

**LONG ASHTON PARISH COUNCIL**  
**FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**19:30, 18<sup>th</sup> April 2017, Jubilee Pavilion**

Present:-

Ms S Hardingham - Chairman  
Mr C Cave  
Mrs B Mackwood (from 19:33)  
Mr R Sterland  
Mrs J Pullin  
Miss M Uppington  
Mr A Wilkinson

Absent:-

Mr D Johnson  
Mr N Moorcroft  
Mr I Scoones

In attendance: the Clerk, Dr J Turp, and Mrs V Lacey (minutes).

F17.23 - Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs D Johnson, Moorcroft and Scoones.

F17.24 - Declarations of Interests and Grant of Dispensations

Interests to be declared during the meeting and no dispensations were requested.

F17.25 - Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2017, copies having been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

F17.26 - Exclusion of the press and public

There were no matters necessitating the exclusion of the press and public.

F17.27 - Matters Arising

- a. F17.05a - Local Council Award Scheme. The application cannot be made until the audited accounts are received from the external auditor.
- b. F17.05b - Purchase of anti-virus software. This matter is ongoing.
- c. F17.05e - LULA. The organisers of last year's Christmas lights display are planning this year's event and will come to the F&GP or Council meeting in June to discuss the plans with councillors.
- d. F17.12 - Nationwide Bond – a new 12 month bond account has been opened.
- e. F17.17a - Training Defibrillator. The organiser of the defibrillator training days has been informed that the PC is happy to buy the training defibrillator and for her to have care of it whilst she is running the community training. Cllr Cave suggested that the PC should consider buying more defibrillators, as the ambulance service will only direct callers to one if it's within running distance.
- f. F17.16 - Cllr Mrs Pullin believed that the Parish Office working group report made to the committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> February should have reflected the PC intentions to pay for new storage needed to allow the PC to use the committee room. However, it was agreed that although this has been agreed in principle, there has been no formal resolution to that effect and a detailed proposal was needed so the PC knows what costs are involved. Cllr Mrs Pullin was asked to provide a proposal and costs to the next meeting to allow a decision to be made.

F17.28 - Payment of accounts and Payments to Council

A list of payments and receipts was presented to the meeting and the content noted and approved. It was RESOLVED to approve expenditure of **£21,903.68** and note

receipts of **£1567.50** (£41,789.18 was also transferred from the maturing Triodos Bond to the current account) for the months of February and March 2017. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Cave. All in favour. It was noted that it had been previously agreed that that LACA costs for Peel Park, above those for the maintenance contract will be reimbursed towards the end of the financial year.

#### F17.29 - Bi-monthly statement and Bank reconciliation

The bank reconciliation to the end of March 2017 was presented. The total amount in all accounts is **£511,621.66**. It was RESOLVED to approve the bi-monthly statement and bank reconciliation. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Mrs Mackwood. All in favour.

#### F17.30 - Review of Expenditure against Budget

Noted.

The appropriate level of general reserve was discussed. It is estimated that the PC had about £108,000 in General Reserves (GR) at the end of the last financial year, equivalent to 65% or 7.8 months of the precept. The PC recognises the need to keep reserves at a reasonable level in case NSC failed to pay the precept. It was agreed that the PC will aim to keep its GR at between 6-9 months of the precept, which is within the range recommended by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

#### F17.31 - External Audit

- a. Accounts for the year 2015/16 - to consider the External Auditor's report if available. The report is not yet available, Grant Thornton, has written to the PC to let it know that its governing body is now reviewing its response to the objection raised by a resident. It was noted that the Clerk has had to provide a substantial amount of information to the external auditors, as a result of the objection and the investigation surrounding it.
- b. Auditor's requirements for the financial year 16/17. The PC has been selected for an intermediate audit of its 16/17 accounts. Although this is probably due to the objection last year, the PC's income in 16/17 would have triggered an intermediate audit anyway. The Clerk will need to provide detailed additional evidence that the PC has complied with two of the governance statements over that required for the standard audit.

#### F17.32 - Taylor Wimpey Areas

- a. To receive update on the transfer of the Taylor Wimpey areas and lease to LACA. There has been no progress on this matter.
- b. Public Art. There has been no response from Taylor Wimpey to the PC's confirmation that it is happy to accept the offer of a cash payment to commission two public works of art for the Kings Croft and Chancellors Park estates.

#### F17.33 - To Review the following (circulated)

- a. Standing Orders. These were reviewed and it was RESOLVED to recommend to Council that the Standing Orders be adopted with no changes. Proposed by Cllr Miss Uppington, seconded by Cllr Cave. All in favour.
- b. Financial Regulations. These were reviewed and minor changes made to reflect recent changes in the NALC model regulations. It was RESOLVED to recommend to Council that the Financial Regulations be adopted with these changes. Proposed by Cllr Cave, seconded by Cllr Sterland. All in favour.
- c. S106 Taylor Wimpey areas earmarked reserve. The amount in this earmarked reserve has been finalised to take account of expenditure of £11,746 and income of £2,048 (bank interest), leaving £199,988 at the end of March. It was RESOLVED to set the Earmarked Reserve for the Section 106 Taylor Wimpey areas at £199,988. Proposed by Cllr Mrs Mackwood, seconded by Cllr Cave. All in favour.

F17.34 - Reinvestment of 6 month Triodos Bond (matures 6<sup>th</sup> May 2017) – to consider the options and to agree how to proceed.

