

CRONTON PARISH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING



MINUTES OF THE FIRST REMOTE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 22 JUNE 2020 AT 7.00 PM.

Present : Councillors W Cook (Chair), D Bray, S Cooper, G McGann, D Rostance and D Thomas

In attendance: Councillor T Byron (Ward Councillor – Whiston and Cronton)
Vitti Osborne (The Clerk)
2 Members of the public

1. APOLOGIES

It was resolved that apologies for absence received from Councillor J Foran be accepted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of interest were received from:

- (a) Councillor D Thomas – Agenda item 18 (Cycling Path Project) – A resident in the area.
- (b) Councillor D Rostance – Agenda item 20 (Village and Community Matters – The back fence of The Pasture) – A neighbouring resident.

3. UPDATE FROM MINISTRY OF HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

A letter dated 6/4/20 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Governments on emergency legislation made to support local authorities in response to the Coronavirus pandemic was noted. The first set of regulations enables all local authority meetings before 7 May 2021 to be held remotely and removes the requirement for the annual meeting this year. The second set postpones until 6 May 2021 local by-elections and other polls, either scheduled or which would otherwise arise before that date.

4. MINUTES

It was resolved to accept the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 17 February 2020 as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman with the following amendment:

Minutes 128(d) should read “.....surveillance camera to monitor fly-tipping in Tue Lane”

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Cycleway between Prescot and Cronton – The new cycleway would come through Cronton via the footway/cycleway on the land leased to Knowsley Council between Fox’s Bank Lane and Penny Lane. Some nearby residents expressed their concern about the impact of the development on security, privacy, road safety and wildlife of the area. It was also pointed out that surveys had taken place in the area and on private land but residents were not notified nor consulted beforehand. It was responded that the Council had contacted Knowsley Council for details of the project and would look into the issues raised on receipt of the information. Councillor D Thomas would keep the resident concerned informed when further information was received.

Wildflower meadow on the Pasture – In response to a complaint, arrangement would be made to remove the problematic wildflowers at an appropriate time.

6. COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

- (a) General Purposes and Environment Committee meetings held on 2/3/2020 & 9/3/2020
- (b) Finance and Policy Committee meeting held on 2/3/2020

7. WARD COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Councillor T Byron stated that the problematic wildflowers would be removed by Knowsley Council in the winter.

8. COUNCILLORS REPORTS

- (a) **Policing** – Low Police visibility. Apart from some house searches and a few minor incidents at the Pasture, it was relatively quiet. A speed enforcement operation took place in Smithy Lane and speeding tickets were issued. A thank you letter would be sent to the Police.
- (b) **Healthwatch activities in Cronton** – No report
- (c) **Transportation in Cronton** – No further news received from Mersey Travel about the proposed removal of the bus shelter on Cronton Road. Bus service number 7 between Warrington and Liverpool carried few passengers during lockdown.
- (d) **Environment** – A fly-tipping incident in Tue Lane during lockdown had been reported to Knowsley Council for action. The grass at Coronation Gardens had been cut. The overgrown plants covering the finger post at the junction of Chapel Lane/Cronton Road needed to be cut back.

9. PLANNING APPLICATION

(a) **Planning applications**

APP. NO 20/00069/NEI (amended) – To ratify comments submitted on 2/6/20

CONSULTEE: Halton Borough Council

LOCATION: Widnes Sixth Form College Cronton Lane Widnes

PROPOSAL: PROPOSED DEMOLITION, REFURBISHMENT AND EXTENSION TO TWO AREAS TO PROVIDE 24 NO. CLASS ROOMS, 1NO. TUTORIAL ROOM, 3 NO. STAFF ROOMS, GENERAL STORE, MALE AND FEMALE CHANGING FACILITIES, STUDENT WC'S, STAFF WC AND SHOWER ROOM, REMODELLED CIRCULATION SPACES INCLUDING NEW STAIRS AND LIFTS AND ENHANCEMENTS TO EXTERNAL ELEVATIONS INCLUDING REPLACEMENT OF WINDOWS AND DOORS

The original planning application was first considered at the General Purposes and Environment Committee meeting held on 9 March 2020 and comments were submitted to Halton Council via Knowsley Council. An amendment to the planning application confirmed an increase in staff and student numbers, which needed to be considered.

It was resolved that in response to the amendment, the original comments together with the following comments be submitted to Halton Council.

'This issue will be exacerbated by the fact that the college is expanding its student intake and teaching staff as a result of the proposed modifications. In addition the impact of the construction phase should be taken into account in your plans.'

APP. NO: 20/00245/FUL

LOCATION: 415 Cronton Road Cronton WA8 5QF

PROPOSAL: ERECTION OF A SINGLE STOREY FRONT AND SIDE EXTENSION, DETACHED GARAGE AND THE RECLADDING OF EXISTING DWELLING TOGETHER WITH ASSOCIATED BOUNDARY TREATMENT AND LANDSCAPING WORKS

It was resolved that no observations be made on this application.

