

**Minutes of the Town Council meeting held in The Old School Community Centre at 7.00 p.m.
on Thursday 19th November 2015**

Present: Cllrs. Paul Bishop (Chair), Stephen Kimminau, Margaret Godwin, Phil Gryce,
Gayle Mallows, Chris Marchant, Loveday Perceval-Maxwell, Alan Parsley,
Claire Ebeling (Town Clerk), 7 members of the public

1 Apologies for absence – Cllr Bob Verguson. Borough Councillor Alaric Pugh also sent his apologies.

2 To receive declarations of members' interests and consider requests for dispensation – Cllrs. Mallows, Godwin, Perceval-Maxwell and Bishop declared an interest as members of the Friends of Clare Castle Country Park. Cllr. Godwin also declared an interest as Treasurer of the newly formed community group (Clare Community Association).

Cllr. Kimminau declared an interest as a patron of Clare Castle Country Park.

A discussion took place regarding the membership of groups who are apparently against Clare Country Castle Park Trust. The point was made that the groups referred to are not formal groups and/or are groups on Facebook.

Cllr. Kimminau asked for confirmation of whether Councillors are allowed to contribute to posts on Facebook. Cllr. Bishop responded that this matter should be discussed at a future meeting.

Section of the meeting open to the public:

3 Police Report – No police officers were able to attend. No report was provided.

4 Public Participation

A parishioner asked whether the council has inspected the completed work to the buildings in the park. Cllr. Gryce responded that Keith Haisman had been appointed as Project Manager to oversee the work and he is satisfied that the work has been completed to the expected standard.

5 County Councillor's Report – Report attached.

Cllr. Evans also reported that works to improve the drainage in Ashen Road is scheduled for the Spring.

Cllr. Evans asked the Town Council to consider making a contribution from the Section 106 money to highways work close to Clare Primary School. The Clerk will contact Suffolk County Council Highways again to chase up the release of S106 money.

Clerk

6 Borough Councillor's Report – Cllr. Pugh sent his apologies and sent a report (attached).

End of public section of meeting

7 To approve minutes of previous meetings held on 22nd October and 4th November 2015

The minutes were approved unanimously.

8 To receive an update on the actions from the previous meetings

The Clerk reported that one action was outstanding – to respond to correspondence regarding a request for a skate park.

9 To receive the Clerk's Report for decision and information – See attachment to the minutes.

Clerk

10 Finance

- i) The monthly accounts and cash flow report were proposed by Cllr Godwin and approved unanimously.
- ii) To receive recommendations for decisions to be agreed:
 - a) To approve the 2016/2017 Precept budget - Cllr Godwin reported that further information was required on some printing costs and also workplace pension costs and recommended that final version of the precept be considered for approval at the December meeting. Approved unanimously.
 - b) To consider subscription to LCPAS (Local Council Public Advisory Service) – Cllr. Godwin recommended the approval of the subscription. Approved unanimously.
 - c) To receive a request from the CPFA for reallocation of 14/15 precept grant. Cllr. Godwin referred to a formal request made by the CPFA, which had been circulated to all Councillors, and recommended the approval of the request. Approved unanimously.

11 To consider items of correspondence for decision/response - see attachment to minutes

The Clerk reported that a response is to be agreed to a parishioner regarding posts by Councillors on Facebook. Cllr. Bishop suggested that a discussion take place in advance of the next meeting.

Cllr. Bishop proposed the approval of a draft response to the letter sent last month from CCCP Trust regarding the EADT article involving Cllr. Verguson. The draft had been circulated to all councilors by email. Approved unanimously.

12 Planning

- i) DC/15/2211/TCA – The White House, Nethergate Street – Remove dead weeping ash tree and pollard weeping willow tree.
Cllr. Godwin that the Town Council support this application. Agreed unanimously.
- ii) DC/15/2213/FUL – Land East of Chilton House, Chilton Street - 2No. dwellings with garages and new access (resubmission of DC/15/1355/FUL).
Cllr. Gryce recommended that the Town Council support this application but that observations be made as follows: That the 14 conditions attached to the previous approval should be applied to any new approval. Regard should be given to Policy DM6 relating to flooding and the materials used on the driveways. Agreed unanimously.
- iii) DC/15/2223/FUL – Cart lodge, Moonstone, Folly Road – i) Conversion of Annexe/Cartlodge to separate dwelling and ii) Open cart lodge ancillary to host dwelling
Cllr. Godwin recommended that the Town Council support this application as it complies with Policies DM1, 2, 24 and 33. Agreed unanimously.

