

MINUTES OF the 309th MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER
ON THURSDAY 29 OCTOBER 2015 at 8.00PM

Present: Cllr Mitchell in the Chair David Allison – Clerk to the Council

Cllrs Baldwin, Brand, Greenman, Hobbs, Hollands, Kaur, Ridley, Saxon, and Wynne-Jones

Voting Members: 10 reducing to 9 during item CC1534/15.

Not Present: Cllrs Kataria and Vassiliou.

Public: 3

CC1526/15 Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Bains, Edmunds, Gallagher and Taft.

CC1527/15 Declarations of Interest by Members

Registrable non-pecuniary interests were declared by Cllr Greenman and Cllr Mitchell on Agenda item CC1533.1/15 Annual Subscriptions (Croxley Green Society).

CC1528/15 Representations from the Public

Representations were made by a representative of the Croxley Green Society on Agenda item CC1533.1/15 Annual Subscriptions, Croxley Green Society. The representative referred to the Societies' Renewal Subscription that had been submitted to the Council and had been circulated to Councillors with the Agenda.

The representative stated that he hoped that the Subscription Renewal provided sufficient information for the Council about the Society and its work in regard to The Revels and Croxfest which they organise with volunteer labour. It was advised that the Society has a Constitution and that their accounts can be made available once they have been signed off.

The representative commented that the costs for The Revels and Croxfest is about £29,000 and in the case of The Revels it is probably the only opportunity that local clubs, societies and other good causes have each year of raising funds via their stalls to self-generate income.

The representative stated that the funding via Subscription from the Parish Council is integral to organising and running the events. It was pointed out that there was approximately £15,000 held in reserves which represented about 50% of the operational costs.

Another representative stated that if there were not sufficient funds held this would seriously compromise whether such events could actually be organised.

The Chairman thanked those making representations and proposed that the Agenda item CC1533.1/15 dealing with the Croxley Green Society subscription be moved up the Agenda. The proposal was agreed.

CC1533.1/15 To discuss and agree as appropriate the Council's annual Subscription to outside bodies for 2016-17

Part Agenda Item Croxley Green Society Subscription (£5,500). The Chairman

introduced this item and asked Members for comment. It was stated that the events do an immense good for the community and provides a very positive image for Croxley Green and the Parish Council.

Comment was made about how complete the Renewal Subscription had been in providing background information but concern was expressed about the request for future funding rather than just the budget year the Council would be progressing in the following months.

A Member expressed concern that the chart showing income versus expenditure was not a balance sheet. The Clerk pointed out that during Representations from the Public, the Society had offered to provide the accounts once certified and these would then be circulated to all Members for their information.

A Member pointed out that the Society has a significant reserve and rhetorically asked what would the Council do if another organisation approached the Council for a Grant with such reserve funds?

It was pointed out that there is a gap between funds held in reserve and operational costs for the events and it towards the operation costs the subscription contributes. It was added that the events play an important part in Croxley Green each year and should be supported.

Clarification was required in regard to whether the Council were being asked to agree to the subscription for 2016-17 now or whether the Council is just including the subscription figure at this time. The Clerk clarified that the Council would be agreeing to include the figure in the Budget which, along with all other budgets, would be set in January 2016 when determining the Precept. A recorded vote was requested. Those in favour for including £5,500 in the Councils Subscription budget were Cllrs Baldwin, Hobbs, Hollands, Kaur, Saxon and Wynne-Jones. Cllr Brand abstained. There were no Cllrs against the motion and Cllrs Greenman and Mitchell did not vote having previously declared a non-pecuniary interest.

Resolved:

- That £5,500 for the Croxley Green Society subscription for 2016-17 be included in the Council 2016-17 budgeting process.

CC1529/15 Minutes

Resolved:

- That the Minutes of the 308th monthly meeting of the Council held on Thursday 24 September 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

CC1530/15 Matters Arising

CC1516.2/15 re EA1140/15 Proposed TRDC Public Space Protection Order. The Clerk was asked whether there was any further information on this matter. The Clerk advised that nothing further had come to his attention.

CC1521/15 Neighbourhood Plan and Community Plan Update. It was asked which businesses had turned up for the meeting in September. It was stated that James Estate Agents, Sports Shop Croxley, Standard Tandoori and Londis (Baldwins Lane) had attended the meeting.