APP. NO: 20/00255/FUL

APPLICANT: United Utilities Water Limited

LOCATION: Pex Hill Country Park Pex Hill Cronton

PROPOSAL: APPLICATION FOR VARIATION OF CONDITIONS APPLIED TO PLANNING PERMISSION 19/00292/FUL FOR ERECTION OF BOOSTER PUMPING STATION WITH ASSOCIATED PIPEWORK AND ACCESS ROAD TOGETHER WITH WORKS TO WATER TREATMENT PLANT CONSISTING OF 9 KIOSKS, PLANT AND ASSOCIATED WORKS INCLUDING CHANGES TO GROUND LEVELS. VARIATION SOUGHT TO CONDITION 1 AND 10 TO ALLOW FOR CHANGES TO THE KIOSKS AND FENCING AND CHANGE FROM GRASSCRETE ACCESS TRACK TO STONE AND SEEDED TRACK

It was resolved that the Council's original objection remains valid.

- (b) **APP. NO. 07/01161/FUL** – Construction of roundabout (Cronton Road/Queensbury Way) and distributor road together with associated works. Planning permission had been given by Knowsley Council on 30/11/2007. Reasons for the granting of planning permission were given in the report. The Chairman was concerned about the impact of the proposed housing development between Sandy Lane and Queensbury Way (Halton) on traffic at the roundabout and Cronton Road. The situation would be reviewed when a planning application was submitted to Halton Council.

10. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2019/20 AND INTERNAL AUDITOR APPOINTMENT 2020/21

- (a) Members received for consideration the remote Internal Audit Report for 2019/20 dated 22 May 2020. Two matters arising were noted and addressed.

- Financial Regulations – 3 quotations should have been obtained for the purchase of the 3 defibrillators. It was explained that 3 prices were obtained online but only asked for a quote from the lowest price supplier. In compliance with the Financial Regulations, 3 quotations would be obtained in future procurements.
- Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities – A list of expenditure above £100 should be published on the website. It was responded that the list would be published with the Annual Return 2019/20.

- (b) The Internal Audit Report of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 was presented to the Council.

It was resolved that the Internal Audit Report for 2019/20 be received and noted.

- (c) The Council was satisfied with the service of the Internal Auditor.

It was resolved that Mr David Blanchflower be re-appointed as the Internal Auditor for 2020/21 at the same audit fee of £97.

11. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) 2019/20 PART 3

- (a) **Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2019/20** – Members acknowledged their responsibility for ensuring that there was a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. They confirmed, to the best of their knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2020 that there were no weaknesses identified.

It was resolved that Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 be approved and signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

- (b) **Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20** – The Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer certified that for the year ended 31 March 2020 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return had been prepared on a receipts and payments basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a

Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and presented fairly the financial position of this authority.

It was resolved that Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

12. THE PASTURE MAINTENANCE CONTRACT FOR 2020/21

The Council was satisfied with the service provided by Knowsley Council. The maintenance contract had been extended for one more year at the price given for the optional second year.

It was resolved that approval for the Pasture maintenance contract extended for one year (2020/21) at £4,043.13 be ratified.

13. INSURANCE RENEWAL

The Council had a 3-year long term agreement with the insurance broker Came and Company (Local Council Insurance). The policy for 2020/21 was renewed on 19/3/20 at a premium of £4,043.13

It was resolved that approval for the insurance renewal for 2020/21 be ratified.

14. BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT

It was resolved that the Budgetary Control Report as at 22 June 2020 shown in Appendix A be received and approved.

15. RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

It was resolved that receipts and payments as listed in the attached Appendix B be noted and approved.

16. FIXED ASSET REGISTER

A copy of the Council's Fixed Asset Register for the year ended 31/3/20 was presented to the Council for information. The method of recording was based on the Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities (England) 2019 – The Practitioner's Guide (Section 5 – Fixed Assets and Equipment).

It was resolved that the Fixed Asset Register for the year ended 31/3/20 be noted and accepted.

17. GRANT APPLICATIONS 2020/21

Three grant applications were received. After careful consideration, **it was resolved** that the following grant allocations be approved.

- Cronton Community Association - £250 for new lighting of the Centre – outside and foyer.
- Cronton Senior Citizens Christmas Party - £350 for the Christmas Party 2020.
- Cronton Village Bowling - £100 for the maintenance of the green and surrounding area.

18. CYCLING PATH PROJECT

Awaiting information from Knowsley Council.

19. SUBMISSION OF HALTON DELIVERY AND ALLOCATIONS LOCAL PLAN

The Parish Council objected to the proposed developments of two parcels of Halton's Green Belt Land. The Halton Delivery and Allocation Local Plan had been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on the 5 March 2020.

It was resolved that a letter be sent to the Halton Programme Officer (assisting the Inspectors through the examination process) requesting the Parish Council be kept informed of progress.

20. VILLAGE AND COMMUNITY ISSUES

- (a) Ownership and maintenance responsibility of the Pasture – A Copy of the lease of the Pasture was presented. The terms relating to maintenance were noted.
- (b) Filling in the fence gaps at the back of the Pasture had been raised with Knowsley Council and the Police but funding was an issue. As it was a minor job (below £100), Councillor D Rostance undertook to obtain a quote.
- (c) Councillor T Byron would follow-up the return of the smiley face speed detection sign.

21. CRONTON NEWS

A bulletin covering the work of the Council since the lockdown on 23/3/20 was considered.

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm.

Signed _____ Date 27 July 2020