



Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Thursday, 19th January 2023 at 7pm at Cuxton Library

Present: Cllr Hutchfield (Chair), Cllr Porter, Cllr Reynolds, Cllr Thorley, Cllr Wilson, Cllr Jensen, Cllr Burley and Cllr Vye.

In attendance: Mr C. Jensen, Clerk

There were no members of the public present.

159) Apologies for absence

Cllr Savage – prior engagement. Cllr White – prior engagement.
It was resolved to accept these apologies.

160) Declarations of Interest (DPI, conflict of interest and personal interests) and alterations to the Register

Agenda item 12 - Cllr Porter & Cllr Vye.

161) Minutes of the meeting held on 8th December 2022 – for approval

No amendments required.
It was resolved to accept these minutes as a true record of the meeting.

162) Matters Arising

Cllr Hutchfield advised Mr Hutchfield and Mr Reynolds had agreed to help the clerk install the basket swing. They would also consider if the broken basketball backboard should be replaced or dismantled.
The clerk advised the bootcamp invoice was now paid and all updated documentation had been provided.

Medway Councillor's report and Public Session

No report had been received but Cllr Hutchfield advised Ward Cllr Fearn had sent his apologies as he was attending a Medway Council meeting this evening. However, he confirmed the traffic loop would be re-installed on 26th January.

163) Finance

a) Bank Balances as at Statement Date 31st December 2022

Cllr Burley confirmed he had audited all transactions for November 2022. No issues had been raised.

It was resolved to accept these balances as correct.

b) Approval of payments made since the last meeting

The clerk provided Councillors with details of payments made since the last meeting. No issues were raised.

It was resolved to accept these payments as correct.

c) Approval of accounts for payment

The account from Logic related to the last payment due under the old agreement and was for work completed up to 21st December.

The clerk provided an account from Qualitrees for the purpose of confirming the amount now due was 50% of the original quotation. He would ensure when the final account was received, it was only for the remaining 50%.

It was resolved to approve these payments.

d) Recommendation from Finance Committee meeting held on 10th November 2022, regarding Court Reserve balance being transferred to Legal and Professional Fees, for discussion

The clerk apologised as this item had been omitted from the Council meeting held on 8th December. He confirmed at the Finance Committee meeting held on 10th November, it was proposed the Court Reserve balance, £24,000, be transferred to Legal and Professional Fees Reserve as the Court Reserve was not likely to be used for some time whereas the Legal and Professional Fees was used on a monthly basis for the Pavilion re-development. This transfer was recommended to full Council.

It was resolved to approve this recommendation and the clerk to attend to the transfer of balances as stated.

e) Update on BT contract

The clerk advised a new broadband contract had commenced with TalkTalk on 17th January but the three-month free payment option was not available when the clerk had contacted them to request the transfer from BT. However, the new contract still offered a significant monthly saving from the previous BT contract.

The clerk advised the Parish mobile phone contract, also with BT, had expired at the same time and a PAC code had been generated. The transfer of the existing mobile number to a SIM only contract was under consideration. Cllr Burley suggested a Pay-As-You-Go contract might be more appropriate and the clerk was tasked to make further enquiries.

f) Update on Unity Bank replacement

The clerk advised all documentation, including certified identification, had been sent to Teachers Building Society and a response was awaited to confirm the account had been opened. The clerk advised he had printed the

closure form for the Unity Bank account and Cllr Burley agreed to sign the form in addition to the clerk. Cllr Hutchfield suggested £25,000 be transferred from Unity Bank before the closure of the account form be submitted to ensure the Council had funds available in case the closure took an inordinate amount of time to complete.

It was resolved the clerk arrange the transfer of the amount stated and Cllr Thorley authorise the transaction under the two-tier system in operation.

164) Budget

a) Budgetary headings proposal for 2023/24 – for discussion

The clerk provided the budgetary heading proposals as recommended by the Finance Committee at their meeting on 10th November. Following discussion it was agreed the amount of the budget headings be approved.

It was resolved to accept this recommendation with all Councillors in favour of the proposal.

b) Precept Demand – signing of documentation for submission

At the previous Council meeting, Cllr Thorley proposed the Finance committee's recommendation to Council that the precept remain unaltered from 2022/23 and Cllr Wilson had seconded this proposal. This recommendation was approved by all Councillors.

The clerk provided documentation which was signed by Cllr's Hutchfield, Reynolds and Wilson on behalf of the Parish Council.

The clerk to forward the completed documentation to Medway Council, the unitary authority, at the earliest opportunity.