13 To discuss the appointment of Trustees to Clare Castle Country Park Trust

- i) Cllr. Bishop reported that one Town Councillor was required to join the panel of two CCCP Trustees to interview applicants to be nominated for appointment via the public advertisement route. Cllr Gryce suggested that it should perhaps be a female to provide some balance, bearing in mind that the other panel members would inevitably be male and proposed Cllr. Perceval-Maxwell. Cllr. Perceval-Maxwell confirmed that she would be willing to take the role. Approved unanimously.

ii) Wednesday 9th December was agreed as the date for an extraordinary Town Council meeting to nominate the two Town Council trustees. Cllr. Bishop summarised the process of selection and appointment of Trustees (see attached). The ratification of the decision regarding the Town Council nominated Trustees will take place at the Town Council meeting on 17th December 2015.

Cllr. Kimminau asked for clarification on the difference between a Town Council nominated Trustee and a general trustee. Cllr. Bishop clarified that the Town Council will select the new Trustees who have applied to the Town Council nominated roles, they need not be councillors and would not *represent* the Town Council.

14 To discuss the possibility of an event to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday in 2016.

Cllr. Godwin reported that the Clare Community Association has been discussing ideas for an event and are currently looking into the possibility of having a 1920's style picnic in the park. The difficulty will be to finance it and Cllr. Godwin asked for views on a grant or donation from the Town Council. It was agreed that the idea was received positively but in order to provide funding, council financial regulations would require a business plan and detailed costing information.

Cllr. Godwin

15 To receive an update on investigations into improving tourism in Clare

Cllr. Bishop reported that he had been in discussion with the Chair of Clare Business Association and they had jointly arranged an informal networking meeting with key stakeholders in Clare to discuss initial thoughts on ways to increase the number of tourist visitors to our town. Cllr. Bishop will report back at the next meeting.

Cllr. Bishop

16 To discuss the removal of the brown bin collection service and the possibility of community composting

More detailed information has not yet been received from St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

17 To receive items for decisions required by Town Council Committees and Working Parties

i) Cllr. Gryce reported that the Environment Committee had agreed an increase to the cemetery fees with effect from 1 April 2016 and requested ratification from the full Council. Agreed unanimously.

ii) Cllr. Gryce requested the approval of Trevor Pickerin as a lay member to the Environment Committee. Approved unanimously.

18 To receive agenda items for next main meeting.

(i) To approve the Precept application

(ii) To ratify the selection of Country Park Trustees

(iii) To receive an update on improving tourism in Clare

(iv) To discuss the removal of the brown bin collection service and the possibility of community composting

(v) To receive a report on plans for a community event for the Queen's 90th birthday.

(vi) To discuss the interpretation of the Code of Conduct in relation to the use of Facebook.

19 To confirm the date of the next meeting as Wednesday 9th December (extraordinary meeting) and Thursday 17th December 2015

Confirmed.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Attachment to Minutes, Item 6, County Councillor's Report

Report for Clare Town Council 19 November 2015

HIGHWAYS

HGVs

I was due to meet Bob Verguson re the lorry survey but he had to cancel.

I have also not yet had the planned meeting with Steve Morris the general manager at Culina – but hope to get that agreed very soon.

The outstanding highways issues in the town,

I haven't heard how you are progressing with the release of the 106 money and the purchase of the VAS machines. Do please contact me if you need my help.

Guy Smith, our temporary assistant area highways manager, PCSO Anthony Welford, Mrs Simpson, the new primary school head teacher, Jim Meikle and I all met as planned on 23 October to view the chaos that is parking at the school and discuss how best to deal with the problems. Except it didn't happen quite like that!

There was a major water main burst that morning and children were sent home early so when we arrived all was quiet.

