

WESTERHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held at Russell House on
Monday 20th March 2023 at 7 pm

Present: Councillors: Mrs H Ogden (HO) – Chairman
Mr E Boyle (EB), Mrs D Coen (DC),
Mrs J Davies (JD), Mr C Elsdon-Wortley (CEW)
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)
KCC Cllr Nick Chard
SDC Cllr Diana Esler
SDC Cllr Kevin Maskell
One member of the public

Item		Action
1.	<p>Before the meeting began Cllr Ogden expressed the Council's delight that former KCC Community Warden Steve Grange had been one of two winners of the Local Hero category at the Sevenoaks District Council 'Making it Happen' Community and Voluntary Awards.</p> <p>County and District Cllrs thanked Cllr Ogden for her service over the past 13 years as this was her final Council Meeting. Cllr Chard paid tribute to her professionalism and how big an asset she had been to WTC. Cllr Esler said it had been a pleasure working with her. Cllr Maskell commended her team approach method of working.</p> <p><u>Apologies for Absence</u> Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Bird – work commitment and Holt – personal commitment.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest not previously declared</u> None.</p>	
3.	<p><u>Minutes of the Council Meeting on 23rd January 2023</u> It was resolved to approve and sign the minutes of the Council meeting held on 23rd January 2023.</p>	
4.	<p><u>Information items arising from the minutes of the previous meeting not</u></p>	

	<p><u>dealt with elsewhere on the agenda</u> None.</p>	
5.	<p><u>To receive and consider the following Minutes of Committee:</u> Cllr Robson presented the Minutes:</p> <p><u>5.1 Planning and Development – 02.02.23</u> Covers Farm application was ongoing, the applicant had been asked for additional information. Resolved: that the Minutes be adopted.</p> <p><u>5.2 Planning and Development – 16.02.23</u> Bruce’s Doggy Day Care application still had two conditions outstanding. Resolved: that the Minutes be adopted.</p> <p><u>5.3 Planning and Development – 02.03.23</u> Resolved: that the minutes be adopted.</p> <p><u>5.4 Planning and Development – 16.03.23</u> Members of the Planning Committee approved the minutes. Resolved: that the minutes be adopted.</p> <p><u>5.5 Highways and Lighting - 06.02.23</u> Cllr Sheen presented the minutes. A report had just been received that trial holes and ground investigation works would commence on Beggars Lane on 11th April for four days, temporary traffic signals would be in place. 20 mph Speedwatch had taken place in the High Street and London Road. Hosey Hill residents were continuing their Speedwatch and the Police were taking positive action and carrying out Speedwatch on Hosey Hill each month. The Westerham Hill proposed closure had been paused and there was no current update. Cllr Coen requested that the Goodley Stock T junction with the B269 was monitored as particularly at night it was very difficult to judge where the junction ended. Cllr Ogden reported that she was grateful for the new traffic signs at the junction of Pilgrims Way and Westerham Hill as this was an accident spot. Resolved: that the minutes be adopted.</p> <p><u>5.6 Youth and Community – 20.02.23</u> Cllr Coen presented the minutes. The Crockham Hill Coffee morning was very well attended with 25 attendees last month. Thanks to SDC Cllr Esler for attending. On 23rd March Cllr Coen and Davies were attending a meeting with the Head Teacher of Crockham Hill School to donate bird and insect boxes for the children. The School was to be asked to monitor the wildlife activity. Members of the Youth and Community Committee approved the minutes. Resolved: that the minutes be adopted.</p> <p><u>5.7 Allotments, Playing Fields and Open Spaces – 16.01.23</u> Cllr Lord presented the minutes. WTC had been awarded a grant from part of the UK Prosperity Fund administered by SDC. This was going to be used to fund the paving and seating on The Green adjacent to the Wolfe Statue.</p>	

