

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE
PARISH ROOM, SISSINGHURST ON THURSDAY
10TH SEPTEMBER 2015**

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.

No interests were registered.

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

APOLOGIES: Cllrs. Hartley and Smith. KCC & Borough Cllr. Sean Holden. Borough Cllr. Hannam.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:

97: The Chairman, Cllr. B. Veitch proposed that the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 13th August be adopted as a true record. Cllr. Hall referred to page 5, second paragraph – she had said that TWBC audio record and film their meetings. Cllr. Veitch agreed to the word “film” being added and then proposed that the amended Minutes be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed.

In response to a question from Cllr. Fermor, Cllr. Clifford confirmed that there was no further disruption of rubble in St. Dunstan’s Churchyard which led him to believe that the badger problem had been resolved.

CHAIRMANS REPORT:

98: The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting stating that it is always pleasant to have our Parish Council meeting in Sissinghurst. She congratulated everyone who helped to make the Annual Sissinghurst fete such a success in spite of the unfriendly weather. Her grandchildren thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

In Cranbrook we had travellers parked initially on the Regal (Co-op) car park, and subsequently on the playing field at the bottom of Turners Avenue. They then moved to Southborough and then to Paddock Wood. The cost and clearance of the debris on the playing field and the adjoining woods falls to the landowners. Hopefully this will be tackled as soon as possible to enable the playing field to be put back to use.

The Chairman informed Members that she had attended the September Parish Chairmans Meeting. The main topics covered were the planning advice and the unauthorised gypsy and traveller encroachments. The question on the planning advice was the status of pre-planning advice. The answer was that it was given without prejudice. The agreed protocol for the gypsy and traveller encroachments has been agreed, and is to be issued with the minutes which will be circulated when available.

There have been some troubling incidents of bricks being thrown at cars, which is very dangerous. The Chairman reminded everyone to report anything suspicious to the police, using the telephone number 101 for non-emergencies. All crimes do need to be reported, as otherwise police resources are not applied where they are needed. She also reminded everyone to ensure that garages and sheds are securely locked. Landowners need also to secure their outbuildings and fields.

Cllr. Veitch informed Members that the Appledore unit at the Swattenden Centre will shortly be receiving 40 asylum seekers for assessment. These will be minors aged 16/17. The number of unaccompanied minors in Kent has risen from 200 to 730. She asked if the Parish Council could visit and welcome these young people and a provisional date had been given of Tuesday 29th September in the morning. Cllr. Cook stated that Cranbrook Primary School had prepared parcels for the minors at the unit. He suggested we should write to the organisers and formally welcome them. Cllr. Fairweather made the suggestion that it would be sensible for only two or three councillors to visit, otherwise it would be overwhelming.

The Chairman reminded Members that we were the only parish council within Tunbridge Wells Borough which has the Quality Status. To renew the Status it is a requirement that a photo of all councillors must be on our website together with a few words about each councillor. She would prepare a checklist of suggestions so that the format is uniform. Cllr. Rook will bring in his camera for the October meeting.

Cllr. Clifford referred to the Chairman's remarks regarding the Sissinghurst Fete and he also thanked the team who organised it. He particularly thanked Cllr. Fairweather as he had led the team of organisers and he congratulated him.

NOMINATIONS – COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

99: The Chairman informed Members that Dr. Joy Temple now wished to join the Community Centre Committee. She proposed that Dr. Temple be co-opted onto the Committee; this was seconded by Cllr. Hall and agreed.

COMMUNITY CENTRE COMMITTEE:

100: Cllr. Veitch referred to the report of the meeting held on the 18th August and invited questions. Cllr. Hall pointed out a typographical error on page 2, which was amended. Responding to a question from Cllr. Hall with regard to page 5, first paragraph regarding KCC Adult Services, she did not have papers with her but she thought it was a group set up for the elderly. The Clerk clarified that it was not just for the elderly, there were younger people within the group. The Chairman then proposed that the report be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. Rook and agreed.