However, we had a useful meeting and discussed possible solutions. Guy is getting the preferred solution costed – to clear the bottleneck by digging up part of the green to make a turning circle so cars don't trap each other. But it will run into thousands of pounds and we are not sure where we will find the funding at this stage. Any chance CTC might contribute some 106 funds? We haven't any money set aside for this in our school road safety budget because it had not been flagged up in recent years by the school as a problem. I have put Jim Meikle in touch with our school road safety officer Iain Watson and I know part of the plan is to work with the Junior Road Safety Officers at the school to survey the traffic. It maybe some parents can be encouraged to park further from the school and join a walking bus.

As I explained last month, the Suffolk Roadsafe board has bought a new smaller scale speed camera van. I have met the person in charge of its deployment and made a strong bid to her, and to the PCC Tim Passmore, for the initiative to be launched in the Clare Division. I am hoping we can work up a scheme to co-ordinate the van with the VAS.

Tourism in Clare

I repeat my offer that I would be very happy to support/help efforts by CTC to develop tourism in the town.

Thefts of lead from local churches

As you will be aware the theft of lead from our church roofs is a serious problem at the moment. Hawkedon Church, for example, has been hit twice. I took some church leaders including Tom McKenny, acting lay chair of the Clare Deanery, to Police HQ to meet the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Police officer in charge of the case last week. It was a very useful and positive meeting and the delegation will be sharing what we learned about how best to protect our churches with their colleagues.

One proposal I took to the meeting was the possibility of following the initiative launched by Essex Police to establish a Heritage Watch – a sort of specialist Neighbourhood Watch. Mr Passmore and Det Chief Insp Byford were interested and will look at this idea.

County wide

The scrutiny session into our highways contractors, KMG was very interesting. Our new assistant director for highways Mark Stevens has shaken things up and KMG have brought in some new people and new procedures. So the committee rather than call for the scrapping of the contract, as I strongly suspect we were minded to beforehand, has put the highways team on probation for six months to see if their impressive words and fine plans come to fruition.

Next week, I will be chairing the budget scrutiny. I am keen that we establish why the various spending choices have been made and that the full impacts have been considered.

As we all know Suffolk County Council is facing significant reductions in government grant funding and so is looking to be more innovative and behave in more commercial ways to address revenue shortfalls while addressing local issues. So, SCC is combining with St Eds and Forest Heath to set up a housing development company. It will be a limited company with SCC taking a 50% stake and St Eds and Forest Heath the other half. The thinking is that SCC has surplus land which could, subject to satisfying property disposal requirements, be made available to a jointly owned commercial housing company. Based on current analysis, establishing a housing development company would contribute towards generating revenue and capital income at a greater level than simply selling the surplus land assets.

SCC is looking to save £1m from its annual £22m budget on the fire service. The proposal is to

- Reduce the number of fire engines in Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds and Lowestoft
- Replace the second fire engine at Sudbury with a rapid response fire vehicle
- Close Wrentham fire station.
- The fire stations in our immediate area – Wickhambrook and Clare are not directly affected by the proposals.

There is a public consultation on the plan but I should emphasise it has been drawn up after careful analysis of the fire service operations over the past few years. Although the population and traffic levels have increased 999 calls to the fire service have reduced by more than 30 per cent over the past 10 years

The Devolution discussions go on but I feel they are pointless unless and until there is some real effort made to rationalise local government.

Mary Evans, Clare Division, Suffolk County Council

Attachment to Minutes, Item 7, Borough Councillor's Report

This is a monthly report on activities conducted by Alaric Pugh, Borough Councillor for Clare, on behalf of the whole community, following the election on 7th May 2015. I am delighted to have been elected to represent Clare again and will work hard to uphold the interests of the town at St Edmundsbury Borough Council. I am Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth. The committees I sit on are: Development Control, Rural Working Party, Sustainable Development Working Party, and I Chair the Growth Steering Group and am a Vice Chair of One Haverhill where I lead on the Haverhill town Centre Masterplan. I attend Dedham and Stour Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Project Board Meetings. **My chief role is to ensure Clare and its residents have a voice at the Borough Council table.** I expect to be in attendance at Town Council meetings and will be happy to answer any questions from councillors or parishioners after my report. I have run a surgery between 9.30 and 10.00 am on the first Saturday of the month for residents whose questions cannot be addressed at the Town Council Meeting - this is suspended but I can be contacted at other times: my mobile phone number is: 07930460899 and email alaric.pugh@stedsbc.gov.uk

