HALL ON THURSDAY 21ST MAY 2015**

Cllr. Rook welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited all Members to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Members signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and were handed information packs prepared by the Clerks.

Cllr. Rook read out the following statement. No interests were registered.

Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying:

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.

PRESENT: Cllrs. Bunyan, Clifford, Cook, Fairweather, Fermor, Franks, Goodchild, Hall, Hartley, Holmes, Kemp, Rook, Smith, Swann and Veitch. Borough Councillor Tom Dawlings.

Cllr. Rook then handed over to the Clerk for the Election of Chairman.

01: Election of Chairman:

Cllr. B. Veitch – Proposed by Cllr. Rook, seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed. As there were no further nominations Cllr. Veitch was elected Chairman with twelve votes for and two abstentions. She signed the Declaration of Acceptance Book and took the Chair.

02: Election of Vice Chairman:

Cllr. F. Rook – Proposed by Cllr. Veitch, seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed.

03: Election of Chairman of Policy & Resources:

The Chairman reminded Members that Cllr. Swann had been Chairman of this Committee for a very long time and felt that it was time to stand down but he would still continue to attend the meeting and assist with the finances. The election of chairman of this committee then took place.

Cllr. P. Goodchild – Proposed by Cllr. Swann seconded by Cllr. Cook and agreed.

04: Election of Committees and Delegates:

The Chairman reminded Members that they should consider joining at least two committees. There are usually four meetings per year which are held in the evening excepting planning which is fortnightly and held on the first and third Tuesday at 10 a.m. and the community centre committee which is held once a month on the 3rd Tuesday at 2 p.m. All councillors have a brief outline of what the committees aim to achieve in their packs.

Cllr. Hartley asked whether there is any possibility of the planning and community centre committees being held in the evenings. The Chairman confirmed that committees could change the timing if all members were happy to change. Cllr. Bunyan stated that the planning meetings had been held on a Tuesday morning for a considerable time. We need to form the committees and then discuss the times at the first available opportunity. She confirmed to Cllr. Hall that it would need to be an agenda item. Cllr. Fairweather felt it was rather a disingenuous way to first enable the committee and then set the times. Cllr. Kemp stated that he was interested in Neighbourhood Plans and a Conservation Management Plan and would like to see these on an agenda.

Cllr. Veitch informed Members that it had become apparent that the current structure and scope and the amount of work proposed for this next term of office did not sit comfortably within the existing framework and Cllr. Holmes has offered to undertake a first draft of a restructure. All suggestions will be considered. Cllr. Hartley suggested that it would be appropriate for Full Council to make the decision rather than within committees. Cllr. Veitch confirmed that the final decision will be made by Full Council. She confirmed to Cllr. Swann that any Members can request to join a committee at any time with this being ratified at Full Council.

Cllr. Clifford asked whether he had a conflict of interest in that he was Chairman of St. George's Institute and the Clerk confirmed that this was not a prejudicial interest.

The election of committees and delegates then took place as follows:-

COMMUNITY CENTRE:

Committee: Cllrs. Bunyan, Fermor, Hall, Hartley, Kemp, Rook and Veitch

Chairman: **Cllr. Veitch** - Proposed by Cllr. Rook, seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed.

PLANNING AND PRESERVATION COMMITTEE:

Committee: Cllrs. Bunyan, Cook, Fermor, Hartley, Kemp, Rook and Smith.

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

BURIALS AND PROPERTIES COMMITTEE:

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

Chairman: **Cllr. Clifford** – Proposed by Cllr. Bunyan, seconded by Cllr. Rook and agreed.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY:

Committee: Cllrs. Clifford, Fairweather, Franks, Hartley, Holmes, Kemp and Rook.

Chairman: **Cllr. Holmes** – Proposed by Cllr. Swann, seconded by Cllr. Rook and agreed.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT:

Committee: Cllrs. Fermor, Franks, Goodchild, Holmes, Rook, Smith, Swann and Veitch

Chairman **Cllr. Rook** - Proposed by Cllr. Holmes, seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed.

The Chairmen of the above Committees form the Policy and Resources Committee together with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council and as such are authorised to sign cheques.

