

CRONTON PARISH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING



Minutes of the COUNCIL MEETING held on 5 January 2015 at 7.00 pm at the Parish Council Office, 7 Hampton Drive, Cranton.

Present : Councillors W Cook (Chair), D Bray, S Cooper, J Foran, G McGann, G Pentin, D Rostance and I Watson

In attendance: Vitti Osborne (The Clerk)

101. APOLOGIES

It was resolved that apologies for absence received from Councillor P M Green be approved.

102. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was reported that no declarations of Interest were received.

103. MINUTES

It was resolved to accept the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 24 November 2014 as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

104. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public attended the meeting.

105. COMMITTEE MINUTES

It was resolved that the unconfirmed minutes of undermentioned Committee be noted:

- (a) General Purposes and Environment Committee meeting held on 10 December 2014
- (b) Finance and Policy Committee meeting held on 10 December 2014

106. REPORTS

- (a) **Policing** – Dealt with under Anti-Social Behaviour.
- (b) **The UK Age** – No report.
- (c) **Bus service** – No report.
- (d) **Environment** – By and large the village is clean and in a relatively good state. A few outstanding remedial works need to be followed up.
- (e) **Partnership Advisory Board** – The new Board acts in an advisory capacity.

It was resolved that the above reports be noted.

107. PLANNING APPLICATION

(a) **14/00752/OUT**

Location: Land at Welshmans Farm 345 Cronton Road
Proposal: Outline application for the erection of 1 no. bungalow, access and layout to be considered at this stage (appearance, landscaping & scale to be reserved for future approval)

It was resolved the following observations be submitted (1) Planning Office to clarify if the site is in a greenbelt. (2) The proposed development has to meet all the requirements of Knowsley Council's UDP. (3) All neighbouring residents have to be consulted and views of all local residents are carefully considered when a decision is made.

(b) **14/00716/FUL**

Location: 3 Iver Close Cronton
Proposal: Erection of single storey in-fill extension to connect existing dining room with garage (garage to be converted to extended living accommodation).
Decision: **Granted**

It was resolved that the planning decision be noted.

(c) **14/00615/ADV**

Location: Parklands Club 1A Parklands Cronton
Proposal: Erection of 1no internally illuminated free standing sign post
Decision: **Refused**

It was resolved that the planning decision be noted.

108. BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT

It was resolved that the Budgetary Control Report as at 1 January 2015 shown in Appendix A be received and approved.

109. RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

(a) **It was resolved** that Campaign to Protect Rural England membership for 2015 be renewed at an annual fee of £36.

(b) **It was resolved** that the undermentioned receipt and payments be approved.

Receipts

Description	Amount (£)
HMRC (2013/14 VAT reclaim)	285.65
Carol Service church collection (pay in slip No. 100206)	280.00

Payments

Cheque no.	Description	Amount (£)
1302	Alzheimer's Society (Carol Service church collection donated to Alzheimer's Society - Knowsley : £280 collected and £20 from the Parish Council = £300)	300.00
1303	Holy Family Church (Carol Service - heating contribution)	60.00
1304	HMRC (Oct, Nov & Dec 2014 : Employer's NIC £21.33, Clerk's NIC £ 18.54 and PAYE £34.20. Total £74.07)	74.07

1305	W M Osborne (Reimburse the Clerk for expenses paid in advance : Carol Service (gift cards £10 x 2 = £20, flower basket £10, 2 boxes of chocolates £8, gift bags £3) = £41, Postage stamps = £14.02, Window cleaning 2 x £4 = £8. Total £63.02	63.02
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Direct Debits

Description	Amount (£)
British Gas - electricity 19/9/14 to 18/12/14	101.56

Standing Order

Description	Amount (£)
W M Osborne (Clerk's November 14 salary: net PAYE and NIC)	696.95
S Chesters (Office cleaner's November 14 wages)	31.41
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110. INTERNAL AUDIT

Currently, the Council's Internal Audit takes place twice each financial year. It is stated in the 'Governance and Accountability of Local Councils – A Practitioners' Guide March 2014' that internal audit is proportionate to the needs, the size and the circumstances of the council. Taking into account the factors and subsequent to the discussion with the Internal Auditor, it was recommended that an internal audit at the end of a financial year would be adequate for the Council.

It was resolved that (1) the correspondence from the Internal Auditor dated the 26 November 2014 be noted; (2) internal audit takes place once at the end of a financial year and an annual Internal Audit fee of £90, be approved.