	<p>Members of APFOS approved the minutes. Resolved: that the minutes be adopted.</p> <p>5.8 Finance and General Purposes – 09.01.23 Cllr Sheen presented the minutes. Members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee approved the minutes. Resolved: that the Minutes be adopted.</p>	
6.	<p>Finance</p> <p>6.1 Payment List to 28th February 2023 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 Committee Accounts to 28th February 2023 Cllr Sheen reported that the F&GP budget had been impacted by the increase in payroll; 3% had been budgeted for but the national award had been 6.4%. However if the year end shortfall could not be met from underspend elsewhere, or other parts of the F&GP budget was not sufficient to meet the overspend, then the payroll contingency reserve was available to draw on. The Committee Accounts were approved.</p> <p>6.3 Internal Auditor 2023/34 The Internal Audit letter for 2023/24 had been circulated and reviewed and it was agreed to approve the KCC auditor.</p> <p>6.4 Effectiveness of Internal Audit Cllr Sheen reported that F&GP had reviewed the Effectiveness of Internal Audit and recommended approval. There were no queries and this was approved. Resolved: To approve the Effectiveness of Internal Audit</p> <p>6.5 Financial Risk Assessment Cllr Sheen reported that F&GP had reviewed the Financial Risk Assessment and recommended approval with the suggested amendments. There were no further queries and this was approved. Resolved: To approve the Financial Risk Assessment.</p> <p>6.6 To consider Grant Application for Westerham Hall The grant application and had been circulated. Following discussion it was agreed to award a grant of £75.</p> <p>6.7 To consider Grant Application for Crockham Hill Church The grant application had been circulated. Following discussion it was agreed to award a grant of £700. (10 votes to 1 – Cllr Pither dissenting)</p> <p>6.8 To consider Grant Application for Westerham Town Partnership The grant application had been circulated. This application had been received as the next Council meeting was after the date of the event. Following discussion it was agreed to award a grant of £500 from the financial year 2023/24.</p>	
7.	<p>Local Council Gold Award The resolution criteria, statements and draft application form had been circulated. Following discussion the resolution criteria, statements and application form were approved.</p>	

	<p>Westerham Town Council (WTC) confirms by resolution that it meets the criteria for the Foundation level and publishes the information on its website (see attached criteria).</p> <p>The Council further confirms by resolution that the following are in place: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A risk management policy • A register of assets • Contracts for all members of staff are in place • An up-to-date insurance policy that mitigate risks to public money • A disciplinary and grievance procedure • A policy for training and development of staff and councillors • A record of all training undertaken by staff and councillors in the last year • A clerk who has achieved 12 Continuing Professional development points (CPD) <p>The Council confirms by resolution that it meets the criteria for the Quality level and publishes the information on its website (see attached criteria).</p> <p>The Council further confirms by resolution that the following are in place: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A scheme of delegation • At least two thirds of its councillors who stood for election • An annual report that is actively shared with the community • Evidence of a customer service in how the council handles correspondence with the public • A qualified clerk • A formal appraisal process for all staff • A Training Policy and record for all staff and councillors <p>The Council confirms by resolution that it meets the criteria for the Gold level and publishes the information on its website (see attached criteria).</p> <p>The Council further confirms by resolution that the following are in place: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that the council delivers value for money • Provides leadership in planning for the future of the community • Engages with the community on issues related to the environmental and climate change • Manages the performance of the council as a corporate body • Manages the performance of each individual staff member to achieve its business plan <p>An application for the Gold Award could now be submitted. Cllr Ogden thanked the Local Council Award Working Group for all their hard work in getting the application to this stage.</p>	
8.	<p><u>King George's Field Re-development Project</u></p> <p>The Project Officer had circulated a paper outlining the recommendation from F&GP that WTC proceed with skatepark design option 2 at a cost of £120,000 and that the order be placed using Council monies. Also to change the order of the phases, installing a Fit trail around the circumference of the field before the pavilion/MUGA phase. The Project Officer reported that she had undertaken extensive funding research but there were currently very few grant programmes open to Parish/Town Council.</p> <p>Following lengthy discussion it was agreed to approve all F&GP recommendations.</p>	

