

WESTERHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held at Russell House on
Monday 23rd January 2023 at 7 pm

Present: Councillors: Mrs H Ogden (HO) – Chairman
Mrs L Bird (LB), Mr E Boyle (EB),
Mrs D Coen (DC), Mrs J Davies (JD),
Mr B Holt (BH), Dr S Kay (SK),
Dr J Lord (JL), Mr C Pither (CP),
Mr N Robson (NR), Mrs S Sheen (SS)
and Mr K Thompson (KT)

In attendance: Town Clerk: Mrs A Howells (AH)
Finance/Project Officer: Mrs D Marshall (DM)

Item		Action
1.	<p>Cllr Ogden informed Council that former Chairman of the Council David Le Breton had passed away this week after several years of ill health. He had been a Town and Parish Cllr for over 20 years and had taken a particular interest in roads and footpaths and had amassed much expertise in planning. David had been passionate about Westerham and Crockham Hill and had lived a remarkable life; he will be sadly missed.</p> <p><u>Apologies for Absence</u> Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Elsdon-Wortley – holiday.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest not previously declared</u> None.</p>	
3.	<p><u>Minutes of the Council Meeting on 5th December 2022</u> It was resolved to approve and sign the minutes of the Council meeting held on 5th December 2022.</p>	
4.	<p><u>Information items arising from the minutes of the previous meeting not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda</u> 8.1 Darent Valley Landscape Partnership refund had not been received. The Clerk to chase. 9 The Clerk reported that the WTC/Foodbank submission had been made regarding the SDC Community awards.</p>	AH
5.	<p><u>To receive and consider the following Minutes of Committee:</u> Cllr Robson presented the Minutes: 5.1 <u>Planning and Development – 08.12.22</u></p>	

	<p>Resolved: that the Minutes be adopted.</p> <p>5.2 <u>Planning and Development – 22.12.22</u></p> <p>Resolved: that the Minutes be adopted.</p> <p>5.3 <u>Planning and Development – 05.01.23</u></p> <p>The WTC submission for the SDC Local Plan Regulation 18 had been submitted.</p> <p>Thanks were given to Cllr Robson for working on the submission over the Christmas period and submitting WTC's response.</p> <p>Resolved: that the minutes be adopted.</p> <p>5.4 <u>Planning and Development – 19.01.23</u></p> <p>Covers Farm application was not on the Agenda for the KCC January planning Committee.</p> <p>Bruce's Doggy Day Care application had been approved but two conditions were outstanding. One condition regarding vegetation had been refused and the condition regarding the road layout was ongoing. Members of the Planning Committee approved the minutes.</p> <p>Resolved: that the minutes be adopted.</p> <p>5.5 <u>Finance and General Purposes – 09.01.23</u></p> <p>Cllr Sheen presented the minutes.</p> <p>All items from the F&GP meeting were on the Council Agenda.</p> <p>Members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee approved the minutes.</p> <p>Resolved: that the Minutes be adopted.</p> <p>5.6 <u>Allotments, Playing Fields and Open Spaces – 16.01.23</u></p> <p>Cllr Lord presented the minutes.</p> <p>The Committee had agreed to extend the york paving at the top end of The Green. Once the paving was in place permanent seating would be fixed and a plaque would be placed for the Kings' Coronation.</p> <p>Members of APFOS approved the minutes.</p> <p>Resolved: that the minutes be adopted.</p>	
6.	<p><u>Finance</u></p> <p>6.1 <u>Payment List to 31st December 2022</u></p> <p>Cllr Sheen reported that F&GP had reviewed the payment list and had nothing to bring to Council's attention. There were no other queries and the list was approved.</p> <p>6.2 <u>Committee Accounts to 31st December 2022</u></p> <p>Cllr Sheen reported that the accounts were in line with what was expected at this point in the financial year and she had nothing to bring to Council's attention.</p> <p>There were no queries and the accounts were approved.</p> <p>6.3 <u>Internal Audit Report</u></p> <p>The Finance Officer reported that the mid-year Internal Audit had taken place on 30th November. The report had been received and the only item raised was the frequency of the review of the Financial Regulations and Standing Orders. Whilst it was noted that WTC routinely reviewed these policies every 4 years whenever a new NALC 'model' document was received or there was a change in business practice; this was deemed insufficient. WTC had been advised that annual review was best practice. Consequently, the Financial Regulations had been added to the agenda</p>	