(Post meeting note: The Minutes of the Council meeting of 24 September stated three businesses had attended whilst it states above that four businesses attended. The difference is that one of the businesses is owned by a serving Parish Councillor who attended the meeting and was therefore not included in the wider context of third party businesses attending the meeting).

CC1513/15 Representations from the Public. A Councillor queried why the background concerning the VE/VJ Commemorative service budget item had been raised by a Member of the public at the last Council meeting. The Councillor said that meetings had been held to discuss the service but there had been no answer to emails or calls so it was subsequently decided that a concert should be arranged

instead.

The Chairman said that the representations had been made in regard to what had been reported at a previous meeting but as the situation is now history there was not much point in discussing the matter further.

CC1531/15 Committee Reports

CC1531.1/15 Environment and Amenity Committee held on Tuesday 1 September 2015

It was reported that the Environment and Amenity Committee meeting of the 6 October had been cancelled due to it being inquorate and therefore the Minutes of the previous meeting had not been signed off as a record of that meeting.

CC1531.2/15 Matters Arising

There was no Report to consider, see above.

CC1531.3/15 Planning and Development Committee held on Wednesday 2 September and 16 September 2015

Resolved:

- That the Minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on Wednesday 2 September and 16 September 2015 be adopted as reports of the meetings.

CC1531.4/15 Any matters arising

PD2584/15 Highways and Road Safety. The road accident statistics would be circulated to Members.

CC1531.5/15 Finance and Administration Committee of Thursday 10 September 2015

Resolved:

- That the Minutes of the Finance and Administration Committee held on Thursday 10 September 2015 be adopted as a report of the meeting.

CC1531.6/15 Matters Arising

FA1105/15 Monthly Accounts/Schedule of Payments, Community Bus (Acct Code 4702/107). It was asked whether the number of passengers using the service had been placed on the Council's web site yet. The Clerk advised that he had now re-organised the spreadsheet to summarise on the website but at present there are 15 weeks of missing data and it would be misleading to put the figures up until the missing figures are known. The Clerk added that he was waiting for one of the bus volunteer helpers to return from holiday to obtain the figures.

CC1532/15 Internal Audit Report (Interim) for the year ending 31 March 2016

The Chairman introduced this item and asked the Clerk to elaborate.

The Clerk advised that he was pleased to report that no significant issues or concerns had been identified.

The Clerk continued that the Auditor had proffered advice on two matters. The first related to continuity documentation in the absence of the Clerk for any length of time. The Clerk stated some of this type of information is already in existence but the Auditor was thinking more in the way of a simple guide tracking what happens to an invoice from receipt to it being signed off at the Finance and Administration Committee meeting. The Clerk added that he would prepare such a document.

The second advice from the Auditor was in relation to Procurement as a result of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 that came into force on 1 April 2015. The Regulations place a de minimus of £25,000 on tendering and sets out the use of the Contract Finder and 'light touch' provisions on contracts over £25,000. The Clerk advised that our current Standing Orders already used the de minimus of £25,000 for tendering but NALC have issued guidelines to the Regulations in which they take the

view that Council's may reasonably decide to exempt contracts falling below £25,000 from their Standing Orders entirely. The Clerk commented that this had been brought to Members attention for information at this stage and that he didn't think this was a matter for debate at this meeting other than to respond to the Auditor that the Council will review this matter when Standing Orders are reviewed.

It was commented that again the Council had received an extremely good audit report and the Clerk was thanked for his efforts.

Resolved:

- that the Internal Audit Report is noted.

At this point the Chairman proposed that Agenda item CC1534/15 be brought forward to before the discussion on budgets (item CC1533/15). It was further proposed that the Agenda item CC1535/15, Council Website Update, also be brought forward and taken as the next item with budgets left to the end of the meeting. This proposal was agreed.

CC1535/15 Council Website Update

The Chairman introduced this item and asked the Clerk to elaborate.

The Clerk advised that development of the site was proceeding well and KVA Digital had given permission to go into the development site to show Members how the website is taking shape. The Clerk proceeded to demonstrate the website on screen and went through the features and site navigation tabs.

The Clerk emphasised that what was being seen on screen was the development version and menus were expanded for ease of development and this would not be the case on the final site.