111. KNOWSLEY COUNCIL SPENDING PLANS – CONSULTATION WITH CRONTON PARISH COUNCIL, GREEN SPACE MAINTENANCE CHARGE

The Pasture is leased by the Parish Council from Knowsley Council and its maintenance has always been carried out by Knowsley Council. Due to reduction of government funding, Knowsley Council informed that they can no longer provide the service free of charge and an annual levy of £9,557 will be charged to the Parish Council from 1 April 2015. A simple breakdown of the charge is provided and a consultation with the Parish and Town Councils is taking place.

If a level service agreement is to be set up with Knowsley Council, only necessary items of service at realistic prices are to be included and the frequencies of respective services have to be reviewed. As it is a fee paying service, other options such as securing local contractors should be considered.

Cronton being the smallest local council in the Borough with the smallest precept, the levy is considered completely unaffordable. Although it is not a huge amount per household, it is totally unreasonable in terms of percentage and there is an issue of doubting rating. A discussion took place if a referendum is necessary for an exceptional precept increase. However, the pro and con of the exercise have to be carefully considered before a decision is made.

Members felt that Cronton is entitled to an equivalent proportion of the Borough's spending. As over £0.63 million of Council Tax had been collected from the Parish in 2014/15, it is not unreasonable for Knowsley Council to cover The Pasture maintenance cost.

If the Parish Council is going to maintain The Pasture, monitoring responsibilities and health and safety inspections have to be determined.

In recent years, huge amount of money had been spent in developing green spaces to national standards, the future of the parks in the Borough is a concern.

The Chairman and Councillors D Rostance, D Bray and J Foran will represent the Council at the consultation meeting with Rupert Casey, Head of Environmental Services on the 8 January 2015 and to pass on the general feeling of the Council on this matter.

112. PRECEPT FOR 2015/16

(a) Details of the Estimated Council Tax Base for 2015-2016 had been received from Knowsley Council. Taking into account all deductions, the estimated tax base (net of Council Tax Reduction) is 442 Band D equivalent.

It was resolved that the estimated Council Tax Base for 2015/16 be noted.

(b) Members received for discussion an up-dated draft precept proposal.

It was resolved that in principle the precept be set at £17,000 including employer's contribution to the Clerk's pension. If the Council has to budget for The Pasture maintenance charge, the final precept will have to be revised.

113. ELECTRICAL INSPECTION

The electricity meter tails have to be extended by an electrician prior to re-connecting by British Gas. The re-connecting charge is £120 (inc VAT)

The price for remedial work including replacing the short meter tails quoted by Tyrrell's Electrical and Security Ltd is £110 plus VAT.

It was resolved that a quote be obtained from the electrician just for the two replacement RCDs and a decision will then be made as to who will extend the tails and reconnect the meter.

114. CLERK'S MERSEYSIDE PENSION SCHEME AND SALARY AWARD FOR 2014 - 2016

The National Joint Council for Local Government Service (JNC) has reached agreement on the new pay scales for 2014 – 2016 to be implemented from 1 January 2015. The Clerk's salary has to be reviewed accordingly.

It was resolved that the Chairman will follow-up the Clerk's Merseyside Pension Scheme and to set a starting date for Council's approval. The Clerk's salary review is deferred to the next meeting.

115. KNOWSLEY MBC REPRESENTATION AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

It was suggested inviting Cath Hudspith, Area Relationship Director, to attend Council Meetings on a quarterly basis. This will provide an opportunity for the Council to discuss matters directly with a Knowsley officer on regular intervals. A designated officer should attend if she is not available.

It was resolved that Cath Hudspith, Area Relationship Director, be invited to the Council Meeting to be held on 16 February 2015 and quarterly thereafter.

It was commented that the Police should also be represented at an alternative Meeting.

116. DONATIONS 2014/15

It was resolved that feedback on a donation 2014/15 awarded to Cronton Pathway Project Walks for Health be noted.

117. THE PASTURE PROJECT

It was resolved that the Report dated 9 December 2014 on Cronton Pasture Project from Sefton Play Council be approved and noted.

118. STATE OF THE VILLAGE

It was resolved that the following items be pursued with Knowsley Council:

- Outstanding items after last year's village inspection
- Pavements on Chapel Lane
- A litter bin to be re-installed at the corner of Hampton Drive and Iver Close

119. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

It is a very quiet period of time due to the cold weather. Dave Rimmer (PCSO) will be reminded to keep an eye on area to ensure the youth problem will not move back to the village.

120. CRONTON NEIGHBOURHOOD NETWORK

It was resolved that the agenda for the next Neighbourhood Network to be held on 13 January 2015 be approved.

121. CRONTON NEWS

The date for the next issue of the village newsletter is to be decided.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

Signed _____ Date 16 February 2015