

Full Council Meeting

Thursday 27 March 2025

Agenda Item CC2595/25

Transfer of ownership responsibilities of the Croxley Green History Project Website

Introduction

Councillors decided at the Full Council meeting on the 25 July 2019 to setup a formal working partnership between the Parish Council (PC) and Croxley Green History Project (CGHP) for the purpose of transferring the ownership responsibilities of the CGHP website to the PC. Following the decision a Working Group was formed, and Terms of References were also agreed at the Full Council meeting on the 28 November 2019. However, for some reason discussions between the PC and CGHP were stopped at that time.

In February 2025, representatives of the CGHP have approached the PC to restart the discussions associated with the transfer of the ownership which resulted in a meeting between CGHP and the PC in the beginning of March 2025.

Discussion

Following the meeting on the 4 March 2025, CGHP has sent a document (Appendix 1) outlining the reasons of the transfer request, risks and responsibilities, and the benefits for both organizations.

Recommendation

That, the Parish Council agree to transfer the ownership responsibilities of the CGHP website.

Dimitrisz Sopsisz
Clerk to the Council
March 2025

APPENDIX 1

Our request: for ownership of the History Project (CGHP) website / domain to be transferred to the Parish Council.

In a bid to future proof the CGHP domain and the website we'd like to explore the possibility of transferring the custody of the website from an individual to a custodian organisation which has a permanent and prominent position within Croxley Green.

Background: The CGHP website is a prized community asset that was, originally, an initiative of the Residents' Association (CGRA) and the CGHP website was built under the wing of the CGRA. It has become one of the foremost local history websites in the country and offers educational and genealogical value.

In order that the CGRA could concentrate on its core aims (campaigning and supporting local residents on local issues) the CGHP was, in 2019, made into an independently constituted organisation, one that has enjoyed a close relationship with the Parish Council (PC). The CGRA chair and secretary agreed to assume similar roles in the CGHP for the first year in order to kickstart the CGHP as an independent organisation. However, the website domain (provided by Weebly) remains registered in the personal name of CGHP Secretary - Tony Munroe - and the bi-annual subscription payment of approx. £60 is paid out of Tony's personal bank account - subsequently refunded by the CGHP.

CGHP / CGRA chairman's remarks: The CGHP website is a magnificent repository of Croxley Green local history information; articles & essays; photographs; interviews and memories that catalogues and charts the growth of Croxley Green from early beginnings to the present. It reflects well on our community in showing how CG is a great place in which to live, work and play. In the 6 years since its inception as an independent group the CGHP has enjoyed a close relationship with the PC and the CGRA and together we have helped to cement that sense of community that is disappearing from so many communities.

Responsibilities and risks: Our small group of volunteers would like to install a far greater sense of permanence for the website by asking the PC if it will become its custodian. What does custodian mean? Responsibility? Yes - and, of course, that goes hand and with "risk" - R & R!

Financial R&R in that the PC will be responsible for paying the biannual subscription fee (around £60) and annual website domain address (£10 & can be renewed for 1 up to 9 years. Subscription can be set on auto renewal with the platform provider - Weebly.com - a low risk.

Content R&R - you'll want to ensure website content is aligned with PC principles and standards. PC officers / councillors will not be required to create content (unless they want to). Content will be provided by, or via, the CGHP members. How content is placed on the website is a process we can mutually agree upon. Input if content is occasional - not a regular or onerous task - low risk?

What's in it for:-

A) the Parish Council?

Association with one of the country's leading local history websites and further demonstration of the close links within Croxley Green between those local organisations that have our community at the forefront of everything they do.

Further increase in the positive profile of the PC.

B) CGHP - closer integration with the PC. We can combine resources to attract more volunteers; content; awareness and, possibly, funding for future projects.

Further increase the positive profile of the CGHP - which will further help open up working with other groups locally and beyond. Examples: schools, churches and, for example, when Ben from the Community Centre helped with the WW1 centenary.

If, for any reason, no further content was to be put onto the website the site would remain as a source of a huge wealth of material that has important local historical value.

Key points:

- This will safeguard and preserve the wealth of data (local history) on the website. We hope councillors consider having the PC as custodian of the website meets some of the council's key strategic goals.
- The CGHP website is completely separate from the PC website.
- The CGHP and the PC have a close working relationship and both consider the CGHP website to be a valuable community asset.
- The CGHP comprises a small number of dedicated local historians. However, the chairman and secretary of the group have predominantly administrative / constitutional roles and are primarily focused on their other roles as chairman and secretary of the CGRA. Both will remain as members of the CGHP committee.
- Members of the CGHP will continue to create content in preparation for uploading onto the website. There will be no responsibility for creating content placed upon Parish councillors or officers.
- The Parish Council and CGHP will determine between them how new content will be uploaded onto the website.
- Uploading of content is not a regular or onerous task.
- Management of physical documents and artifacts will remain the responsibility of the CGHP.
- Many of the local events organised by or participated in by the PC overlap closely with the work of the CGHP.