

CROXLEY GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER ON TUESDAY 19 MARCH 2013

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

Cllrs Edmunds, Isard-Brown, Jordan, Martin, Seeley, Shafe, Vane and Wynne-Jones

Voting Members: 9

Not Present: Cllrs Brand and Getkahn

Members of the Public: 0

CC1196/13/S Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Baldwin, Brading, Dann, Mitchell and Ridley.

CC1197/13/S Declarations of Interest by Members

The Chairman recommended that any declarations of interest be made, if necessary, throughout the meeting.

CC1198/13/S Representations from the Public

There were no representations from the public.

CC1199/13/S Councillor Conduct

The Chairman introduced this matter and stated that Cllr Ridley had stated to the Clerk that he would not be attending this meeting. The Chairman stated that following the meeting in November last year when the matter of Councillor conduct was discussed, Council had agreed that if the behaviour of Cllr Ridley continued in terms of breaching the Code of Conduct and the Council's policies, procedures and protocols, further motion(s) would be brought to a (Part 1) public session of Council to determine what further action should be taken. The Chairman made it clear that this was the purpose of this meeting and it was very unfortunate that Cllr Ridley had decided not to attend the meeting to express his views.

In response to a question, the Chairman stated that in accordance with the Council's decision in November 2012 Cllr Ridley's official Council email address had now been withdrawn. The Chairman added that when this action was taken by the Clerk in accordance with Council's agreed action, Cllr Ridley phoned the Clerk to request a copy of his Contract and Job Description together with all those of his staff. It was pointed out that such action could be considered intimidating, harassing and bullying behaviour by Cllr Ridley which is unacceptable given the Council's duty to consider the welfare of its staff.

The Chairman added that Cllr Ridley had requested another email address to be used for him but this was not actioned as it would not be an email address through which official Council business could be conducted.

It was pointed out by a number of Cllrs that Cllr Ridley has continued his gratuitous and cavalier behaviour and has continued to make false accusations, alleged claims of irregularities and potentially libellous comments and his behaviour had gone beyond the limits of acceptability.

It was further pointed out that a considerable amount of time of Councillors, the Clerk and staff had been wasted and Cllr Ridley's attitude was both unprofessional and unbecoming for a public servant.

It was commented that Cllr Ridley had a pernicious and pestilent approach and appeared to be intent on endeavouring to bring the Council into disrepute and undermine all the good work done by Councillors and the staff. It was pointed out that it was regrettable that the efforts that Cllr Ridley put into his actions was not put into constructive measures for the benefit of the community.

RESOLVED:

- That Cllr Ridley is not removed from the Environment & Amenity Committee;
- That Cllr Ridley is banned from entering the Council building except to attend the Environment & Amenity Committee and Council meetings;
- That Cllr Ridley is considered a habitual and vexatious complainant.

The Council then considered the way in which the Council's Habitual and Vexatious policy would be applied.

RESOLVED:

- That Cllr Ridley is restricted to one medium of contact with the Council which is to be in writing only (paper);
- That Cllr Ridley's point of contact for written correspondence is restricted to the Chairman and Clerk only;
- That Cllr Ridley is expected to follow the Code of Conduct and the Council's Policies, procedures and protocols;
- That a review of the position be undertaken in 6 months time.
- That a simultaneous Press Release be issued with the Minutes and a letter to Cllr Ridley.

CC1200/13/S

PART 2

Resolved:

- That the meeting proceeds to a confidential, Part 2 discussion.

CC1200.1/13/S

Complaint about a Councillor

The Clerk reminded Members that as this is now a Part 2 confidential discussion that under no circumstances is the discussion to be placed, copied, emailed or otherwise transmitted, passed or communicated with the public or the press.

This matter was introduced by the Chairman who referred to the Strictly Confidential attachment that had been circulated to Councillors only.

Following a discussion it was proposed and agreed that certain actions be taken.

CC1201/13/S

Closure

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.34pm.