	<p>for immediate review.</p> <p>6.4 To consider Grant Application for West Kent Mediation The grant application and had been circulated. Following discussion it was agreed to award a grant of £300.</p> <p>6.5 To consider Grant Application for Sevenoaks Volunteer Transport The grant application had been circulated. Following discussion it was agreed to award a grant of £125.</p> <p>6.6. Public Sector Deposit Fund investment The Finance Officer reported that Council needed to approve investment in the Public Sector Deposit Fund as recommended by F&GP. It was agreed to invest £100,00 in the Fund. Resolved: To invest £100,000 in the Public Sector Deposit Fund.</p>	
7.	<p><u>Precept 2023/24</u> Cllr Sheen thanked the Finance Officer for her background paper which set out not only how the precept was calculated but also comparisons with neighbouring town councils. Draft budget figures had also been circulated and F&GP had recommended increasing the precept to £293,115. This would represent an increase of 23p per week for band D council tax or 9.2% due to a small increase in the tax base. Following lengthy discussion and much debate it was agreed (11 votes to 1 – Cllr Robson dissenting) to increase the Precept to £293,115. Resolved: To increase the precept to £293,115.</p>	
8.	<p><u>Crockham Hill War Memorial Playing Field Trust – 29th November 2022</u> The minutes of the meeting on 29th November had been circulated and were noted.</p>	
9.	<p><u>Local Elections 2023</u> The Clerk had circulated information regarding dates and information for submission of nomination papers to become a cllr. Information regarding the changes to English local government polls had also been circulated. Changes included the requirement to show photo ID at polling stations before a ballot paper was issued. It was agreed to hold two workshops for potential cllrs; one in an evening and one on a Saturday. The Clerk to circulate dates for cllrs to sign up to talk to candidates. Posters would then be circulated using social media, notice boards and TN16.</p>	AH
10.	<p><u>Annual Town Meeting</u> Cllr Ogden informed Council that as this ATM was the last one for this Council the report to the public would be based on what had been achieved in the last four years. It would also be Cllr Ogden's last meeting before stepping down as a Cllr and as Chairman of the Council. Following discussion it was agreed that the report would include an update on KGF Redevelopment Project and the ECO Action Plan. Community groups would be asked to attend with information stalls about their organisation with highlighting the need for volunteers in accordance with the theme announced for the Coronation.</p>	HO/AH

11.	<p><u>King's Coronation</u> Information had been circulated regarding possible community events for the Coronation. Following discussion it was agreed to purchase bunting and decorate Westerham. It was further agreed that Cllrs Boyle and Coen would form a Working Group to consider this further. Cllrs felt that focusing on volunteering as requested by the Royal Palace would be a fitting celebration.</p>	EB/DC/AH
12.	<p><u>Human Resources Sub-Committee Terms of Reference</u> Cllr Sheen had circulated draft Terms of Reference for a Human Resources Sub-Committee together with background information on why F&GP deemed this necessary. Following discussion this was agreed. Resolved: To approve the Terms of Reference for the Human Resources Sub-Committee.</p>	SS/AH
13.	<p><u>Policies and Procedures</u> 13.1 <u>Investment Policy</u> The Policy had been circulated and the minor amendments recommended by F&GP were approved. Resolved: To approve the Investment Policy. 13.2 <u>Internal Controls Policy</u> The Policy had been circulated and as there were no changes was approved. Resolved: To approve the Internal Controls Policy. 13.3 <u>Financial Regulations</u> The Policy had been circulated and as there were no changes was approved. Resolved: To approve the Financial Regulations. 13.4 <u>Procurement Policy</u> The Policy had been circulated and the minor amendments recommended by F&GP were approved. Resolved: To approve the Procurement Policy.</p>	
14.	<p><u>King George's Field Re-development Project</u> 14.1 <u>KGF Project Report</u> – The report was received and noted. Cllrs were pleased to note that many positive comments had been received regarding the refurbishment of the playground. The Finance Officer reported that further consultation regarding the skatepark would take place shortly. However funding opportunities were still very limited. Congratulations were given to the Project Officer on all her hard work. 14.2 <u>KGF Funds Report</u> – The report was received and noted.</p>	
15.	<p><u>Local Council Award</u> Cllr Ogden reminded Cllrs that approval would be needed at the March Council meetings as it was proposed to submit the application for the Gold Award at the end of March.</p>	

16.	<p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <p>16.1 A thank you card from King Charles had been received following a letter of condolence that had been sent from WTC.</p> <p>16.2 A thank you letter had been received from St Mary's Church for the WTC grant.</p>	
17.	<p><u>Reports from Councillors</u></p> <p>Cllrs Coen, Davies and Sheen had been helping at the Crockham Hill drop in Café; at which attendance was good.</p> <p>Cllr Boyle had spoken to WTP regarding various matters.</p> <p>Cllrs Coen, Davies, Holt and Sheen had attended the Newcomers Get together at the Crockham Hill Village Hall.</p> <p>Cllr Robson had attended the KWG AGM and reported on Covers Farm, SDC Local Plan and Bruce's Doggy Day Care.</p>	
18.	<p><u>TN16, Crockham Hill Village Newsletter & website</u></p> <p>The life of David Le Breton</p> <p>Annual Town Meeting</p> <p>Local Elections</p>	
19.	<p><u>Matters for District and County Councillors</u></p> <p>School buses</p> <p>Land Issues</p> <p>KCC Community Warden</p>	
20.	<p><u>Further matters for consideration at the next meeting</u></p> <p>Local Council Award</p>	
21.	<p><u>Date of next meeting</u></p> <p>Monday 20th March 2023</p>	
	<p>Part 2 Pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (admission meetings) Act 1960. The Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the under mentioned item on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business concerned.</p>	
22.	<p><u>HR Matters</u></p> <p>21.1 Cllr Sheen reported that a salary review had been undertaken and had been recommended by F&GP. This was approved.</p>	

The meeting was concluded at 9.25 pm

Minutes confirmed as a correct record:

Chairman