

MINUTES OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 12TH JULY 2016

PRESENT: Cllr. Goodchild (in the Chair), Cllrs. Bunyan, Clifford, Holmes, Rook, Veitch and Warne.

APOLOGIES: Cllr. Swann.

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.

7/16: Internal Finance Check:

The Deputy Clerk confirmed that Cllr. Swann had completed the internal finance check and confirmed that everything was in order.

8/16: Authorisation of payments made after the June meeting:

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

9/16: Cheques for Payment:

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

These included:

Policy and Resources	£12,913.35
Burial and Properties	£ 8,190.00
Environmental Management	<u>£ 5,215.06</u>
Total	£26,318.41

The Clerk informed Members that Cory had informed us that they will be increasing the cost for the emptying of the litter bins as from the 1st July. We had been notified in May that the cost would rise from £438.00 to £1,747.20 which was an increase of £1,309.20 per month. This had been queried as it appeared that Cory was including bins in the car parks which we were already paying a contract with TWBC to empty. We have now received a revised cost of £915.20 per month. The justification from Cory was that they have not increased their price since 2009. They have suggested that to reduce the costs we could have the bins emptied less frequently. The Clerk reported that Cllr. Swann was not happy with this rise in costs.

A full discussion took place and Members were all in agreement that they would not support the bins being emptied less frequently, quite often the bins are already full to overflowing. Cllr. Rook reminded Members that when they had contacted other operators in relation to the community centre, they were all very expensive. It was proposed by Cllr. Rook, seconded by Cllr. Goodchild and agreed to accept the rise in costs as quoted, £915.20, but to investigate alternative options.

10/16: Staffing

The Deputy Clerk informed Members that she had 24.39 hours of accrued time and the Clerk had accrued 38.34 hours of overtime since the start of this financial year. The Clerk reminded Members that there is no capacity to take on extra work such as taking the Minutes for the Neighbourhood Plan Committee. This is causing a problem as the Minutes are not coming forward for adoption by Full Council. There has been two sets of Minutes adopted with three outstanding. Cllr. Warne offered to speak to the Chairman of the Committee.

11/16: Grant Applications:

a) An application had been received from the Cranbrook Literature Festival for £400 to assist with the organisation of the first community Festival to help with prizes for children's competitions and promotion of the event to the community. After a full discussion it was proposed by Cllr. Rook, seconded by Cllr. Veitch and agreed to award the sum of £400. It was hoped that the organisers would acknowledge our contribution in their promotional material. Cllr. Clifford offered to write a short paragraph for our website.

b) The Fat Carrot, organisers of the Farmers' Market, had made a request for assistance of £79 towards a repeat print of the original leaflet. It was proposed by Cllr. Goodchild, seconded by Cllr. Clifford and agreed to award the sum of £79 towards the re-print. The Parish Council logo should be included in any promotional material.

12/16: Generic Email Addresses:

Following the recent removal of Members personal information from websites as recommended by the Borough Council due to security issues, the Clerk had contacted Dewar Green our website advisor. There were two options to consider, the first was a forwarding service and the second would be for Members to have full email accounts where they can send and receive emails. The first option would attract a one off fee of approximately £60 and the second would be £33 per person per year with the total being £495 for 15 Members. It was appreciated that the first option although cheaper would rely on the clerks forwarding on emails which would be onerous and also Members would not be able to reply therefore it was proposed by Cllr. Veitch, seconded by Cllr. Rook and agreed to accept the quote from Dewar Green to set up full email accounts for all Members.

13/16: Broadband Provider:

The Clerk informed Members that there were two elements to consider. Firstly to enable any recording of meetings to be undertaken, to future proof the initiative it would be necessary to instal broadband into the Council Chamber. We have also had requests for broadband to be installed in the Vestry Hall for the benefit of hirers. A quote had been received from Balanced Audio Visual who are our CCTV contractors to supply and instal a new WiFi system which would provide internet access to both the Vestry Hall and Council Chamber in the sum of £869.40. The second element was the unsatisfactory internet access in the Information Centre. There are ongoing issues with the hub and the system. The telephone network is with BT and it would more advantageous if all the systems were compatible. It was confirmed to Cllr. Veitch that it would be a good idea to change our Broadband provider prior to putting in the WiFi to the Vestry Hall and Council Chamber. Following a full discussion, it was proposed by Cllr. Goodchild, seconded by Cllr. Holmes and agreed to accept the quote from Balanced Audio Visual in the sum of £869.40 and to also investigate broadband packages from BT to see which one suits our purpose. Cllr. Veitch suggested that the terms and conditions in relation to the hiring of the Vestry Hall and Council Chamber may need updating once the WiFi has been installed.

14/16: Promotion of Parish Council:

Cllr. Clifford welcomed Cllr. Warne to the meeting. The working party consisting of Cllrs. Holmes, Warne and himself had met and the document circulated to Members prior to the meeting had been produced which was being put forward for discussion. Some initiatives would increase the workload of the clerks i.e. the idea of going forward with social media. Cllr. Holmes had brought forward a publication from a parish council in Essex which was a colour, glossy edition paid for by advertising. This would probably need to be outsourced. Biddenden and Benenden already have similar magazines. Cllr. Veitch suggested that other organisations such as the churches might also want to come on board and join with us to provide one publication. Cllr. Clifford acknowledged that this was a mighty leap for this Council to move into the electronic age with social media and he recommended serious consideration of a coloured monthly magazine. Perhaps someone outside of the parish council could take it on as a project.

Another suggestion was for a youth parish council. Cllr. Warne stated that Paddock Wood set up a youth parish council six months ago and it was working well. Youth from year 6 onwards were involved and were now getting involved in the Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr. Rook reminded Members that we had gone down this route in the past but it had proved very difficult and it had fizzled out. Cllr. Veitch stated that she had met with John Weeds, Head of Cranbrook School and suggested a tripartite agreement between the two schools and the Parish Council to discuss local politics. The schools could schedule the meetings to accommodate the timetables. Cllr. Holmes suggested that in the past the former Angley School had not really supported the initiative of involving students in local politics but he felt that the High Weald Academy was much more likely to get involved. Cllr. Clifford reminded Members that a youth parish council would not just involve the schools but could involve other groups such as the cadets etc where the young people may not even attend a local school.

Cllr. Holmes stated that he would like the encouragement of the entire Parish Council not just this Committee to be able to move forward with the proposals suggested. The Clerk stated that all Members who were not on this Committee would receive a copy of the document under discussion this evening, with their Minutes.

Cllr. Clifford mentioned the other groups such as the Town Promotion Committee which we could work with to promote the Parish Council. There is a hunger in the community to become more involved. He hoped that the Committee would approve the document as a first draft for promoting all the work of the Parish Council. He mentioned ways of using social media and email lists to use as a communication tool for the community and ourselves. The Clerk reminded everyone that we must abide by the Data Protection Act when compiling email lists and she tabled our Data Protection Policy. The Clerk made Members aware of an email received regarding Data Protection and it was agreed by Members that this be forwarded to the Monitoring Officer. Cllr. Holmes thanked the Committee for supporting what the working party are trying to do with their ideas and initiatives on promotion and communication. Cllr. Goodchild thanked the working party for their hard work.

15/16: Items for Information:

Cllr. Goodchild stated that Cranbrook Primary School had a new headteacher – Mrs Rosie Piper. She was the former deputy so this was good for continuity. Cllr. Rook reminded everyone that if they wanted to volunteer for reading etc at any school that they needed to be DBS checked.