

Westerham Town Council
 Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held
 on Wednesday 10th April 2019 at 7.30pm
 at Westerham Hall

Present: Councillors: Alan Wesley (Chairman) Helen Ogden (Vice-Chairman),
 Philip Ashley, Alex Bates, Loretta Bird, Eddie Boyle, Michael Craig, Anthony Holman,
 Alan Jowett, David Le Breton, Hannah Marsh, Neil Proudfoot and Sharon Sheen

In Attendance: Town Clerk: Angela Howells
 Deputy Clerk: Debbie Marshall
 Assistant Clerk: Deborah Rogers

Cllr N Chard: Kent County Councillor
 Cllr D Esler: Sevenoaks District Councillor
 Steve Grange: KCC Community Warden
 55 members of the public

1.	<p><u>Apologies for Absence</u> Mr M Fallon MP.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Minutes of the meeting held on 18th April 2018</u> These were signed as a true record.</p>	
3.	<p><u>The next Generation – Sea Cadets and Westerham Scouts</u> Cllr Alan Wesley welcomed everyone to the 7th Annual Meeting of Westerham Town Council and its Ward of Crockham Hill. He was pleased to welcome Sub Lieutenant Jan Dean who was the commanding Officer of Westerham Sea Cadets. They were subject to regular inspections and as a result were ranked as one of the top performing Units, brilliantly organized and led and they provided youngsters from a wide demographic with valuable life skills and a lot of fun. Jan Dean showed a recruitment video showing all the activities the Sea Cadets had undertaken in the last year. Alan Wesley then introduced Russell Porter, Group Scout Leader of Westerham Scouts who was going to educate the meeting in what scouts get out of scouting from an age range of 6 – 25 and where that links with the community. There were currently 65 young people in the group. Russell Porter showed a national recruitment video and information about the activities that the Westerham Group took part in. Our two Primary Schools had been looking at democracy and debate and there were some information boards with interesting</p>	

	<p>topics and findings.</p> <p>The Town Council supported a debate day at Churchill School which included teaching the young people the principle of debating and how this worked with voting in Parliament. WTC had also explored with both Schools the similarities between the School Council and WTC with the aim of an early introduction to decision taking and representation.</p> <p>In the view of WTC it was vital the Council engaged with groups and organisations such those who had presented this evening so that young people could become better added value to the community and more disinclined towards unacceptable behaviours.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p><u>Chairman's report – Cllr Alan Wesley</u></p> <p>The full Chairman's report had been circulated to the meeting. The Agenda was somewhat different to previous years as this meeting ended the four-year term of the current council and WTC should therefore report to you the community on the performance over the four years set against the strategic objectives and priorities established in 2015.</p> <p>While elections would be held on 2nd May, there were sufficient individuals standing to fill the three Crockham Hill vacancies leaving two places representing Westerham for which co-option would be necessary.</p> <p>In addition to the routine income of £260,000 from Council Tax and rents WTC had also received £186,000 which was WTC share of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) generated by local housebuilding.</p> <p>CIL – WTC share was 25% of the total levy payable by the house building landowner or developer to Sevenoaks District Council. The other 75% of the CIL could be accessed by application to SDC.</p> <p>WTC had delivered or were currently delivering on all our projects bar one.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Traffic calming and improved parking – WTC had completed the design, planning permission and contractor selection and would be applying to SDC CIL Spending Board for the balance of funding needed. 2. Speed Watch – this was happening regularly, but more volunteers were needed. 3. Improve public toilets – Following consultation a new public toilet had been installed for both visitors and residents at a cost of £48,000. 4. Keeping the community attractive – bollards, improving signage, hanging baskets and Christmas lights make a difference. Litter was still an issue, but WTC do weed kill the pavements. 	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Protecting Green Spaces – WTC had made financial commitments to two projects which have helped secure Lottery funding, the Darent Valley footpath from Westerham to Chipstead and the Greens and Commons projects. 6. Enhance Community Facilities – a new Darent bridge had been built to aid pedestrian access to the playing fields. 7. Crockham Hill playground – very old equipment had been replaced in consultation with the community and with the aid of a Biffa grant. 8. Outdoor gym – a well-used facility costing £10,000. 9. Footpath from New Road to Crockham Hill School and Church – this was put in for pedestrian safety at a cost of £4,500. 10. King Georges Playing Field Pavilion refurbishment – this was still in the planning and consultation stages and was a very large project. WTC had put aside £75,000 so far. <p>WTC had received a clear audit. In the year 2018/19 WTC received a precept (Council tax) of £260,000 however £400,000 was spent on behalf of and in the community. I therefore submit that WTC is astonishingly good value for money.</p> <p>The last four years of this Council have seen unprecedented levels of complex planning applications and consultations. The bulk of this work has fallen upon a small number of Councillors while the others picked up the responsibilities aided by our competent and highly motivated staff.</p>	
5.	<p><u>Looking forward – Local Planning Issues</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SDC draft Local Plan – following a community vote WTC successfully opposed the inclusion of WWW in the draft Local Plan which was currently being submitted to the Government Planning Inspector for approval, with a hearing likely to be in the Autumn. 2. Moorhouse DPD – The third application was objected to by WTC and was refused on Green Belt grounds. TDC have included this site in their draft Local Plan, WTC would continue to object to this and the hearing is also likely to be in the Autumn. 3. Covers Sandpit – This was ongoing. WTC has objected on the grounds that the original restoration was still suitable. There were also concerns from Highways England regarding the possible impact of the proposed haul road. <p>WTC would continue to seek professional advice when deemed necessary.</p>	
6.	<p><u>Your Views – Priorities for the next Council</u></p> <p>Cards have been placed on the tables for you to list your priorities for</p>	

	<p>the next Council who do need to hear your ideas.</p> <p>Cllrs Philip Ashley, Michael Craig, Anthony Holman, David Le Breton, Hannah Marsh and Neil Proudfoot and the Chairman were leaving the Council. David after 28 year and Philip after 15 years were deserving of special thanks.</p> <p>The new Council will welcome five new Councillors, Deborah Coen, Bob Holt, Stewart Kay, Clive Pither and Keith Thompson.</p> <p>If anyone here tonight is interested in becoming co-opted as a Councillor as outlined above, please speak to the Town Clerk.</p>	
7.	<p><u>Open Session</u></p> <p>The panel to answer questions were the speakers plus WTC Cllrs Helen Ogden, Vice-Chairman and Philip Ashley, Chairman of the Planning Committee.</p> <p>Q – Barry Reid – When will we know about the new Council Chairman?</p> <p>A – This will be decided at the Annual Council meeting on 13th May.</p> <p>Q – Dr Skinner – How are speed limits managed? There was recently a fatal accident in Dairy Lane, Main Road has a 40mph speed limit which goes into 60mph?</p> <p>A – KCC Cllr Chard responded that speed limits were difficult to change due to national standards but could be looked at where there are fatalities. Dr Skinner was asked to email KCC Cllr Chard to discuss further.</p>	

The meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.

Signed as a correct record

Chairman