

MINUTES OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 7th JANUARY 2020

PRESENT: Cllr. Beck (in the Chair), Bunyan, Clifford, Fairweather (in part), Fletcher and Gilbert.

APOLOGIES: Cllr. Warne.

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.

103/19: Internal finance check:

Cllr. Beck confirmed that the internal finance check has been completed and everything was in order.

104/19: Authorisation of payments made after the December meeting:

A list of payments made after the December meeting is filed with these minutes.

105/19: Transfers of monies between accounts:

No transfers had been required.

106/19: Cheques for Payment:

Cheques for January were signed for payment as per the list filed with these minutes. It was proposed by Cllr. Beck, seconded by Cllr. Clifford and agreed to authorise payment of the cheques as presented.

These included:

Policy and Resources	£15,402.64
Burial and Properties	£ 3,129.58
Environmental Management	<u>£ 675.50</u>
Total	£19,207.72

107/19: Community Centre:

Cllr. Fletcher advised that the legal documents were still with the Co-Op Management in Manchester. A chasing email was sent on Monday. The NHS Medical Centre Group are considering 2 site options. No more work will be undertaken until they have made their decision, which is expected at the end of January. If our site is chosen, we can then continue to plan from that perspective.

Cllr. Gilbert advised that once the land transfers had been completed and is in our ownership, a master plan for the entire area, including a topographical survey would be obtained. In response to Cllr. Clifford, Cllr. Fletcher confirmed that no project manager would be appointed until a decision is received regarding the Medical Centre.

108/19: Staffing:

The Clerk advised that the National Living Wage Threshold had been increased from £8.21 to £8.72 per hour for workers over the age of 25. It was proposed by Cllr. Beck seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed that the Caretakers salaries be increased to £8.72 per hour from 1st April 2020, in light of this information. The Clerk confirmed she had no concerns regarding the quality of their work.

In response to Cllr. Clifford, the Clerk confirmed the arrangement with agency admin support for the office was working well, until a new permanent member can be appointed. A meeting was planned on Friday between Cllrs. Fletcher, Gilbert and the Clerks to discuss their current roles.

109/19: Website Development:

The Clerk advised our current website support provider would no longer be able to provide a service for us and would like all his existing clients to find an alternative provider, ideally by the end of January. We had 3 options, the first to move to a company called Fixed at a similar cost to the current provider, however they do not offer technical support. The second option is to use a company recommended by our current provider initially at a cost of £150 per quarter to host and manage what we have at the moment. They also have experience in web design and would be happy to quote for a revamp or redesign of the existing website. The third option would be to find a new supplier ensuring that any new website conforms immediately to the new Accessibility Regulations. It was proposed by Cllr. Beck, seconded by Cllr. Fairweather and agreed to approve the second option by moving our account to Mouse.co.uk. The Clerk advised there may be a minimal initial fee for migrating the information over to the new provider. In the meantime, Cllr. Clifford and his working party of Cllrs. Hatcher and Pethurst would look into the requirements for updating or designing a new website and seek appropriate quotes.

110/19: Public Toilets:

Cllr. Fairweather felt that although it is not a statutory responsibility, that we as a council should consider providing a public convenience in the centre of town for residents and visitors to the Town. He had undertaken some initial research into the vandal proof, self-cleaning pod type toilets but as yet had not obtained any costings. Members felt it was definitely worth exploring further.

111/19: Parish Cake:

Cllr. Clifford advised the copy date for the next edition was 28th January. Cllrs. Fletcher and Beck would put together an article to explain the budgetary process and the precept demand. Cllr. Bunyan offered to approach some of the newer Planning Committee members to ask them to write an article about the Parish's role in the planning process.

112/19: Contracts:**a) Grounds Contract:**

The specification for the grounds contract had been delegated to Cllrs. Fletcher, Beck and Clifford. Cllr. Fletcher suggested some minor amendments regarding the Ball Field which would allow for the creation of a spinney. He suggested that people may like to plant a tree in celebration of a significant anniversary or occasion. It was also suggested that the removal of ivy from around key trees should be included in the contract. The Clerk would amend the specification accordingly and arrange for it to be placed on the Public Contracts website.

b) Parish Warden Contract:

This had been delegated to Cllrs. Fletcher, Gilbert and Clifford at the previous meeting. They expected to meet in the near future to discuss the job description and person specification as the current contract expires on 31/03/2020.

113/19: Vestry Hall hire request for 24th May 2020:

A request had been received from Marian Cumberland on behalf of Cranbrook goes Nuts in May, to use the Vestry Hall on Sunday 24th May. It had previously been agreed to discuss requests for Sunday bookings on a case by case basis. A full discussion followed; it was proposed by Cllr. Gilbert, seconded by Cllr. Fletcher and agreed to approve the request, offering the facilities free of charge as it was a community event. The Caretakers would be offered an additional £30 to carry out the necessary duties.

114/19: Grant Applications:

a) Cranbrook in Bloom

The Clerk advised that Linda Page, Chairperson of the organisation had asked to withdraw the current application. Due to financial restraints they ceased their watering schedule at the end of August which had represented a considerable saving. However, they will be looking to submit a further application for particular projects in the new financial year. The Co-Op have agreed to fund the replacement of 63 existing troughs and a new water bowser to make the cost of watering more economical.

115/19: Promotion of Parish Council:

Cllr. Clifford felt this no longer needed to be a regular agenda item and that Parish Cake is the key to promoting the Parish Council. The Clerk agreed to remove it from future agendas.

116/19: KALC Community Award Nomination:

Members discussed possible recipients for the award. Cllr. Fletcher proposed that the Cranbrook in Bloom Committee be nominated for the group award. This was seconded by Cllr. Fairweather and agreed.

117/19: Items for Information:

Cllr. Clifford advised he was the Council representative on the VE Day Commemoration Committee. A meeting is scheduled with Major David Riddick next week.

Cllr. Clifford also wanted to congratulate those responsible for the Christmas trees and lighting in Sissinghurst. Cllr. Fairweather advised the trees were paid for by the Fete Committee, the lights put up by himself and Cllr. Smith.

Cllr. Gilbert had prepared a list of things to consider when looking at the future use of the Weald Information Centre. He would be liaising with Cllr. Clifford and the Clerks to discuss future requirements.