WESTERHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held at Russell House on Monday 8th July 2024 at 7 pm

Present: Councillors: Dr J Lord (JL) – Chairman
Mrs L Bird (LB), Mr M Bortolozzo (MB),
Mr E Boyle (EB), Mr I Breminer (IB),
Mrs D Coen (DC), Ms C Dicker, (CD),
Mr A Hussain (AJH), Mr N Proudfoot (NP),
Mr N Robson (NR), Mrs L Rodgers (LR),
Mrs S Sheen (SS) and Mr K Thompson (KT)

In attendance: Town Clerk: Mrs A Howells (AH)
Finance/Project Officer: Mrs D Marshall (DM)
SDC Cllr Diana Esler

Item		Action
1.	**Cllr Co-option/Declaration of Acceptance of Office** Following a selection meeting prior to the Council meeting it was agreed to co-opt Mr I Breminer and Ms C Dicker to the Council for the Westerham Ward. Mr Breminer and Ms Dicker duly signed their Declarations of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Proper Officer and joined the Council.	
2.	**Apologies for Absence** None.	
3.	**Declarations of Interest not previously declared** None.	
4.	**Minutes of the Council Meeting on 20th May 2024** **It was resolved** to approve and sign the minutes of the Council meeting held on 20th May 2024.	
5.	**Information items arising from the minutes of the previous meeting not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda** 12.5Cllr Coen reported that she had not yet met with SDC Cllr Gustard regarding the Greatness Skatepark but would contact her again following the general election. 12.6 Cllr Bird confirmed that there was one area in Crockham Hill that appeared on the Highways Improvement Plan, speed reduction on Main Road.	DC
6.	**Membership and Chair of Committees** A draft document detailing Membership of Committees and Chairs of Committees had been circulated. Following discussion this was agreed.	

	The HR Sub- Committee to be added to the list consisting of Cllr Sheen, Boyle and Hussain. Cllr Breminer agreed to be a substitute for the HR Sub-Committee. A substitute for the F&GP was still needed.	
7.	**<u>To receive and consider the following Minutes of Committee:</u>** 7.1 **<u>Planning and Development – 23.05.24</u>** Cllr Robson presented the Minutes: TDC Local Plan – There was no further information on the state of their Local Plan. SDC Local Plan – The report had been delayed until the Autumn and this would be followed by a Regulation 19 consultation in the Winter. Covers Farm – The KCC Planning meeting would take place on 15th July and the Officers Report was to recommend refusal. Cllr Robson would be attending on 15th July to make a presentation on behalf of WTC. A meeting was being held on 11th July to discuss the report and the presentations. 1 Westways – the owner had appealed against SDC's decision and the appeal was pending. **Resolved**: that the Minutes be adopted. 7.2 **<u>Planning and Development – 06.06.24</u>** **Resolved**: that the Minutes be adopted. 7.3 **<u>Planning and Development – 20.06.24</u>** **Resolved**: that the minutes be adopted. 7.4 **<u>Planning and Development – 04.07.24</u>** Members of the Committee approved the Minutes. **Resolved**: that the minutes be adopted. 7.5 **<u>Highways and Lighting – 10.06.24</u>** Cllr Bird presented the Minutes. Cllr Lord congratulated the Assistant Clerk on her work with the Speed Watch volunteers. She would be setting up a schedule of sessions in the coming months. Members of the Committee approved the Minutes. **Resolved**: that the minutes be adopted. 7.6 **<u>Allotments, Playing Fields and Open Spaces – 04.03.24</u>** Cllr Lord presented the minutes: Congratulations were given to the Deputy Clerk on her work on the three allotments sites. She was having regular meetings with the allotment representatives. She was addressing the issues and making progress; the waiting lists were being reduced and plots were being cultivated. She had also had over 150 tyres removed from Currant Hill site and was awaiting removal of the remaining tyres. The pipework repair had been completed at Farley allotment site. A deputation of plot holders from Currant Hill had attended the meeting and requested standpipes instead of water troughs. Following discussion this was refused due to cost. The Assistant Clerk to investigate cleaning the troughs and providing lids. SDC had taken a decision to replace dog bins with joint litter/dog waste bins. However these bins cost £500 and dog bins cost £260. The dog bin adjacent to Granville Road had been vandalised and SDC wished to replace it, WTC had queried the cost and SDC had agreed to share the	

	cost. The Assistant Clerk was conducting a survey of the locations of the remaining dog bins. Members of the Committee approved the Minutes. **Resolved**: that the minutes be adopted. 7.7 **Youth and Community– 24.06.24** Cllr Coen presented the Minutes. A meeting had taken place with SDC regarding the Emergency Plan, Cllrs Coen, Bortolozzo and the Clerk had attended. This had been combined with a visit to the SDC CCTV Control Room. Crockham Hill School had commenced their 'Create a Garden'.competition and planting would hopefully take place in the Autumn. Further ECO projects would be discussed with the school. A meeting had been arranged with Churchill School to discuss similar projects. WKHA had given notice that they would no longer be providing the Fitness sessions and they would stop at the end of the Summer Term. Cllr Boyle was following up with MoorEnergy to see if they could provide a boxing class to take its place. The attendance at the Youth Club had been disappointing. It was not known if this was because of the scheduled day due to football training, youth clubs were outdated, marketing or some other reason. A survey had been sent to Churchill School year 5 and 6 parents/carers asking for feedback regarding the youth club. Cllr Dicker suggested using tik tok to communicate with young people and this would be discussed further at the next meeting. Members of the Committee approved the Minutes. **Resolved**: that the minutes be adopted. 7.8 **Finance and General Purposes – 01.07.24** Cllr Sheen presented the minutes: Members of the Committee approved the Minutes. **Resolved**: that the Minutes be adopted.	
8.	**Finance** 8.1 **Payment List to 31st May 2024** Cllr Sheen reported that F&GP had reviewed the payment list and had nothing to bring to Council's attention. There were no queries on the lists and the payment list was approved. 8.2 **Committee Accounts to 31st May 2024** Cllr Sheen reported that the accounts were in line with expected expenditure. There were several items to bring to Councils attention regarding budget lines exceeding budget: - • F&GP – The Insurance was £324 over budget due to a change in the way the legal indemnity cover was dealt with. The Business rates was £577 over budget due to higher than expected increase. Both of these areas could be met by F&GP contingency, if necessary, but might be offset by an underspend on payroll, as a lower pay award than budgeted for was likely. • APFOS – electricity was high for the KGF pavilion but this was likely to be due to estimated invoices. The Finance Officer was investigating.	DM