165) Flagpole in village – update

The clerk advised MHS Homes had confirmed they had no objections to the Parish Council siting a chat bench and a flagpole on their land at the bottom of James Road, subject to the Parish Council having responsibility for the upkeep and maintenance of same. Cllr Hutchfield and the clerk proposed to meet with the residents living in the vicinity to garner their views. Cllr Porter suggested this was a sensible approach and Cllr Thorley agreed as she stated it was known some residents had previous issues with chairs they had left outside their homes. Cllr Thorley stated a resident had advised that the Academy of Cuxton Schools had a flagpole previously and the clerk to determine if it was still in existence and usable. Cllr Wilson advised she had a contact from her previous employment if the school could not assist. Cllr Reynolds also suggested she would speak to a resident who might be able to help.

166) Pavilion Re-Development

a) Discussion regarding estimate for extending planning application

The clerk advised the estimate for extending the planning application had not yet been received from the project managers. Cllr Hutchfield advised the original quotation provided was £4,000 + VAT but having spoken to the project managers, it had been reduced to £3,250 + VAT. In addition, Medway Council would levy a planning extension fee of £980. Following discussion, it was decided the planning application had to be extended as a funding application could not be submitted to the Football Foundation and the project could then not move forward. In the absence of the quotation, Cllr Hutchfield asked Council for their agreement to the figures stated so that when the matter was discussed with the project managers she could advise Council's decision.

In the absence of an updated quotation, it was resolved to accept the figures provided by Cllr Hutchfield as correct. Councillors confirmed their agreement that Cllr Hutchfield confirm to the project managers they should commence the process to extend the planning application.

b) Update regarding formation of steering committee as per recommendation from Funding for All mentor

Cllr Thorley suggested further people were needed to share the workload with regards to the pavilion re-development and Cllr Hutchfield advised the first meeting of the new steering group, for this purpose, was scheduled for Tuesday 24th January. Further discussion occurred regarding the proposed ownership of the café and Cllr Thorley advised she would check the Charity Commission website in respect of previous advice provided. The clerk was requested to contact the Plunkett Foundation for further clarification. Cllr Reynolds suggested an article be added to the forthcoming newsletter requesting volunteers who might be interested in helping with the re-development project. Cllr Hutchfield advised this was in hand.

167) Terms of Reference

a) Terms of Reference (TOR) for Facilities Management Steering Group

Cllr Hutchfield advised the Terms of Reference be reviewed once the position regarding trusteeship had been clarified. Councillors agreed this was the correct course of action to be taken in the circumstances.

b) Amendment to Terms of Reference (TOR) Land Management Committee

Cllr Hutchfield advised the Terms of Reference be reviewed once the position regarding trusteeship had been clarified. Councillors agreed this was the correct course of action to be taken in the circumstances.

168) Recreation Ground

a) Algae removal in playground – update

The clerk advised, following Councillors previous concerns, he had contacted the contractor to ask for further details of the previous contract which he had

advised he had fulfilled. Unfortunately, the contractor could not provide sufficient assurances and the clerk confirmed the Council would not be employing his services. The clerk advised that Mr Hutchfield, Mr Reynolds and himself might need to spray the surfaces to clear the algae. Cllr Porter advised the clerk to contact Cuxton Gardens, who maintain the bike track, to ask if they had any suggestions. Cllr Vye confirmed what solution was used on the allotments to clear algae and would email the details to the clerk.

169) Planning

a) Winery Planning Inquiry – update

Cllr Hutchfield advised the inquiry case management meeting had been held earlier and the planning inspector identified three key issues which were discussed namely: the Green Belt; AONB and traffic safety. Cllr Hutchfield provided updates to Councillors and confirmed further clarification had been sought for providing evidence to the enquiry regarding these issues. Cllr Thorley welcomed Cllr Hutchfield's assurances that issues would not be discussed or raised at the inquiry which might result in pecuniary penalties for Cuxton Parish Council. Cllr Hutchfield advised the inquiry is scheduled to start on 21st March. Cllr Thorley raised the issue of residents' recent comments on Facebook which Cllr Hutchfield confirmed she had responded to and she also advised she had asked Medway Council Highways of the application process for an upper weight limit to be considered on Bush Road.

170) Allotment Association – Volunteer Days BBQ

The clerk advised at the previous Land Management Committee meeting a request had been received to allow BBQ's at the allotments on volunteer days. Cllr Thorley asked how many days the request covered and Cllr Porter advised it was likely to be two/three times a year. Cllr Hutchfield advised it should be made clear that BBQ's would only be allowed on volunteer days in recognition of the efforts of the volunteers and the responsibility for the safety and removal of the BBQ's would rest with members of the CAA committee.