	<p>Resolved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To proceed with design option 2 for the skate park @ £120,000 To place the order for the skate park using Council monies To change the order of the phases, installing a FIT trail around the circumference of the field before the Pavilion/MUGA phase <p>The Project Officer was thanked for all her hard work.</p>	
9.	<p><u>Annual Town Meeting</u></p> <p>Cllr Ogden had circulated a draft Annual Report and asked for any comments to be sent to her by the end of the month.</p>	All Cllrs
10.	<p><u>King's Coronation</u></p> <p>Cllr Boyle reported that in discussion with Westerham Town Partnership it had been agreed by Youth and Community to keep the marquee on The Green from Beating of the Bounds, the weekend before, and engage a musician to play on the afternoon of Sunday 7th May. The cost of £325 to be taken out of Y&C contingency 2023/24. Residents would be invited to attend and bring their own picnics.</p> <p>The Clerk reported that coronation bunting had been purchased for Westerham and Crockham Hill and would put up in Westerham on 28th April.</p>	
11.	<p><u>Policies and Procedures</u></p> <p>11.1 <u>Code of Conduct</u></p> <p>The Code of Conduct had been circulated and was approved.</p> <p>Resolved: To approve the Code of Conduct.</p> <p>11.2 <u>Asset Register</u></p> <p>The Register had been circulated. Cllr Sheen reported that a Buildings Valuation had been carried out before WTC renewed the Insurance Policy.</p> <p>Following discussion the Asset Register was approved.</p> <p>Resolved: To approve the Asset Register.</p> <p>11.3 <u>Strategic Business Plan</u></p> <p>The Strategic Business Plan had been circulated; the Plan had been updated with current financial information and following discussion was approved.</p> <p>Resolved: To approve the Strategic Business Plan.</p> <p>11.4 <u>Standing Orders</u></p> <p>The Standing Orders had been circulated and were approved.</p> <p>Resolved: To approve the Standing Orders.</p>	
12.	<p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <p>12.1 A letter had been received from the Sevenoaks Volunteer Transport Group, thanking WTC for the grant.</p>	
13.	<p><u>Reports from Councillors</u></p> <p>Cllr Thompson reported he had attended the Darent River Dipping event.</p> <p>Cllr Elsdon-Wortley reported he would be donating a tv screen for the chamber.</p> <p>Cllr Boyle reported he had attended meetings with WTP and</p>	

	<p>retailers/businesses.</p> <p>Cllr Kay reported an increase in litter, particularly adjacent to Beggars Lane. The Clerk to raise this with the litter pick tomorrow.</p> <p>Cllr Robson reported he had attended the KALC Climate Change Conference on 17th March and would circulate the presentation.</p> <p>Cllr Coen reported she had attended the NALC webinar on Social Isolation, which had been very interesting and relevant and she had made contact with a similar sized council.</p> <p>Cllr Coen reported that the closure of Edenbridge Leisure Centre had been raised with her by a number of concerned residents.</p> <p>Cllr Davies reported she had attended the drop in the CH Cafes and despite standing down as a Cllr would continue to help with this project as a joint collaboration with WI and WTC.</p> <p>Cllr Davies reported that the Post Office would be closing in Edenbridge.</p> <p>Cllr Pither reported he had attended the Surrey Hills AONB consultation in Godalming, he would report to the Planning Committee.</p> <p>Cllr Ogden reported she had made an address at the funeral of David Le Breton on behalf of WTC.</p> <p>Cllr Ogden reported she had spoken to KCC Cllr Chard on 3rd March regarding the following – Covers Farm, land at Churchill School, School buses, Community Warden, Childrens Centres, and closure of Westerham Hill.</p> <p>Cllr Ogden reported she and the Clerk had met with Mr H Warde on 28th February.</p>	
14.	<p><u>TN16, Crockham Hill Village Newsletter & website</u></p> <p>Annual Report. Beggars Lane – via social media.</p>	
15.	<p><u>Matters for District and County Councillors</u></p> <p>For KCC: as set out in Cllr Ogden's conversation with Cllr Chard of 3 March (see above).</p> <p>For SDC: updates on the situation on Leisure Centres: Cllr Maskell to provide introduction to funding expertise in SDC.</p>	
16.	<p><u>Further matters for consideration at the next meeting</u></p> <p>None.</p>	
17.	<p><u>Date of next meeting</u></p> <p>Monday 15th May 2023 – Annual Council Meeting</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>	
18.	<p><u>Staff Bonus</u></p> <p>Cllr Sheen reported that F&GP recommend the Staf Bonus to Council for payment in accordance with the new salary arrangements. This was</p>	

	approved.	
	<p>Cllr Ogden thanked Cllrs for their hard work and support over the term of this Council and was confident that the next Council would carry forward work begun in the last four years</p> <p>Cllr Boyle thanked Cllr Ogden for her leadership of the Council.</p>	

The meeting was concluded at 9.20 pm

Minutes confirmed as a correct record:

Chairman