

CROXLEY GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF the 286th MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER
ON THURSDAY 4 JULY 2013

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

Cllrs Brading, Brand, Getkahn, Isard-Brown, Jordan, Seeley, Shafe and Vane

Not Present: Cllr Ridley

Voting Members: 9

Members of the Public: 6

CC1224/13 Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Baldwin, Bennett, Dann, Edmunds, Martin and Wynne-Jones.

CC1225/13 Declarations of Interest by Members

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

CC1226/13 Representations from the Public

Representations were made by the Croxley Green Residents' Association in respect of Agenda Item CC1236/13 (S137 Grant Application). It was stated that Croxley Green is rich in history and the History Project would be a web based community resource that would capture this history to form a digital archive of local photos and film with input from residents. Once established, the archive would assist school children and others to access and study the local history. The Grant Application request was to support this project in that one of the main costs is the scanning of material that would be used on the site.

Another resident commented that having a digital archive as proposed would be a great asset to those interested in and researching the history of Croxley as at present the only way to achieve this would be by visiting a considerable number of different establishments to look at any archives they may have.

The Chairman of the meeting thanked those making representations and proposed to Members that the Agenda Item CC1236/13 be brought forward in accordance with Standing Orders. The proposal was seconded and agreed.

CC1236/13 S137 Grant Application

The Chairman introduced this matter and asked Councillors for their views. It was considered that this was an excellent idea particularly as was pointed out that at the moment people have to a host of different sites to get information on the history of Croxley Green.

One Cllr opposed the Grant application and considered that the Residents Association should undertake fund raising to get the necessary finance to proceed with the project. It was pointed out to the Councillor that the Grant request was for 50% of the monies needed and that the remaining balance would be from fund raising and from the Residents' Association themselves.

Given the general consensus of Cllrs views in support of the project the Chairman proceeded to put the matter to a vote. A Cllr requested a recorded vote. Those in favour of granting £500 for this project were Cllrs Getkahn, Brading, Isard-Brown, Jordan, Mitchell, Seeley, Shafe and Vane. Those against the grant was Cllr Brand.

RESOLVED

- That £500 be granted to the Residents' Association for the development of a web based history archive of Croxley Green.

- CC1227/13 Minutes
Resolved:
- That the Minutes of the 285th monthly meeting of the Council held on Thursday 25 April 2013 be approved and signed by the Chairman.
- CC1228/13 Matters Arising
There were no matters arising.
- CC1229/13 Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting
The Clerk advised that in accordance with good practice the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting should be signed off at the earliest opportunity following the meeting. The Clerk added that any matters arising will be addressed at the next Annual Parish Meeting.
Resolved:
- That the Minutes and the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 25 April 2013 be approved and signed by the Chairman.
- CC1230/13 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
The Clerk advised that in accordance with good practice the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting should be signed off at the earliest opportunity following the meeting. The Clerk added that any matters arising will be addressed at the next Annual General Meeting.
Resolved:
- That the Minutes and the Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 9 May 2013 be approved and signed by the Chairman.
- CC1231/13 Committee Reports
- CC1231.1/13 Environment and Amenity Committee Tuesday 2 April 2013
Resolved:
- It was noted that the Environment and Amenity meeting scheduled for 2 April 2013 was cancelled.
- CC1231.2/13 Planning and Development Committee held on Wednesday 1 May and Wednesday 15 May 2013
Resolved:
- That the Minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on Wednesday 1 May and Wednesday 15 May 2013 be adopted as reports of the meetings.
- CC1231.3/13 Any matters arising
There were no matters arising.
- CC1231.4/13 Finance and Administration Committee held Thursday 9 May 2013
Resolved:
- That the Minutes of the Finance and Administration Committee held on Thursday 9 May 2013 be adopted as a report of the meeting.

CC1231.5/13

Any matters arising

There were no matters arising.