	The Committee were in negotiations with the Doctors Surgery regarding the new lease and had given notice of an increase in rent. If this was not agreed then there would be an impact on the WTC Accounts. Cllr Lord thanked Cllr Sheen for the amount of work she had undertaken in the lease negotiations. Cllr Robson requested that if a new accounting package was investigated could using forecasts be explored? The Finance Officer stated that it was not about the package but about the amount of work required to achieve this. It was agreed that Cllrs Sheen would meet Cllr Robson to discuss this further. There were no further queries and the accounts were approved. 8.3 **Internal Auditor's Report** The Internal Auditor report had been circulated. Council thanked the Finance Officer for her work to ensure a clean audit. As advised by the Internal Auditor, the only issue raised was outside of WTC's control: "The External Audit Report was not published online prior to the 30th of September 2023, therefore the Town Council had not met their publication requirements. It should be noted that this was not published on time as the External Auditor had not provided the report to the Town Council until after the 30th September." 8.4 **Grant to We are Beams** Cllr Sheen presented a paper regarding the Grant Applications Following lengthy discussion, it was agreed to award a grant of £200 to 'We are Beams'. **Resolved:** To award a grant of £200 to 'We are Beams'. 8.5 **Grant to Baby Umbrella Foundation** Following discussion, it was agreed to seek more information regarding this organisation and the amount of Westerham and Crockham Hill residents the Foundation helped. **Resolved:** To seek further information regarding the organisation.	SS/NR SS
9.	**Crockham Hill War Memorial Trust minutes – 21st May 2024** The minutes of the Trust from 21st May 2024 were noted.	
10.	**WTC Survey consultation** Cllr Lord had circulated a draft document regarding the Council Vision Statement, WTC priorities and how to present the Committee responses to the resident's consultation within the Strategic Business Plan. It was agreed that the resident's response had been disappointing. Cllrs and Officers had been tasked with visiting local community groups as well as having an online survey. Following discussion it was agreed to retain the Council Vision Statement – 'The aims of the Council are to maintain Westerham and Crockham Hill parish as a thriving, attractive community, to improve the quality of life for residents in the area and to enable local businesses and other key stakeholders to provide opportunities and community activities for the benefit of residents and tourists'. Following discussion, it was agreed that Cllrs would send comments regarding the priorities and Committee activities over the next four years to the Chair by the end of July.	Cllrs

11.	**<u>Policies and Procedures</u>** The following Polices had been circulated: - 11.1 – Financial Regulations – The Finance Officer reported that NALC had issued a model set of Financial Regulations. The Finance Officer had circulated draft Regulations in which she had highlighted new clauses and changes to existing clauses. Item 4.8 needed to be highlighted as it stated that – any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months was prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. This item to be reiterated at the WTC Budget meeting in January 2025. Following discussion it was agreed to approve the draft Regulations. 11.2 – Scheme of Delegation – The Clerk had circulated the Scheme with some amendments. The Scheme stated that F&GP had been delegated to approve the grants. Cllrs wished to approve grants at Council. Following discussion the Scheme of Delegation was agreed, however grants would continue to be approved at Council with an F&GP recommendation. 11.3 ECO Policy – this was agreed. 11.4 Social Media Policy – this was agreed. 11.5 Press Policy – this was agreed. **Resolved:** To approve the Financial Regulations, Scheme of Delegation, ECO Policy, Social Media Policy and Press Policy.	
12.	**<u>Correspondence</u>** 12.1 A letter had been received from SDC stating that WTC could go ahead and co-opt a cllr as no electors had requested a by-election following the resignation of Dr Kay.	
13.	**<u>Reports from Councillors</u>** Cllr Boyle reported that he had attended a WTP meeting to discuss the September Fayre. Cllr Lord reported that on 24th May he and the Clerk had attended Quebec House as the Scottish 78th Fraser Highlanders who had kindly donating a replica uniform and kit to the National Trust. Cllr Lord reported that on 29th May he and the Clerk had attended a meeting with the new Leader of SDC , Cllr Hogarth.	
14.	**<u>TN16, Crockham Hill Village Newsletter & website</u>** None.	
15.	**<u>Matters for District and County Councillors</u>** Cllr Bortolozzo asked SDC Cllr Esler if SDC would re-look at parking charges but Cllr Esler stated it had all been agreed.	
16.	**<u>Further matters for consideration at the next meeting</u>** None.	
17.	**<u>Date of next meeting</u>** Monday 7th October 2024 Apologies were received from Cllr Dicker.	

The meeting was concluded at 10.05 pm

Minutes confirmed as a correct record:

Chairman