171) Lower Thames Crossing – Registering as an Interested Party

a) Discussion regarding the formation of a steering committee for the purpose of taking CPC as an interested party forward

Cllr Porter stated the Parish Council should register as an interested party although Cllr Hutchfield advised that Cuxton fell outside of the project area but would nonetheless be impacted by the development. The clerk asked if Councillors would volunteer to be members of a steering group and following discussion, Cllrs Porter and Burley volunteered to form the steering group. Cllr Hutchfield advised an article would be placed in the forthcoming newsletter to ask for residents to volunteer to assist. In the meantime, the clerk was asked to register the Council as an interested party.

172) Reports of meetings attended on behalf of Council

a) KALC

It was confirmed a local KALC meeting had not taken place but the clerk advised he had attended a national meeting concerning the Coronation. During this meeting it had been confirmed Buckingham Palace had advised beacons were not to be lit to commemorate the Coronation as it was considered too soon after the Platinum Jubilee and the passing of the Queen. However, beacons were expected to be lit in 2024 to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day.

The clerk advised the 30-word nomination for the 2023 Community award was due to be submitted by 28th February. Cllr Hutchfield suggested the nomination should be considered at the next Council meeting, which was agreed by all Councillors.

b) Rural Liaison

Cllr Hutchfield advised she did not attend the recent meeting due to a prior engagement.

c) Cuxton Academy of Schools

The clerk advised a recent meeting had taken place where trees in the school drive were discussed as the school had commissioned an arboricultural survey following correspondence received from a resident. Having contacted Cuxton Countryside Group, CCG, the clerk advised they had confirmed they would be able to attend to some of the recommendations on behalf of the School and the Council but others would need further expert action. The clerk to contact the school to confirm that quotations would need to be obtained for the works not able to be undertaken by CCG.

Cllr Thorley asked if a discussion had taken place regarding the locking of the gate at the bottom of the Junior School drive. The clerk advised the school did not have any spare keys and the clerk had arranged a quotation from the supplier which had been sent to the school so they could order, pay, collect and distribute the keys to those running clubs in the school after hours, so the gates could be locked daily. The clerk had asked the school to confirm when the keys had been distributed so that volunteers would no longer have to lock the gates. The clerk also confirmed the school advised they have money earmarked to replace the gates in the future.

The clerk advised the school would be prepared to forward a survey to all parents regarding potential usage of a café in the proposed re-development. Cllr Hutchfield advised she would prepare a survey for consideration by the pavilion re-development steering group which, if approved, would be sent to the school for onward distribution.

d) Police Liaison

The clerk advised no meeting had been attended but a Police surgery had been arranged at Cuxton Library on Friday 27th January.

173) Correspondence

The clerk advised correspondence had been received regarding a broken step in Six Acre Wood which CCG had now repaired. Additionally the clerk had been copied into correspondence, sent to Ward Cllr Fearn, regarding the re-instatement of the traffic loop, which from earlier comments was due to be completed on 26th January.

Cllr Hutchfield advised a letter of thanks had been sent to the 'Wheel of Cuxton' for their help with the Christmas Tree.

174) Confidential Section closed to the public

a) Street Cleaning – Feedback from discussions held

The clerk advised, following the recent Staffing Committee meeting, the recommendation to Council was that the temporary street cleaner should be made permanent at his current hours of 17 per week. Once the amount of the street cleaning grant had been confirmed by Medway Council for 2023/24, a review would be conducted of hours worked. The clerk confirmed to Cllr Thorley, following her request, that a meeting had been arranged with the other street cleaner to discuss spheres of responsibilities, as he had withdrawn his request for additional hours. The clerk confirmed Medway Norse had confirmed they would be emptying the bins in the village whilst the street cleaner was on leave in February.

It was resolved to accept the recommendations as stated and the clerk to provide a permanent contract of employment to the current temporary street cleaner.

175) Information Exchange

Cllr Wilson advised she had contacted Medway Council to request the remaining potholes in James Road be repaired. Cllr Hutchfield advised the forthcoming newsletter would include email details for residents so they could contact Medway Council regarding pothole issues in the village.

176) Members Future Agenda Items

Winery Planning Inquiry

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8:58 pm

Next meeting 16th February 2023, 7pm at Cuxton Library

Signed *Kay Hutchfield*

Chairman

On the *16th* **day of** *February*

2023