1. Training undertaken since last report - 4 days of training on Leadership of Planning, government direction for growth, and the forthcoming Housing and Planning Bill
2. Civic events/business - St Eds Remembrance, West Suffolk business awards, Clare Commemorates
3. Meetings attended (excluding Majority Group meetings)
 - Cabinet Planning
 - Joint Cabinet Planning
 - Cabinet
 - Joint Cabinet
 - Development Control
 - Ec Dev Briefings
 - One Haverhill re masterplan consultation process - fortnightly
 - One Haverhill core group
 - DMO strategy meetings
 - Sustainable Development
 - Site visits
 - Locality Officer meeting
 - Joint Transport Portfolio Holders (SCC)
 - Joint Economic Development Holders (SCC)
 - Planning briefings and other ad hoc development planning meetings
 - Meeting with Cambridge Hands on science centre
 - Extraordinary Full Council
 - Environment briefings
 - Devolution briefings
4. Forthcoming meetings before next TC Meeting:
 - DMO meetings
 - One Haverhill board
 - Full Council
 - Others TBA
5. Voting record - recent items with direct significance to Clare community: none applicable
6. Current Clare issues involvement/resident requests to take forward:
 - planning items
 - Locality budget items
 - Enquiries re new Post office and mini-mart - all compliant

8. NEWS:

- It has been a very, very busy month with an exceptional number of meetings.
- In response to the Town Council enquiry about support for composting I have secured the following encouraging response. I am advised the more detail will be available next year when the brown bin policy comes fully into force.

Some further information on plans to support composting.....

Plans are very nearly fully formed for supporting home composting. We are currently finalising the design of the leaflet ready for distribution next year. This leaflet is going to be distributed countywide to promote the subsidised home composting scheme for those that would like it. Costs for what we call a "Dalek" composter will be 50% off of the RRP - £8.99 for the 220L bin and £9.99 for the 330L bin.

The picture below is typical of the "Dalek" type composters (it might not be exactly this type).



In addition the Suffolk Waste Partnership (SWP) will be running 14 two hour training sessions across the county and attendees will receive a free 330L home composter.

There will be the usual online publicity through our websites and twitter accounts and we will take part in further activities through Compost Awareness Week in May.

Please be advised that the prices for bins has not been made public yet, but the 50% discount has been agreed at both Member and Director level within the SWP.

While the information about support for community composting isn't built in as yet, we anticipate that Suffolk County Council SWP colleagues will pick this up as part of their composting support. Norfolk have done some work on this which we are looking at as part of developing plans for Suffolk SWP.

<http://www.communitycompost.org/>

Our experience is that it takes a lot of committed volunteers to be able to support community composting and they are quite hard to maintain. Having said that, it will be perfectly possible for us to find support for those communities that want to plan for this commitment as we have good evidence of best practice to share. Locality budgets and rural grant aid should in theory be able to support such schemes.

Attachment to Minutes, Item 10, Clerk's Report

Information:

I have completed the declaration to TV Licensing that Clare Town Council's offices do not require a TV Licence. This is valid for three years.

A concern was recently raised by Cllr Parsley on behalf of some Westfield residents regarding the lack of handrails on concrete steps close to bungalows at the back of the estate. I contacted Havebury and a surveyor came this week to assess the steps and indicated to Councillor Parsley that a handrail would be likely to be fitted.

St Edmundsbury Borough Council Planning decisions

DC/15/1682/HH – Rosebank, Snow Hill – Render to outside of property – Application approved.

DC/15/1584/LB - Chilton Hall, Chilton Street – Removal and replacement of main staircase and associated alterations – Application approved.

DC/15/1720/LB – Chilton Cottage, Chilton Street – Continued use of existing annexe as separate residential dwelling – Considered by Delegation Panel – deferred to seek further information.