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE:

101: Cllr. Swann referred to the report of the meeting held on the 8th September and he referred specifically to 36/15 on how we can promote Cranbrook and Sissinghurst. He invited questions. No questions were raised. Cllr. Swann then proposed adoption of the report; this was seconded by Cllr. Rook and agreed.

PLANNING & PRESERVATION COMMITTEE:

102: Cllr. Bunyan stated that two meetings had been held and the Minutes circulated. She invited questions. No questions were raised.

BURIAL GROUNDS & PROPERTIES COMMITTEE:

103: Cllr. Clifford reported that the quality of the work being carried out under the grounds contract was being assessed. A meeting is being arranged with Pentland Homes to discuss the boundary fencing between the former Sissinghurst Primary School site and the Cemetery. At Golford we are looking at the tarmac around the Chapel and also the paths. An inspection of our properties will be carried out together with a site visit to look at the red telephone box in Frittenden in readiness for when we take over the two boxes in Cranbrook. The Clerk clarified to Cllr. Cook that we are not yet the owners but have registered with BT that we wish to adopt them; we now have to await clearance from TWBC which is part of the process.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE:

104: Cllr. Holmes informed Members that the next meeting was scheduled for the 22nd September and he reminded his committee members that it had been agreed that they would all speak to three businesses in the Town and he would like the information in readiness for the meeting.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT:

105: Cllr. Rook stated that the next meeting is scheduled for the 15th September. He reported that the drainage work in the Crane Valley had been completed but there was still a problem at the skate ramp. It could be spring water and he felt the only solution was to run a drain down into the stream. A meeting had been held with the Kent High Weald Partnership and Cranbrook in Bloom with regard to improvement works in Crane Valley which would include works to the steps on the boundary with the Regal Car Park and extending the board walk. He encouraged people to visit the nature area in the Valley which has many interesting species of plants and fauna.

He was pleased to report that RoSpa had inspected our play areas and we had a clean bill of health. The traveller incursion in the Regal Car Park had already been mentioned by Cllr. Veitch. The car parks generally have been well maintained and Cranbrook in Bloom had assisted with some planting. With regard to Cranbrook in Bloom, they had entered both the South East in Bloom and Britain in Bloom competitions. He had personally met the judges at The Windmill.

With regard to Stone Street and pedestrian safety, he reassured everyone that this is still very much on our agenda. We would like KCC to at least undertake a feasibility study. He has been raising the issue for the last fifteen years. Mr. Wren from TWBC attended our last Policy & Resources meeting to discuss their cycle route policy. Their suggested route was not acceptable and we had suggested that a route between Cranbrook and Sissinghurst would be more advantageous. Responding to Cllr. Fermor, he confirmed that we were in the very early stages and a route had not yet been worked up.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:

106: Cllr. Veitch gave Cllr. Smith's apologies for the delay in setting up a first meeting of the Committee. He was hoping to arrange a date in early October. He had however met up with senior planning staff at the Town Hall, together with Cllr. Veitch and Cllr. Bunyan when they had been told that developing a neighbourhood plan would have little or no bearing on the Gladman appeal decision.

Cllr. Veitch referred to the Interim Report for Hawkhurst which the Clerk had circulated to all Members for information. This is a very different document to the Headcorn version.

Cllr. Cook asked Cllr. Kemp whether the Conservation Area Management Plan which he had referred to at a recent planning meeting would be a primary task to go into a neighbourhood plan. Cllr. Kemp stated the Conservation Architect would like the Plan to be undertaken within the next six months to a year. He would like to discuss this further at a Planning Meeting. He would like to lead it. It is no more of a priority than the neighbourhood plan. Cllr. Swann pointed out that there is already a comprehensive Conservation Area Appraisal which would need to tie into any Management Plan. Cllr. Clifford referred to a past desire to have a Design Statement – where would this fit in. Cllr. Hall confirmed this would be covered within a neighbourhood plan. After further discussion Cllr. Kemp agreed to provide the Clerk with the necessary information to enable this issue to be included on the next agenda for the Planning Committee meeting to be held next Tuesday.

