

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 23rd AUGUST 2016**

PRESENT: Cllr. Holmes (in the Chair), Cllrs. Clifford, Cook, Fairweather and Warne

APOLOGIES: Cllr. Hartley

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.

05/16: Reports from Councillors:

a) Heritage Trail Leaflets & Visit Cranbrook & Beyond:

Cllr. Warne reported that she had spoken with some businesses regarding Visit Cranbrook and Beyond and the general feeling was that a leaflet with a map is very useful; we should talk to Tenterden Tourism and 1066 people; anything we can do to be more welcoming would be great; the Information Centre needs to be open on a Saturday in season for information of accommodation/camp sites, places to eat etc; encourage farmers to take up government grants to convert buildings for holiday lets; better signage for public toilets; and footpaths, featured walks and cycle routes should be added to the map. Cllr. Holmes reminded Members on the history with TWBC where they would only promote accredited bed and breakfast providers and the majority of our local ones were not accredited. Most bookings are now done online. Cllr. Warne stated that this could be difficult in this area with the poor phone coverage. Cllr. Fairweather stated that he had found it difficult to find B & B's in this area online. The Clerk informed Members that there is a shortage of B & B's in this area and it is sometimes very difficult to find anyone with vacancies. Cllr. Warne reiterated that government money is available to farmers to convert buildings to B & B's. She also mentioned that walking and cycling is very popular. Cllr. Holmes stated that there had already been a reprint of the very popular Walk through Time maps. The Clerk tabled the packs for the benefit of new Members who were not aware of their existence. Members all agreed that these were excellent.

A general discussion then took place on the content and text on the current version of Visit Cranbrook and Beyond and it was agreed that a lot of revision and amendment was required. The Clerk suggested that perhaps the only text which needed to be on the revised leaflet would be the text relating to the actual villages themselves as shops names and eating places could change regularly and therefore the leaflets could be out of date soon after reprint. Stationery Express were working on a revised version and she would provide this to Cllr. Warne as soon as it was available. Cllr. Holmes informed Members that he had also managed to track down the company who had the original art work. He suggested that there was no great rush to reprint the leaflet as the tourism season is coming to a close and we could discuss this leaflet again at the next meeting.

With regard to the Heritage Trail leaflet, the Clerk tabled the revised version which Stationery Express had produced. Members were happy to go ahead with the revision and it was proposed by Cllr. Fairweather, seconded by Cllr. Clifford and agreed to proceed with the reprint of the Heritage Trail leaflet as tabled. The Clerk informed Members that this is a very popular leaflet and tourists spending a short time in Cranbrook enjoy walking round and finding the properties with the heritage plaques.

b) Welcome Packs:

Cllr. Clifford apologised for the delay with the revised welcome pack. Cllr. Fairweather agreed to take more up to date photographs. This item was deferred to the next meeting.

c) Business Feedback Reports:

The Chairman asked Members how they would like the report formatted. Currently he has categories such as car parks, street markets etc. Cllr. Clifford suggested that in the first instance he would like to know what we are gathering the information for to which the Chairman stated that he saw it as an Aide Memoir. Cllr. Warne suggested it is for the bigger picture and this would then feed into the Neighbourhood Development Plan. Cllr. Clifford reported on his feedback which was encourage businesses into the town, promote free parking with appropriate signage, positive Christmas shopping celebration, tree planting to promote a country town feel. Cllr. Holmes encouraged Members to continue to speak to businesses and on their reports to identify which business they had spoken to, this will avoid duplication.

06/16: Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Promotion Group/Cranbrook Experience:

Cllr. Warne apologised for not attending the last meeting. Cllr. Clifford reminded Members that this group met in the Rugby Club once a month and it appears that it is now a promotion group. The Chairman for a short time was Brian Scott, but he understood that it is now Emma Wood. Members had a full discussion and various points were raised including the fact that there does not appear to be any terms of reference or constitution and there is disappointment that the focus of supporting local businesses seems to have fallen off the agenda. A discussion also took place on the situation with the Cranbrook Business Association which appears to be inactive at the moment apart from Cranbrook in Bloom and the Millennium Outings. Cllr. Holmes offered to speak to Graham Edwards, the current Chairman and a new business in the town who might be willing to be involved.

07/16: Cranbrook Tourism Group:

Cllr. Holmes stated that the next meeting is on the 31st August. The Discover Cranbrook leaflet is being distributed. The Group had been asked to provide a delegate to the Cranbrook Experience Group and they had asked to attend the meeting but this had been declined as there was already a full agenda. Cllr. Clifford stated that there had been many discussions in the past on how Sissinghurst National Trust could be married with Cranbrook, there is no information at Sissinghurst Castle about Cranbrook. He offered to provide them with the reprinted Heritage Trail Leaflets. The Clerk stated that Sissinghurst National Trust had not provided the Information Centre with any leaflets at all this year, despite being asked on several occasions. There is however leaflets on all the other local National Trust properties. Cllr. Clifford offered to investigate.

08/16: The Great British High Street:

Unfortunately the Committee Members had a different document than the Chairman and therefore the discussion was more general than anticipated. Various topics were discussed including pop up shops, art and crafts, street markets and enhancement of the town centre with landscaping/trees etc, even the idea of whether we needed a Mayor. The Clerk was tasked with speaking to the Town Clerk of Tenterden to gather information on their street market. All Members would be given both documents in readiness for the next meeting.

09/16: Items for Information:

Cllr. Holmes asked if there was any further news on the Crown Inn. The Clerk confirmed that Enterprise Inns had told her that the contract had been signed in July with the person who had Costa Coffee franchises.

DRAFT