DC/15/1895/TCA – Stour house, Stoke Road - (i) T1 - White Mulberry - 40% Crown reduction (2-3 meters all round) (ii) T2 - Weeping Willow - Pollard to 8-9 meters in height – Application approved

DC/15/1727/FUL – Leys Farm, Hundon Road – Proposed poultry shed to house 4000 birds - – Application approved

DC/15/1893/LB – The Cock Inn - (i) Alterations to existing chimney to install new wood burning stove (ii) Installation of new bar area (iii) Removal of internal walls, windows and pier (iv) Removal of 2 no. windows and replacement with single wider window (v) New WC arrangement from previously approved application - DC/15/1197/LB

Attachment to Minutes, Item 12, Correspondence

Items for action (all circulated to Town Councillors)

Patrick Daniels	Letter regarding EADT article published 22 October 2015 Action: Draft response to be circulated by email.
Circus Tyanna	Request to include Clare in the 2016 tour (13-17 July) Action: Email to be forwarded to Clare Combined Charities and CCCP Trust as they have control of the land in Clare that might be suitable for a circus.
Hastoe Housing	Request for information on negative aspects of rural affordable housing Action: Respond to decline the offer.
Hastoe Housing	Housing and Planning Bill Action: Cllr. Bishop to draft a response in support.
Keith Haisman	Request for information about Councillors' attendance of meetings. I have put together a Councillor attendance record and propose that it be published on the website. Action: Record to be published on the website and updated quarterly.

Items for noting (copies available from the Clerk on request)

The Clare Society	Copy of an email to St Edmundsbury Planning Officer, attaching correspondence from Charles Church re the site in Stoke Road.
PCSO Anthony Welford	Police reports for Town Council meetings.
Cavendish Parishioner	Copy of a letter sent to CCCP re parking
Clare High Street resident	Complaint regarding dog fouling referred to Environment Committee.

Attachment to Minutes, Item 13, Nomination of trustees – possible sequence of events

October CTC

Chair reports that he has received outline of criteria for selection of trustees from current chair. These have already been distributed to all councillors.

Each councillor candidate should prepare a one page outline of how they match these criteria. This should be circulated as part of the agenda business for November's CTC. Note that each outline will be placed in the public domain.

November CTC

Councillors who wish to stand as candidates and have submitted an outline will be selected by a simple vote of all councillors (including candidates). This will be by a show of hands (recorded by name if so requested). Councillors may request more information from candidates, but must ask each candidate the same questions. The nominations will be subject to confirmation at the Extraordinary CTC meeting after the candidates have had an opportunity to meet with the trustees and feedback to the Chair as per the Management Agreement.

Should any position remain unfilled (that is, among the two council nominations), it will go for selection at an extraordinary council meeting, held within two weeks of the CTC. This will be the same occasion at which the CTC will nominate two further trustees for approval by the trustees. After the meeting any councillors who are nominated will be asked to meet with park trustees to discuss best fit. Both the nominated councillor(s) and the trustees will feedback to the Chair of the Town Council prior to the Extraordinary CTC meeting.

Extraordinary CTC

This will be previously advertised so that all candidates can prepare an outline (as described above). These will be placed in the public domain, prior to the meeting. Councillors cannot be candidates at this stage.

In the public section of the meeting, no comments on candidates will be accepted, whether in support or against. Comments on the criteria will be heard.

Firstly any nominated councillors will be confirmed or otherwise after feedback from discussions with the trustees.

If it is desirable, all further candidates should be questioned by councillors (2 questions each; all of the same nature). If a candidate cannot attend, that does not exclude them from selection.

A simple ballot will take place, each councillor voting once for each the posts available (i.e. if there are three candidates for two posts, a councillor may only cast two votes). Those with the highest totals will be selected. The directly-selected posts will be taken first and separately; the posts for confirmation will take place once they have been filled.

Because of the potential complexity of this situation, the clerk will prepare two sets of ballot papers. The clerk will then announce the result after verification by the SFO; the full set of results will be published within the minutes of the meeting. If requested, the names of councillor voting for each candidate will be recorded.