CRANBROOK CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

107: Cllr. Swann reported that there had been no recent meeting.

KENT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS:

108: Cllr. Clifford had nothing to report. Cllr. Veitch informed Members that at the recent Chairman's meeting in Tunbridge Wells, the Goudhurst Parish Chairman had asked why we did not attend meetings. We had been omitted on the mailing list and therefore were not aware of any meetings scheduled, this has now been rectified. The next meeting is on the 10th November at Goudhurst. We have been asked to host the February meeting which we are happy to do.

Cllr. Bunyan referred to various items in the August Parish News including the News from NALC regarding funding for war memorials and First World War graves. Cllr. Cook mentioned that the Chairman of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission was an old Cranbrookian. Cllr. Bunyan informed Members that there was also an article where the Prime Minister had apparently pledged to “save Britain's public loos”.

ACTION WITH RURAL COMMUNITIES IN KENT:

109: There was nothing to report.

CLERKS REPORT:

110: The Clerk had nothing to report.

CORRESPONDENCE:

111: There was no correspondence to report.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION:

112: Cllr. Rook informed Members that he was going into hospital on the 29th September for a hip replacement operation.

113: Cllr. Fairweather informed Members that he was in the cast for the next C.O.D.S production in October. He recommended everyone to attend.

114: Cllr. Hall as a Borough Councillor reported that she had attended a recent briefing and was told the housing numbers are listed as 6,000 but they are now looking for 19,000. She had been told that this was in the NPPF but she hadn't been able to find it. She clarified that this figure was for the Borough not Cranbrook and Sissinghurst.

115: Cllr. Holmes informed Members that the Museum would be open this Saturday and Sunday for the Heritage Weekend. Cllr. Rook clarified to Cllr. Holmes that the traffic lights in Cranbrook at the moment were to enable telephone cabling works to be carried out. We had no news on the completion of the gas mains replacement works.

116: Cllr. Cook commended Cllr. Goodchild on his tea and cakes initiative which is held on the first Sunday of the month in the Cranbrook Primary School. It is well received by those who need some company. Cllr. Goodchild confirmed that it is held to reach out to local people.

117: Cllr. Fermor reminded Members that the annual Ploughing Match is being held in Marden on the 19th September. Some funds raised at the event are donated to the High Weald Academy Farm. There will be a Spitfire which will do a flyby at 3pm. Cllr. Bunyan informed Members that this was the same day as the Sissinghurst Flower Show.

The Chairman closed the meeting to enable parishioners to make comments or ask questions.

Issues raised:-

- Street cleaning Wilsley Green Roundabout to London Lane – TWBC responsibility Borough Cllr. Linda Hall to take forward
- Debris from road traffic accidents – KCC responsibility – Advised parishioner about the KCC portal where they can record their complaints and track them.
- Dirty highway signs – KCC responsibility – reiterated information regarding the KCC portal.
- Congratulatory card for the Queen on becoming the longest reigning monarch.. Disappointed that the Union Jack had not been on the Vestry Hall flagpole.
- Number of incidents of cold callers. Nominated Neighbour Scheme. Cold Calling Control Zone – KCC Responsibility.
- Promotion of Cranbrook. Professional marketing advice in advance of new tourist season. Some parishioners might not support public money being spent on this. Cranbrook needs an image. Plenty of attractions. Press only report bad news. Press releases. Two councillors have expertise in this field. Promotion not just about Parish Council – wider mix. Borough tourism page on their website promotes Cranbrook very well. TWBC Local magazine can be used to promote our parish. Building relationships with the press. Good practice to look at how other councils promote their areas. High Weald Academy on television with their A level results.
- Borough Cllr. Tom Dawlings – Increase in housing numbers from 300 per year to 600 per year. Hawkhurst Public Inquiry – interesting outcome for the Gladman Appeal. Inspector's report will be interesting.

