

# CROXLEY GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF the 292<sup>nd</sup> MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER ON THURSDAY 30 JANUARY 2014

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

Cllrs Baldwin, Bennett (arrived at 8.11pm), Brading, Brand, Dann, Edmunds, Jordan, Ridley and Shafe

Voting Members: 10 rising to 11 at 8.11pm

Not Present: Cllr Vane.

Members of the Public: 0

### CC1307/14 Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Martin, Getkahn, Isard-Brown, Seeley and Wynne-Jones.

### CC1308/14 Declarations of Interest by Members

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

The Clerk reminded Members that the general dispensation granted last year to all Members who have a disclosable pecuniary interest in setting the Precept remains in place. The Clerk continued, however, that amended guidance had been issued by the HMG Department for Communities and Local Government in March 2013 regarding disclosable personal interest in the matter of setting the Precept by Members living in the area. The advice clearly stated that a Member does not have a disclosable pecuniary interest as a homeowner or tenant.

### CC1309/14 Representations from the Public

There were no members of the public present.

### CC1310/14 Minutes

The Clerk advised that an amendment needs to be made on the Minutes under Agenda item CC1293/13 second paragraph. The Clerk pointed out that under the Representations from the Public reference was made to the amount of subscription to Croxley Green Society being initially fixed at £1 per head of population. In fact this should read "initially fixed at £1 per household". The Minutes were amended accordingly.

#### **Resolved:**

- That the amended Minutes of the 291<sup>st</sup> monthly meeting of the Council held on Thursday 19 December 2013 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

### CC1311/14 Matters Arising

CC1301/14 (Land Acquisition Group). A Councillor asked why the Guild of Sport leased land was not mentioned in the Minutes. It was pointed out that the Minutes were not a verbatim report of the official content of the meeting with Three Rivers District Council and indeed would not take account of any aside comment(s) that may have been made either in or outside the meeting.

CC1312/14 Committee Reports

CC1312.1/14 Environment and Amenity Committee held on 3 December 2013

**Resolved:**

- That the Minutes of the Environment and Amenity Committee meeting held on 3 December 2013 be adopted as a report of the meetings.

Councillor Bennett arrived at this point (8.11pm) increasing voting numbers from 10 to 11.

CC1312.2/14 Any matters arising

A Councillor enquired why a member of the public who had made representations appeared to be dictating to the Council what it should be doing. In reply it was pointed out the individual making the representations was expressing his view which he was quite entitled to do and it is for Council to make of it what they will. It was also commented that if the Councillor raising this matter had an issue about it, it would be more appropriate to attend the Croxley Green Residents Association and express his views there directly.

The Chairman at this point commented that there were no Committee Reports for the Planning and Development Committee meetings previously held as the Committee had not at this time signed the Minutes of the meetings.

CC1312.3/14 Finance and Administration Committee held Thursday 12 December 2013

**Resolved:**

- That the Minutes of the Finance and Administration Committee held on Thursday 12 December 2013 be adopted as a report of the meeting.

CC1312.4/14 Any matters arising

It was asked whether the Grant to the Croxley Green Mummings would be coming out of Reserves to which the Clerk stated that this would be the case if needed as virement from the budget had been agreed. The Clerk confirmed that to date no receipts for new/replacement costumes had been received.

CC1313/14 Budget and Precept 2014/15

The Chairman introduced this item and asked the Clerk to elaborate. The Clerk stated that the discussions would be based on the draft Budget schedule version 7 issued with the Minutes of the Finance and Administration Committee meeting on 9 January 2014.

The Clerk stated that on the version 7 schedule it showed the draft Precept as £267,578 taking into account the Grant from TRDC but this grant will be less in the 2015/16 (assuming TRDC decide to allocate it) and no grant in 2016/17. The Clerk continued that he had undertaken a further review of the budget and if the Council wish to continue with the current levels of spending for services/facilities for the residents and without reducing the services/projects etc, the shortfalls created by the TRDC grant will have to be progressively recovered. There was also concurrently, a shortfall in the level of the Reserves that the Council should have (by some £46,000) so Council need to be conscious of this fact too.

The Clerk stated that there will be an estimated shortfall in budgeted expenditure of some £30,000 on overall employments costs for not having a second Ranger and normally this shortfall would go into Reserves which would help considerably. However, the Clerk was recommending given what had been said about the shortfall in Reserves, that £8,000 be included in the budget from Reserves with the remainder of spending shortfalls going to

Reserves.

The Clerk presented on screen the effect of this which showed that there would be a Precept of £259,578 but with natural growth due to the increase in the Tax Base the net effect is a 3.05% increase (+£7,564). The Clerk added that the printing company for the Parish Pump magazine had now confirmed that they will hold the cost at the same level as the current year so the budget provision for printing can be reduced accordingly from a budget of £5,000 to £3,400.

The Clerk showed the effect of this change which would be that the Precept became £257,978 and with natural growth due to the increase in the Tax Base the net effect is a 2.4% increase (+£5,964). The Band 'D' equivalent would go from £46.52 this year to £47.62 an increase of £1.10.

Members considered that this was a reasonable approach. A Cllr asked whether it is appropriate to include the cost of a plaque for the Jubilee oak tree at this stage and whether that should wait until the tree is more settled. It was commented that as the tree has been planted it should have the appropriate plaque as soon as possible.

It was also asked about the budget provision for the 'Killingdown Farm' pond but it was pointed out that Council had modified the original budget proposal so that it was a more generic provision for ponds rather than just focused on one.

There being no other comments the Chairman proposed that the Precept be set at £257,978 and Budget be set at £275,587 and the proposal was seconded. A recorded vote was requested. Those for the proposal were Cllrs Baldwin, Bennett, Brading, Dann, Edmunds, Jordan, Mitchell and Shafe. Those against the proposal were Cllr Brand and Ridley.

**Resolved:**

- That the precept for 2014/15 be set at £257,978;
- That the Council's Budget for 2014/15 be set at £275,587

CC1314/14

Closure

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.33pm.