DELEGATE TO THE KENT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS:

Cllr. Clifford Cllr. Smith (Reserve)

DELEGATES TO THE CRANBROOK CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Cllrs. Bunyan and Swann

DELEGATE TO THE TOURISM FORUM:

Cllr. Holmes Cllr. Clifford (Reserve)

DELEGATE TO THE MUSEUM:

Cllr. Holmes Cllrs. Fermor & Franks (Reserves)

DELEGATE TO THE CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU:

Cllr. Rook

DELEGATE TO AGE CONCERN:

Cllr. Rook

DELEGATE TO CRANBROOK BUSINESS ASSOCIATION:
Cllr. Holmes.

DELEGATE TO THE TRANSPORT ACCESSIBILITY GROUP:
Cllr. Holmes

TREE WARDEN:
Cllr. Fermor

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.

05: Parish Council meetings will continue to be held on the second Thursday of each month at 7.30 p.m. This was proposed by Cllr. Rook, seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed. Meeting cards will be handed out to Members following this evenings meeting.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:

06: The Chairman, Cllr. B. Veitch proposed that the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 9th April be adopted as a true record. Cllr. Hall pointed out a typing error on page 5 which was amended. She queried why there was not a heading "matters arising". The Clerk explained that this was deemed not good practice as you cannot legally make decisions under matters arising and thus the advice from KALC was to replace this with "items for information". Cllr. Hall wished to raise an item and referred to page 4 and she asked why Cllr. Veitch had not responded to a question from Cllr. Bancroft with the very concise information given out by Borough Councillor Tom Dawlings in his email. Cllr. Veitch stated that at the time there was conflicting information and she did not feel it prudent to comment. Cllr. Hall reiterated that she felt that Members should have been aware of the facts as outlined by Cllr. Dawlings. The Clerk confirmed that the email had been circulated round to everyone, excepting new members who were not councillors at the time. Cllr. Veitch then proposed that the Minutes be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. Rook and agreed.

07: All Parish Council bank accounts will continue to be held by HSBC Tenterden Branch together with a daily current account held by Lloyds, Cranbrook. This was proposed by Cllr. Rook, seconded by Cllr. Swann and agreed. Cllr. Rook explained for the benefit of new councillors that we had opened a Lloyds account for our day to day banking following the closure of the Cranbrook branch of HSBC.

CHAIRMANS REPORT:

08: The Chairman welcomed everyone to our new Parish Council. She thanked Members for voting her in as Chairman and she would do her utmost for the community during her period of office, but she would need Members help to achieve everything that we have already identified as needing doing.

She stated that her vision for the next four years includes:-

- getting the Community Centre built and up and running
- raising the money to pay for the Community Centre
- updating our parish plan
- undertaking a neighbourhood plan
- renewing our status as a quality council
- surveying the use of the car parking and deciding on residents permits
- revitalising the marketing of Cranbrook via the Tourism Forum,

Not to mention our ongoing day to day work, such as the Burials and Properties, maintenance of the Parish Council website, and other projects in which we have participated over the years, such as the Hop Pickers Line. There is plenty for us all to do. It is not just attending meetings. There are also plenty of opportunities for us to involve other members of our community.

She thanked the hard-working clerks for putting together the packs of information. She recommended careful reading of the material. There is a lot of very useful information within it.

It has become apparent over the last few years that the committee structure does not fit our current needs and work load. As already mentioned we will be considering alternative structures in the near future, and Cllr Holmes has kindly offered to create a draft for discussion.

Training is important for all of us. Our Deputy Clerk plans to complete her training programme this year, and the Clerk has the details of training opportunities available to councillors. These are circulated on a regular basis.

The latest information she had on the Cranbrook Engineering site is that the report from Historic England has been sent to the Secretary of State for a decision on the potential listing. She did not have a copy of the report, and did not know what it said.

On the assumption that we will be proceeding with the Wilkes Field development, we need to consult our ratepayers on the topic of taking out a loan from the Public Works Loan Board in order to get the construction going. We have a draft consultation document, and this will be an agenda item for our June Council Meeting.

Finally, the Chairman reinforced that the Parish Council has always prided itself on being on the side of the community, and therefore has also prided itself on being a non-political body.

She thanked everyone for making her Chairman, and she looked forward to working with all Members.

