

LONG ASHTON PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING
19:30, 18th December 2017, Jubilee Pavilion

Present:

Mr C Cave
Ms S Hardingham
Mr M Harris
Mr P Jackson
Mrs B Mackwood (until 21:05)
Mrs J Pullin
Mr R Sterland
Miss M Uppington
Mr A Wilkinson

Absent:

Mr N Moorcroft

In attendance: the Clerk, Dr J Turp, Mrs V Lacey (minutes) and Mr M Riggall, North Somerset Council (NSC) Liaison Officer, from 19:31 until 19:55.

Before the meeting, Mr Riggall explained the implications of General Data Protection Regulation coming into force in 2018.

F17.110 - Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Moorcroft.

F17.111 - Declarations of Interests and Grant of Dispensations

No dispensations were requested and it was agreed that interests would be declared during the meeting. It was noted that Cllrs Cave and Mrs Pullin and Hardingham and Jackson, as PC-nominated members of the Long Ashton Community Association (LACA) or the Youth Club management committee respectively, have dispensations to take part in and vote on matters relating to LACA and the youth club.

F17.112 - Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th October 2017, copies having been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Cllr Miss Uppington, seconded by Cllr Hardingham. Agreed.

F17.113 - Exclusion of the press and public

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

F17.114 - Matters arising

- a. F17.87- Change to Terms of Reference. This matter was discussed at the last council meeting and it was agreed that it would be reconsidered if F&GP was again inquorate or close to being so.
- b. F17.91b - Purchase of anti-virus software. This matter is ongoing.
- c. F17.70 - Issues around solo working. Ongoing.
- d. F17.95a - HMRC removing Transcash as a means to pay Tax & NI. It was RESOLVED that to ensure compatibility with HSBC's systems, the PC will now require just one signature on direct debits to HMRC for tax and national insurance payments. The Clerk will inform HSBC. Proposed by Cllr Wilkinson, seconded by Cllr Mrs Mackwood. All in favour.
- e. F17.95b - Reinvestment of Hampshire Trust Bank Bond – confirmed.
- f. F17.95f - New photocopier. This has been delivered.
- g. F17.99c - Hedge at back of Paulman Gardens. This matter is ongoing - a letter to residents has been drafted but not yet sent.

- h. F17.99 - Tree Protection Chancellors Park. The Clerk is waiting for a price from the contractor for cutting circular areas round the bases of tree trunks on Chancellors Park to protect them from strimmer damage.
- i. F17.101 - Hearing Loop. This matter is ongoing.
- j. F17.103 - Local Government Finance Settlement consultation. The PC responded to the consultation as agreed. The settlement has yet to be published.
- k. F17.105 - Village Orderly recruitment. A new village orderly has been appointed.

F17.115 - Payment of accounts and Payments to Council

A list of payments and receipts was presented to the meeting. It was RESOLVED to approve expenditure of £69,849.68 and note receipts of £2,522.88 for the months of October and November 2017. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham, seconded by Cllr Jackson. All in favour. The Clerk was asked to write to thank Alexander May and Volksfest for their donations to this year's Christmas lights.

F17.116 - Bi-monthly statement and Bank reconciliation

The bank reconciliations to the end of November 2017 were presented and checked. The total amount in all accounts is £560,435.55. 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.

F17.117 - Review of Expenditure against Budget Noted.

F17.118 - Finance items

- a. It was RESOLVED to vire £855 from admin contingency to audit and accountancy, to cover additional costs incurred on the 2015/2016 audit. Proposed by Cllr Cave, seconded by Cllr Wilkinson. All in favour.
- b. To agree that dog bins replacement included in Highways budget can be bought. It was RESOLVED to spend up to £2,000 on up to 10 new dog waste bins. Proposed by Cllr Mrs Mackwood, seconded by Cllr Harris. All in favour. It was noted that some of the newer bins are already rusting and that better quality bins are needed.
- c. It was RESOLVED that the PC will share with NSC the cost of new posts and no cycling signs for the footpath behind Copford Lane. The PC's contribution will be approximately £60. Proposed by Cllr Mrs Mackwood, seconded by Cllr Cave. All in favour.
- d. To agree to clerk getting quotes for contracts to maintain TW areas, Theynes Croft car park and to discuss getting quotes for Birdwell Rec/burial ground and Churchyard. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk will obtain quotes for maintenance work in Theynes Croft car park, Birdwell Recreation Ground, Chancellors Park and Kings Croft. Proposed by Cllr Cave, seconded by Cllr Miss Uppington. All in favour. Following discussion, it was agreed not to seek quotes for the churchyard and burial ground maintenance as the existing contractor is reliable and provides value for money.