CC1232/13

Annual Accounts 2012/13 – External Audit

The Chairman introduced this matter and asked the Clerk to elaborate. The Clerk advised that unfortunately the Annual Return has not as yet been received back from the external auditor so this matter will have to be deferred until a further meeting.

The Clerk did advise, however, that the external auditor has received some queries from an elector and that the external auditor would be charging the Council £117 per hour to deal with the matter.

It was pointed out that the issues raised are not new to this Council and included matters such as the Membership Subscription to the Croxley Green Society and in this context the auditor had requested a copy of all Councillors Declaration of Interests forms. The other queries raised were in the context of tendering on a number of items.

It was pointed out that as these matters were not new to the Council, there should be a very robust reply to the auditor and in particular to emphasise that the Council is not bound to accept the cheapest service or supplier. It was added that the Council have behaved responsibly and the challenge was most regrettable particularly as it will be funded from taxpayers monies.

CC1233/13

Internal Audit Report for the year ending 31 March 2013

The Chairman introduced this item and asked the Clerk to elaborate. The Clerk advised that yet again the Council had received a very good internal audit report. The Clerk added that the internal auditor had made two recommendations, one of which had been addressed at the time of the auditor's visit. The second item referred a matter which had been reported to Council on 29 November 2012 following the auditor's interim visit.

The Clerk referred to Minute CC1154/12 (29 November 2012) in which it stated that the Report refers to several cheques issued in and dated September in the August Cashbook. The Clerk said that the invoices for those cheques were indeed dated August and therefore correctly shown in the August cashbook but the cashbook has picked up the entry date of the invoices onto the accounts system in September for authorisation at the September Finance & Administration Committee meeting. The Clerk added that in practice and for reasons of efficiency all invoices are bulk input prior to preparing the monthly accounts for the Finance & Administration Committee meeting. The Clerk continued that in this particular case the August invoices, allocated to month 5, August, were input on 11 September prior to the Finance meeting on 13 September but the entry date of September was picked up rather than the August invoice date.

Resolved:

- that the end of year internal report is noted and the Clerk drafts an appropriate response to the Internal Auditor.

CC1234/13

Electoral Review of TRDC – Draft Recommendations

The Chairman introduced this item advising the Boundary Commission were proposing only two wards in Croxley Green, one called 'Croxleyhall Wood Ward' and the other 'Durrants Ward'.

Members agreed that the two ward solution was appropriate and it was commented that with few exceptions, electors polling districts would not have to change. However, Cllrs did not think that the 'Croxleyhall Wood Ward' name was appropriate as Croxleyhall Woods are at the southern end of the Ward is only a small part of Croxley Green and would properly have little significance to those in the middle or north of the new enlarged Ward area.

It was considered that this Ward should be called 'Dickinson Ward' as this would reflect the heritage of Croxley Green given its past history of Dickinson Paper Mill.

Resolved:

- That the Clerk writes to the Boundary Commission expressing the Council view that the Croxleyhall Wood Ward should be called Dickinson Ward.

CC1235/13

Review of Bank Signatory Authorisation and Debit/Credit Card for the Council's Bank Account

The Chairman introduced this item and asked the Clerk to elaborate. The Clerk advised that following resolution of Council at its Annual General Meeting on 9 May that a credit/debit card be obtained for use with the Council's business bank account, the Clerk had spoken with the bank. The bank advised that because the account currently requires any two of the authorised signatories to authorise payments it would not be possible to issue a card that required only one authorised person. The bank advised that the requirement for two authorised signatories would have to be changed to only one. The Clerk added that should Council decide to agree to this change, the current internal procedures that require two authorised signatories for cheque payments would remain in place and accordingly in this respect the Council's Standing Orders and Finance Regulations would not need to be modified.

Cllrs were surprised that the bank was being unhelpful although it was noted they had offered a possible solution. Cllrs considered that it was essential that a card is obtained so that the staff or other Cllrs did not have to use their personal cards in pursuance of Council business.

