Minutes of the F&GP committee March 2014


Apologies:- None – all present

1. The minutes of the February meeting were approved as a true record and signed accordingly

2. Matters arising from previous meetings

2.1 OVMH documentation ownership is being investigated by Cllr. Cracknell.

2.2 Assistant clerks contract – The clerk has obtained a specimen contract and will forward it to the chairman who will utilise it to compose a suitable contract and job description for the Assistant Clerk.

2.3 It was observed that the gutters need replacing – Cllr.Verrall to obtain quotes and budget for next year.

2.4 Estimates for works to the front entrance, path, hedge, dropped kerb to ensure that they are DDA compliant are awaited.

2.5 It was agreed to increase the width of the dropped kerbs outside the office car park. The clerk has obtained quotations from KCC *(The costs appeared exorbitant - £150 to process the work and £1000-£2500 for completion. The Chairman to speak with KHS)*

2.6 It was decided that in order to separate out the football club from the car park lighting, a separate meter should be provided in the car park electricity box – the clerk to progress

2.7 The toilet refurbishment to be costed

2.8 It was noted that the bricks on the entrance wall need replacing and it is understood that BT has removed them for safe keeping. The chairman volunteered to repair the wall as soon as practicable.

2.9 The members looked at various current Parish web-sites and Cllr Whitehead volunteered to investigate a new system for Otford

2.10 The Clerk will investigate additional banks to the Bank of Ireland and Unity Trust Bank

3. General

3.1 An updated cash flow was tabled and agreed. The only area of concern was that income from burials continued to decrease.

3.2 Extra costs for refurbishment to the duck house following the recent vandalising were anticipated.

3.3 The receipts and payments lists were agreed.

3.4 Web site update – Cllr. Whitehead stated that the situation was progressing using an open source software called “Drupal”. It will be as compatible with “accessibility practices” as possible.
3.5 The chairman to verify that the Dentist and Yvonne are happy with the having the defibs fitted. There will be a minor running cost associated with them (less than £15/yr)  

3.6 The clerk has been investigating alternative bank accounts to spread risk. The clerk had liaised with Sevenoaks District Council to find recommended alternatives and it was decided to investigate Barclays and The Nationwide for Parish usage. Nat West had not responded.  

3.7 KALC are making progress with the Govt in agreeing that parishes should be able to use electronic banking where applicable.  

4. Cemetery  

4.1 There have been complaints from one of the relatives concerning the “flooding” of one of the graves. The clerk has responded.  

4.2 A request from a developer, regarding the number of green burials has been sent to the Council. The clerk has responded.  

5. Car Park  

5.1 There were no financial matters to discuss  

6. Toilets  

6.1 There were no financial matters to discuss  

7. Allotments  

7.1 There were no financial matters to discuss  

8. Bus Stop(s)  

8.1 There were no financial matters to discuss – It was agreed to remove this item from the agenda.  

9. Recreation Grounds/Pond  

9.1 The playground roundabout had been reported as broken. It will be investigated by Mr Thomas  

9.2 The duck house had recently been vandalised. It will be removed, repaired and reinstated as soon as practicable.  

9.3 There were more tyre marks on the pond grass surround. The culprits have not been identified.  

10. School House/Heritage Centre  

10.1 Decoration of the foyer has been completed. New carpet tiles are the next item to be replaced. The recommended sculptured carpets were questioned as it was thought (through experience) that they would be difficult to keep clean  

10.2 It was noted that clearing the frontage had commenced.
11. The Chalk Pit

11.1 There were no financial matters to discuss

12. Other Matters.

12.1 A suitable replacement representative for the Smyth Charity was discussed. As it was run on behalf of St Bartholomew’s and some pastoral care might have to be administered, it was recommended that the request from the charity be forwarded to St Barts

12.2 Sustainable Communities Act. See Annex A. It is proposed that OPC support this action and that the clerk should respond to KALC positively

[OPC to VOTE]

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The March meeting will be held on **Monday 31 March 2014** at 09.15

There being no other business this meeting was closed at 11.00am

Signed…………………………………………Chairman

Dated ........
From: KALC
Subject: FW: Sevenoaks Town Council Submission to Sustainable Communities

Please see the e-mail below from Sevenoaks Town Council regarding their proposal for a return of a system to provide a percentage of the Business (Non-Domestic) Rates to Town and Parish Councils to be used for the benefit of economic growth in the locality.

You will see that a number of Town and Parish Councils around England have already supported the Sevenoaks proposal. It would be good to see more Councils supporting the proposal to demonstrate to DCLG that it has significant and widespread support. Our National Association has been pressing Government to provide a percentage of the Non-Domestic Business Rates to Parish and Town Councils. If your Council wants to support the Sevenoaks Town Council proposal then DCLG advise that the best way to do this is by e-mailing sca@communities.gsi.gov.uk. You can also check the DCLG Barrier Tracker facility at http://barrierbusting.communities.gov.uk/.

If any other Councils are developing a proposal under the Sustainable Communities Act then please let us know as we are working with other County Associations and Local Works to generate support for proposals from around England.

Kind Regards

Terry Martin
County Secretary
Kent Association of Local Councils

Dear All

I have today submitted the online application on behalf of Sevenoaks Town Council for a proposal under the Sustainable Communities Act for

The proposal is for a return of a system to provide a percentage of the Business (Non-Domestic) Rates to Town and Parish Councils to be used for the benefit of economic growth in the locality.

I understand that the application should be able to be viewed on the DCLG ‘Barrier Busting’ website.

In order to have a hope of being successful this application needs as much support as possible from as many local councils and organisations as we can muster. It is hoped that NALC and SLCC will officially support this.

To date we have support from the following councils

i) Amersham Town Council
ii) Bodmin Town Council
iii) Chelveston Parish Council
iv) Littlehampton Parish Council
v) Shrewsbury Town Council
vi) Bracknell Town Council
vii) Frome Town Council
I have placed below a précis of the responses within the submission. It is important to note that if successful that this will benefit all town and parish councils regardless of size. Please therefore forward and request as much support as possible.

**What is the SCA proposal? Please give as much information as you can:**

The proposal is for a return of a system to provide a percentage of the Business (Non-Domestic) Rates to Town and Parish Councils to be used for the benefit of economic growth in the locality.

Most local businesses are quite surprised to know that none of their business rates are returned direct to the council in the town or parish in which they are located and find this most frustrating. Local businesses want to contribute towards their local surroundings and community and presume this would be how this was done.

Increasingly Parish and Town Councils have become more diverse and with the encouragement of the Localism Act and the Power of General Competence are taking over many services from principal authorities and as in the case of Sevenoaks taking the lead locally in relation to projects for economic development and growth.

A percentage of the Business Rates would assist in the sustainability of these projects and for example the many projects proposed in the Sevenoaks Town Partnership’s economic growth strategy.

5. Describe clearly and briefly (in one line) the SCA proposal:

A percentage of Business Rates to be paid direct to Parish and Town Councils for the benefit of local economic growth.

With regards

Linda

Linda Larter MBE
Chief Executive / Town Clerk
Sevenoaks Town Council