It was RESOLVED to reinvest the proceeds of the maturing £73,700 bond into a 12 month Triodos account, paying 0.8% interest.. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham, seconded by Cllr Miss Uppington. All in favour. It was noted that the total in Triodos accounts was slightly above the compensation scheme level but this was thought to be an acceptable risk

F17.35 - CCLA Local Authorities Property Fund

The answers to questions posed by the Independent Financial Adviser (IFA) in order to gauge the PC's risk profile and assess if investment in the CCLA Local Authorities Property Fund is appropriate for the PC, were discussed and agreed.

F17.36 - Photocopier

Although the photocopier has been repaired, it was agreed that when it eventually fails quotes for a replacement machine can be sought, with the following functionality: A3 and colour photocopying; wireless connection; capacity to photocopy to both sides and to collate 21 copies.

F17.37 - Telephone Contract

It was RESOLVED to continue the PC's telephone contract with Mainstream Digital as it provides a very competitive package. Proposed by Cllr Miss Uppington, seconded by Cllr Mrs Mackwood. All in favour.

F17.38 - Three year Budget

A draft summary budget for the next three years was discussed. It aims to help councillors with the budget setting process in future years and will be subject to review. It shows differentiation between regular and planned one-off payments. It was agreed that the document should show an annual increase in the precept of 2% as cuts in the NSC budget are likely to mean that the PC may have to pick up some of the services. It was noted that the PC will receive precept income from the Audley Retirement's apartments on the former Redwood Lodge site. Minor changes were made to some headings and it was agreed that the costs for LACA and the Youth Club will be revisited in summer 2017 after discussions have been held with the organisations. With these changes, it was agreed to recommend the draft three year budget to full council.

F17.39 - Action Plan

A draft action plan was discussed and changes agreed to strengthen and clarify the contents. The draft action plan will be recommended to full council.

F17.40 - Village Club

a. Report on Valuation of building. The Chair expressed her disappointment that the valuation of the village club conducted by Maggs & Allen did not explicitly consider the potential impact of the building's Asset of Community Value status on its value. It was noted, however, that the lack of good comparable cases would have made this impact difficult to quantify.

b. Update on progress of community bids for the building. Hebron Church, one of the two community groups who were looking at preparing a bid for the building is still interested. It is hoped that its Asset of Community Value status will strengthen the group's bid. The other group is unlikely to progress with a bid. The Clerk will again contact the Royal British Legion's agent, Alder King, to check whether it can accept offers; and to alert NSC if not. The group has so far been unable to gain access to the building for a survey. It was noted that Long Ashton's Neighbourhood Development

Plan refers to the need to 'protect and enhance the community value of the asset' and the Chair will identify the community uses/value of the Village club as it was.

#### F17.41 - Parish Council office working group report

Cllr Mrs Pullin reported that the workshop has been tidied, but that LACA need more storage space and racking will not help, so this could take the form of an additional building. The Bowling Club has agreed to new cupboards in the lobby, allowing the PC to use the Committee room but the Spinners and Weavers have still to be consulted. Cllr Mrs Pullin will bring a detailed storage proposal and costs to the next F&GP meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> June.

#### F17.42 - Grant Applications

- a. To consider further information from LACA and to review and agree precise payment terms for the grant to LACA (including correspondence from LACA chairman). There was insufficient information available to discuss this at this meeting so Cllrs Cave and Mrs Pullin will bring detailed figures relating to LACA's charges to its largest user groups to the next Council meeting, and explain why the increased charges have not produced a corresponding reduction in LACA's grant request to the PC. The Clerk will, as agreed, hold back £1,000 from the PC's grant to LACA until the matter is satisfactorily resolved, and the PC is content that its grant is providing value for money.
- b. To consider arranging meeting with LACA to enable Councillors to engage fully on its working. LACA's chairman has invited all councillors to contact the manager of the community centre if they would like more information. It was noted that councillors would like to meet LACA's new treasurer and the meeting to discuss LACA's new constitution on 26<sup>th</sup> April would provide an opportunity to spend half an hour discussing LACA's finances and accounting systems with him.
- c. Community Grant – to review timetable and agree date for vetting meeting. The Community Grant decision meeting will be held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> October. The application deadline is 2<sup>nd</sup> May, and F&GP will vet all applications at an extra meeting at 7pm on 8<sup>th</sup> May.

#### F17.43 - Theynes Croft car park

The PC has instructed Wellers Hedleys, who provided a competitive quote of £575 + disbursements, to act as solicitors on behalf of the PC with regards to the lease between the PC and NSC. The possibility of making alterations to the car park, including the erection of signs and the removal of the mini roundabout will be raised before the lease is signed.

#### F17.44 - Correspondence

- a. From Triodos re updating information. As part of their regular information cycle Triodos have asked for information regarding the nature of the PC business. The information was confirmed and the form signed by Cllrs Hardingham and Miss Uppington.
- b. From LACA re Village Picnic. The PC has been invited to have a stall at the Village Picnic on 25<sup>th</sup> June. It was suggested that it could use the stall to ask for opinions on the government's consultation about banning charges for parkruns, The matter will be discussed further at the annual council meeting.

#### F17.45 - Matters for information

The Chair noted the Government's consultation on banning charges for parkruns, and for business users of green spaces - including dog walkers and personal trainers, and suggested the PC should respond to it.