Resolved:

- That Council authorises the Clerk to change the authorised signatory requirement to one authorised person and to obtain a debit / credit card for use with the Council's business bank account;
- That the Clerk is given delegated authority to a maximum of £500 on the card unless a purchase of larger value has been specifically authorised by Council or the Finance and Administration Committee;
- That any queries regarding obtaining the debit / credit card are delegated to the Clerk and the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Council to ensure that a card is obtained as soon as possible.

CC1236/13

S137 Grant Application

This item was discussed after CC1226/13 Representation from the Public – see above.

CC1237/13

The Parish Councils' Charities for 2013/14

The Chairman introduced this item and invited suggestions from Cllr as to what charities should be supported for the year 2013/14.

The following charities were put forward:

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children;

Help for Heroes;

Stroke Association/Club (local branch);

Hew Hope Trust;

Herts Young Homeless;

Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre;

Gray Cancer Institute Centre, Mount Vernon Hospital.

The Chairman stated that these were very laudable causes.

Resolved:

- that further research be undertaken by those putting the charities forward to brief Council so that an informed decision can be taken at the next meeting.

CC1238/13

The Croxley Guild of Sports

This item had been withdrawn from the Agenda on Monday 24 June 2013.

CC1239/13

Rickmansworth School Swimming Pool

The Chairman introduced this item and advised that the work on the pool will start in the summer and it is planned to have it open for January 2014.

The Chairman added that they have most of the money required for the works but have a further bid into Sport England for funds to carry out more work and they are hoping to hear about this in mid July.

The Chairman continued that Rickmansworth School have met with all the swimming clubs to inform them of their plans.

The Chairman said that he had expressed the Council's view that we were very keen to see some form of public access. They are seriously considering access to the public at certain times, and this includes the use of the sports facilities. They have advised that the pool will be made available to community groups and national governing body affiliated clubs who wish to facilitate swimming and other aquatic activities for members of the public. In this situation all groups will complete a letting agreement with the school and the school will not staff these sessions. This access will be provided outside of school hours, which includes the need of the PE department for after school clubs.

CC1240/13

Village Centre Project

The Chairman introduced this item and asked Cllr Jordan to elaborate. Cllr Jordan stated that the outcome of the pre-feasibility study was presented at the Annual Parish Meeting and the project was now at a point where decisions need to be made to progress to a feasibility stage.

Cllr Jordan added there was now need for wider consultation in particular and of a priority with members of the Croxley Green Community Association and with other stakeholders as to their expectations from the project. Cllr Jordan added that the Community Association need further points of information clarified which may require a little more work for the architect.

Cllr Jordan concluded that the village centre project together with the Land Acquisition Working Group and the Community Plan all were inter-related which would in the fullness of time develop into a Neighbourhood Plan for Croxley Green.

A Cllr enquired as to where the money for such a project would come from but it was pointed out that this is a matter much further down the line as at this point the project is still only at a concept stage.

It was pointed out that the village does need new and better facilities to meet the increasing demand on the existing infrastructure and growing population in Croxley.

CC1241/13

Community Plan

The Chairman introduced this item and asked Cllr Jordan to elaborate. Cllr Jordan stated that the survey results were now on the Council's web site and there is also a link to it from the Croxley Green Residents' Association web site.

Cllr Jordan said that the Clerk had compiled the raw data results into booklet form and was currently arranging quotes to have it printed so that a copy can be delivered to each household as the feedback of their efforts in completing the survey.

Cllr Jordan added that there is still some expert analysis that now needs to be undertaken.

CC1242/13

Local Producers Market Initiative

The Chairman introduced this item and stated that it had planned to organise about 25 stalls for the market but in the end only 4 committed and at the very last minute two of these pulled out hence the need to cancel the market at the very last minute.

The Chairman added that it appears that the Artichoke public house were keen to hold a market which they will be organising for sometime in August.

CC1243/13

Closure

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.31pm.