The website was well received by Members and helpful comments made about potential hyper linking aspects within the site to which consideration would be given particularly once the site had been fully populated and potential links could be identified for ease of navigation. This was particularly in the context of viewing Council Agendas and any Supporting Papers.

The Clerk did comment that with the Content Management System being used other features could be developed in the future to add to the site but additional funding would be required to do so.

The Clerk also highlighted that new and additional script would need to be written and would like the help from Councillors in doing this. It was added that the content of the site could be easily updated or added to and the request for script and web material was not just a 'one off' request but an ongoing request for input to keep the site up to date with pertinent information.

The matter of testing was raised and the Clerk would establish how best Councillors can become involved in that prior to the site going live.

CC1534/15 Joint Parish Councils Annual Meeting with TRDC

The Chairman introduced this item and commented that the meeting was very positive in regard to a number of issues.

The Chairman continued that in relation to land transfer TRDC were willing to discuss the matter and that the current land values as used in their annual accounts would be made available.

The Chairman then explained about the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which supersedes the S106 arrangements that developers have to pay towards infrastructure. It was pointed out that without a Neighbourhood Plan the Parish Council would be entitled to 15% of the developers CIL payment but with a Neighbourhood Plan this rises to 25%. It was emphasised that there are certain rules about what the funds can be spent on and detailed accounting records would need to be kept. At present there was nothing in the pipeline that the Council would immediately benefit

from in regard to CIL payments and such payments are more into the future. The Chairman stated however, that the Council should begin its thinking as to where such payments could be deployed.

[At this point Cllr Brand left the meeting].

CC1533/15

Projects / Budget Items 2015-16

The Chairman introduced this matter and referred to the Annual Subscriptions Agenda item CC1533.1/15 to complete the discussions on this aspect before moving to the wider aspect of the Budget.

The Clerk went through the remainder of the other Annual Subscriptions on screen, the details of which had been circulated with the Agenda. The Clerk stated that he considered that one item could now be removed from the list namely the Direct Information Service (£90) as information was now available through other sources. This would reduce the Annual Subscription budget (including the subscription to the Croxley Green Society) to £7,346.21.

Resolved:

- that the Annual Subscriptions figure of £7,346.21 be included in the Council's budget for 2016-17.

The Chairman then introduced the main budget and asked the Clerk to elaborate. The Clerk presented the budget on screen (v3 dated 16 October 2015) and advised that the 2016-17 budget had been populated with existing figures for Members guidance and these would need to be reviewed. The Clerk added there was one new figure that had been included and that being in respect of recruitment. The Clerk advised that all being well it was his intention to retire during the budget year under discussion so it would be prudent for the Council to include recruitment costs for a new Clerk.

The Clerk reminded Members that budget proposals would need to be submitted by the end of November.

Members noted the budget position.

The Chairman then stated that he wanted to undertake a mini brainstorming session to get ideas generated for future projects. The Chairman explained that there is no explanation required in putting forward ideas but one or two word topics would be written down on a flip chart under the headings of the Community Plan.

The brainstorming took place and the detail is attached as Appendix A to these Minutes.

CC1536/15

Closure

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.52pm.

Council Meeting 29 October 2015

Ideas Generation Session under CC1533/15 Budgets 2016-17

(headings represent those in the Community Plan – items not in any priority order)

Environment & Green Spaces

Litter bins
Nectar oasis
Pond + Environmental unit
Woodland Management in second Village
 Green & existing woods
Masonry Bees
Trees re-planting (street trees)
Overgrown lanes maintenance

Leisure & Recreation

3 mile road race
Great Croxley Green Pub Pram Race
Information Boards – stones Orchard
Village Hall
Playing fields
Pop up coffee shops at recreation areas
Access to school swimming pool
Access to new school facilities
Deck chairs on Green
Physical Notice Board
Village map board
Croxley Green station lift access
Library use

Built Environment

New Council offices

Business & Commerce

Communications with business'
Café / continental (street tables/chairs)
Business/organisations sponsorship of events

Transport & Road Safety

Traffic flow on roads in Croxley
Parking
Traffic congestion on A412
Speeding
Parking management re rail link

Safe Society

Funding of PCSOs
Village CCTV

Health

2x defibrillators
Ask blood transfusion service to increase hours