ADOPT A B.T. KIOSK:

10. The Chairman reminded Members that this item was deferred from the last meeting and a question and answer sheet has been circulated to all Members prior to tonight's meeting. Responding to a question from Cllr. Clifford on whether any funding has been set aside for possible repairs, Cllr. Veitch confirmed that there had been no explicit amount set aside but budgets have been set for the various committees and there was some leeway within the budgets. There are two red kiosks – one at Bakers Cross and one at Swifts View. The Clerk explained that the kiosks had been used elsewhere to house defibrillators, tourist information or just for floral arrangements. Cllr. Smith stated that the Clerk had enquired about the possibility of the grey modern box in Sissinghurst being replaced with a red heritage box but this had been declined. The Clerk confirmed that the Sissinghurst kiosk is available to adopt. Cllr. Smith suggested that we should try to ascertain the usage of the box. Cllr. Fermor stated that it was a brilliant idea to adopt the red kiosks; they were part of our heritage. Cllr. Veitch proposed that Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Parish Council adopt the two red kiosks and that they be part of the Burials and Properties portfolio. This was seconded by Cllr. Holmes and agreed. Cllr. Clifford confirmed that the kiosks would be on the next agenda for Burials and Properties.

COMMUNITY CENTRE COMMITTEE:

11. Cllr. Veitch brought forward the report of the meeting held on the 21st April and invited questions. Cllr. Swann asked when we are going to approach the lottery fund. Cllr. Veitch stated that we cannot go ahead with fundraising until we have a planning permission. Cllr. Rook agreed, stating he had checked this online. Cllr. Swann offered to telephone to make enquiries.

Cllr. Clifford informed Members that with regard to the refurbishment of St. George's Institute, he had sought advice from the lottery fund and you cannot apply until planning consent has been obtained and financial tenders have been sought and received. If you apply too early the application will be returned as not complete. If you apply more than once you lose creditability.

Cllr. Hartley asked whether new members could have information on the Community Centre. Cllr. Veitch stated that the Business Plan and Plans are held in the Parish Office. With regard to costs, this is included in the Annual Report. The Clerk confirmed that everyone had a copy in their packs.

Cllr. Hall queried the structure of the Community Centre Committee. Cllr. Veitch clarified that it was made up of parish councillors and members of the community. She confirmed to Cllr. Hall that this had been agreed at a Full Council meeting. Cllr. Veitch confirmed that the Draft Head of Terms referred to in the report was work in progress, no decision had yet been made, it is not ready to be presented to Full Council.

Cllr. Holmes referred to future fundraising and mentioned Crowd Funding which might be worth a read.

Cllr. Veitch proposed adoption of the report. This was seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed.

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE:

12: Cllr. Goodchild brought forward the report of the meeting held on the 5th May and invited questions. No questions were raised. He proposed adoption of the report. This was seconded by Cllr. Cook and agreed.

PLANNING COMMITTEE :

13: Cllr. Bunyan referred to the Minutes of the meeting held on the 21st April and the 5th May and invited questions. Responding to a question from Cllr. Hartley she confirmed that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council are not in attendance at our meetings. She informed Members that there is a time constraint for our responses and this is why there are usually two meetings a month. Cllr. Cook stated that any controversial applications are normally considered by Full Council. Cllr. Rook informed Members that this is a sub-committee of the Council and the only committee which does not have to have the report adopted by Full Council.

BURIAL GROUNDS & PROPERTIES COMMITTEE:

14: Cllr. Clifford referred to the report of the meeting held on the 14th April and invited questions. No questions were raised. He proposed adoption of the report, this was seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed.

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:

15: Cllr. Holmes stated that there had been no recent meeting.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

16: Cllr. Rook stated that there had been no recent meeting. There is a lot of work to be done in the forthcoming year with regard to car parks etc. He confirmed to Cllr. Swann that the first meeting would be the annual site visit.

CRANBROOK CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

17: Cllr. Bunyan stated that the next meeting is on the 27th May.

KENT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS:

18: The Parish News had been circulated. Cllr. Veitch informed Members that she and the Deputy Clerk would be attending a training course on VAT and Employment Tax.

ACTION WITH RURAL COMMUNITIES IN KENT:

19: There was nothing to report.

CLERKS REPORT:

20: The Clerk tabled a poster “Have Your Say”. This related to a special Kent Feedback Forum which people are being encouraged to sign up to where you will be able to feedback on whether the way information is circulated works or whether it could be improved.