F17.119 - To Review the following (circulated)

The draft risk assessment for the Village Orderly role was reviewed and agreed without change.

F17.120 - Taylor Wimpey Areas

- a. Transfer of the Taylor Wimpey areas and lease to LACA. There has been no update on this matter, however, the PC's solicitors have asked if the issue is still live and it was agreed that the clerk will reply to ask them to keep the file open.
- b. Public Art. Taylor Wimpey has not contacted the PC recently however, NSC's legal team is looking at the issue.

F17.121 - Parish Council office working group report

New furniture will be ordered for the committee room in the Jubilee Pavilion, which is now part of the PC office.

F17.122 - Community Grant

It was RESOLVED that the PC will continue the Community Grant – making two grants one of £1,500 and the other of £500. However, the PC reserves the right not to award the grants if there are just one or two applications for each grant, or if the applications are unsuitable or not good enough. The same timetable as last year will be used with applications due in May and the decision meeting in October. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham, seconded by Cllr Sterland. Motion carried with one abstention.

F17.123 - The new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The PC has budgeted £2,000 in 2018/19 to cover the cost of a Data Protection Officer (who cannot be the parish clerk) and an associated training and audit package, which may be provided by NSC. In due course Mike Rigall will be invited to talk to Full Council about GDPR and its requirements as details become clearer.

F17.124 – LACA Grant

A working group of Cllrs Hardingham, Sterland, Wilkinson and the clerk, has held several meetings with LACA to discuss this year's grant. Subject to another meeting between the parties to finalise the details, it was RESOLVED to make a one-year £33,050 grant to LACA, with a view to reaching a three-year settlement from next year. Proposed by Cllr Sterland, seconded by Cllr Wilkinson. All in favour. Contingency will be made for the eventuality that LACA's appeal against business rates for 2018/19 is not successful and for legal costs if they pursue changing their constitution to become a CIO.

F17.125 - Youth Club Grant

Cllr Jackson has a pecuniary interest in this item and left the meeting at 20:50, taking no part in the discussion or vote.

Following a discussion about the Youth Club's fundraising efforts and recognising its value to the community, it was RESOLVED that the PC will grant the Youth Club £17,500 for one year with the expectation that the group will undertake a community project within the year. A three-year settlement will then be considered going forward from next year. Proposed by Cllr Cave, seconded by Cllr Sterland. All in favour.

Cllr Mrs Mackwood left the meeting at 21:05. Cllr Jackson rejoined the meeting at 21:06. It was noted that as the Youth Club funding had been finalised Cllr Jackson could participate in the discussion of the budget.

F17.126 - Grant Applications

- a) £750 has been made available to the Children and Young Person's Network this financial year for it to provide grants for youth organisations within the parish. As the process is still new and no grants have yet been awarded this year, it was agreed that the allocation will be reduced to £500 for 2018/19, with the intention that it will be increased the following year.
- b) The PC had received a number of requests for grants. It was agreed to use the £810 remaining in the grant budget for this financial year to fund some of these requests.

Cllr Hardingham and Cllr Sterland had declared interests in the samba band and Friends of Keeds Wood & the Brake respectively, and took no part in the vote.

It was RESOLVED to award the following grants this financial year:

- £200 to Friends of Keeds Wood & the Brake, to buy tools;
- £300 to the LA Shed Project, towards insurance; and
- £310 to the Samba Band, towards the repair and replacement of musical instruments.

Proposed by Cllr Cave, seconded by Cllr Wilkinson. All in favour.

Following discussion about the remaining requests it was RESOLVED to make the following grants next financial year:

- £800 to Nailsea and District Community Transport to transport elderly residents or those with limited mobility.
- £600 to Citizens Advice North Somerset to fund general and specialist money, housing and welfare advice services.
- £300 to Wellspring Counselling to provide free and subsidised counselling services.
- £500 to St. Peter's Hospice towards a Cubescan Biocon scanner.
- £300 to the West of England MS Therapy Centre towards physiotherapy exercise classes.

The grant request for 'The Battle's Over', a celebration and memorial to mark 100 years since the end of WW1, was considered.

Cllrs Cave and Mrs Pullin declared an interest in this application, as members of the organising committee, and took no part in the vote.

It was recognised that funds are needed as deposits to secure the required services (eg marquees, lighting etc.) for this event and it was RESOLVED that £1500 will be made available this financial year from reserves towards these deposits subject to Cllrs Hardingham, Wilkinson and the clerk meeting with the organiser in January to confirm they are content with the arrangements. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Jackson, all in favour. It was RESOLVED that provision of £3,000 will be made in the 2018/19 budget towards the event or memorial with exact details to be agreed by Council. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham, seconded by Cllr Jackson, all in favour.