CORRESPONDENCE:

21: Two letters of thanks for Section 137 grants had been received. One from Cranbrook in Bloom and one from Cranbrook Museum. A letter had been received from Tunbridge Wells & District CAB informing us that the Advice Bus which has served eight rural villages in the Borough is to be replaced with a range of other ways of providing help and advice to people who find it difficult to get to the two offices in Tunbridge Wells and Cranbrook. People will be able to telephone and if appropriate arrange a follow up appointment, there will be a pre-booked advice service in an outreach clinic and where necessary they will continue to visit at home for people who cannot leave their house. There will also be a Skype Advice Service based in the Tunbridge Wells bureau.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION:

22: Cllr. Veitch tabled the current plans for the Community Centre. She informed Members that she and Cllr. Rook had attended a meeting with the planning team recently and there were concerns on the access and car parking spaces. She had prepared notes of the meeting. Cllr. Rook confirmed that the main objection was lorries reversing over Crane Lane – this has now been amended to show vehicles coming out front ways only. He tabled the plan to show this.

23: Cllr. Rook informed Members that he and Cllr. Veitch would be attending the Men’s Breakfast on Saturday June 13th to give a presentation on the Community Centre. He explained for the benefit of new Members that this was a Gentleman’s breakfast meeting organised by St. Dunstan’s Church.

24: Cllr. Holmes reported that he had attended a meeting of the Cranbrook Weald Tourist & Economic Forum – made up of the core members – on the 12th May. The decision was made to focus solely on tourism. He thanked Cllr. Dawlings for organising the meeting. He then took the opportunity of thanking the outgoing Chairman Cllr. Rook for all his hard work in his term of office.

25: Cllr. Rook mentioned the first meeting of the University of the Third Age – U3A – which was held recently in the Vestry Hall. He had been staggered by how many people had attended. Cllr. Holmes concurred, it had been very well attended.

26: Cllr. Bunyan referred to the litter pick which was undertaken on the 25th April, she hoped that this would encourage more people to be involved. Cllr. Swann suggested we should start earlier in the year and perhaps do it more often. Cllr. Veitch agreed with the comments and made the suggestion that posters asking for volunteers could be put up in more social areas such as the Milk House.

27: Cllr. Cook informed Members that two Cranbrook doctors had helped in the Nepal disaster – Robert Casserley and Rachel Tullet.

28: Cllr. Fairweather reported that the Sissinghurst Ward Members had arranged an informal meeting to enable the villagers to meet the new Members. The meeting is to be held on Saturday the 20th June in St. George’s Institute at 11 a.m. He extended an invite to all Members. The Clerk offered to insert something in the June issue of the Parish Newsletter.

29: Cllr. Clifford remarked that the collection of 30 bags of rubbish would be a proactive storey for the press. He had in the past offered to undertake press releases on behalf of the Parish Council. The Chairman confirmed that this could be a future agenda item for Policy & Resources. She will also now endeavour to get to grips with the Chairman's Blog. Amy Martin is our contact for the Courier and she does sometimes attend the meetings.

30: Cllr. Clifford enquired who was responsible for public footpaths. It was clarified that it was Jonathan Bibby at KCC.

31: Cllr. Hall mentioned Neighbourhood Plans and how important these were. She suggested we should discuss this topic sooner rather than later. She would like to see this on the next meeting. The Clerk confirmed that this would be on the agenda for the July meeting. Cllr. Veitch clarified that we recognise the importance of the issue and the restructure will take this into consideration, we will look at Neighbourhood Plans as soon as it is practically possible.

32: Cllr. Smith stated that he supports Neighbourhood Plans and there is an action group in Sissinghurst – SOS – he would copy the Clerk into any emails. He mentioned the appeal by Gladman for the 65 homes in Common Road. There are two applications in Highgate Hill which have gone to appeal and the Borough five year land supply will be scrutinised. He confirmed to Cllr. Rook that the Borough were content that they could defend this at appeal. Cllr. Clifford suggested that the Parish needed to consider employing a professional to deliver a neighbourhood plan. The Clerk had details of companies and people that other parishes had used. Cllr. Hall stated that funding had to be made available. Cllr. Kemp informed Members that he had expertise in master planning and architecture at a smaller level. Cllr. Hartley stated that he has architectural and planning experience and could make a contribution.

33: Borough Councillor Dawlings stated that the Borough Council was in the same position as the Parish in that they were appointing their new committees. With regard to the Cranbrook Engineering Site we need to all pull together, TWBC want to work with the community. The Courier newspaper has not been kind to Cranbrook over the recent months. Benenden gave Marden one of their red B.T. Kiosks. Benenden has one maintained by local residents and one by the Parish Council. They have a £200 budget. The one in Iden Green is the home for the defibrillator.