An application from Somerset Storyfest was refused as a similar project was funded last year and funds are limited this year. The Forest of Avon Trust will be encouraged to resubmit its proposal with more specific details, including the location of its tree planting scheme with funding possibly coming from the £1000 identified in the budget for planting.

F17.127 - Budget

The draft budget for 2018/19 was discussed in detail. Since the original draft was circulated it became evident that NSC's payment to the PC this financial year was based on more residences at Audley Redwood being occupied than is actually the case. This means that the precept for 2018/19 will be based on a smaller number of Band D equivalent homes than last year and adjustments needed to be made to the draft budget to accommodate this. It was noted too that the tax support grant from NSC for 2018/19 has been reduced by 50% to £1,600.

Changes to the draft budget were agreed, £10,500 of expenditure was removed, reducing budgeted expenditure to £190,970. £17,000 of this will be funded from the s106 money held to maintain the Taylor Wimpey Estates play areas and public open spaces/Peel Park and £12,567 from non- precept income. This left £161,403 to be funded from other sources. It was agreed that an increase of 2.8% in the Parish Council charge for a Band D property would be reasonable given the current 3.1% (CPI) inflation rate. This would have the effect of increasing the charge from £58.13 to £59.74 and yield a precept of 158,000. It was agreed that the remaining £3,403 would be funded from general reserves.

It was RESOLVED to recommend the amended draft budget, based on a precept of £158,000, to Full Council for adoption. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Cave. All in favour.

F17.128 - Assistant Clerk

a. To note resignation and to agree arrangements to recruit replacement and hours to be advertised. The Assistant Clerk has resigned, and will leave mid-January 2018. The Chair

thanked the Assistant Clerk and wished her luck for the future. It was agreed that the post would be advertised as 12 hours a week which will include providing admin support to the NDP review group. The salary range will be as for the present Assistant Clerk, ie SCP 20-24 on the NJC pay scale with an extra point available for obtaining CiLCA.

b. To agree to employ temporary cover until replacement clerk is employed. Temporary cover to take and produce the minutes of meetings, until a permanent replacement is recruited, at a similar rate of pay to the permanent role was agreed.

F17.129 - Theynes Croft car park

NSC has agreed the draft wording for new signs in Theynes Croft car park, and quotes for the signage are being obtained. The committee agreed that the car park should be insured for public liability only.

F17.130 - Finance Seminar - This will be discussed at the next F&GP meeting.

F17.131 - At the request of the Planning Committee to review and comment on amended plans for application 17/P/2466/F (Apple Tree Day Nursery) The PC notes that the proposed changes to the plans remove many of its concerns. However, it believes the application should still be refused as it maintains that the low take-up of places at Apple Tree Day Nursery does not reflect the urgent demand for nursery places in the village, and notes that the new residential development on the Barrow Hospital site will further increase that demand. The Long Ashton NDP Policy PLE2, makes retention of businesses and employment within the Parish a priority and states that: "Planning permission for conversion of business premises, (Classes B1, B2 and B8) to residential use will not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Any claim that the business is not viable should be supported by documentary evidence to show that the current use is no longer viable, alternative business uses have been seriously considered and adequately marketed."

F17.132 - Correspondence – to consider and respond to those listed and to note others

- a. From CCLA re Local Authorities' Property Fund November 17 prices/yield. Noted.
- b. From BT re increase in charges. BT's charges are increasing by £10 a quarter - noted.
- c. From snow warden requesting replacement grit bin for Theynes Croft. It was agreed that the PC will pay for this bin to be replaced, and that the developer should be reminded to replace the grit bin that was removed from the top of Glebe Road.
- d. From Triodos – the interest rate on the deposit account has gone up by 0.2%.
- e. From Hampshire Trust Bank confirming new bond. Noted.
- f. From resident re memorial stile/gate. A group hope to erect a stile or gate in memory of a resident. The committee had no objection to the idea and agreed that the Clerk will advise Cllr Lansley of the request, ask the NSC PROW Officer for advice and will reply to the resident before Christmas.
- g. From ALCA re GDPR. The Avon Local Councils Association (ALCA) has provided the PC with FAQs and facts about the General Data Protection Regulations, which come into force in May 2018.
- h. From Nationwide and HSBC. Both banks have written to the PC about changes to their terms and conditions.

F17.133 - Matters for information

The Parish Council Office will be closed at the end of the working day on Thursday 21st December 2017 and reopen on Tuesday 2nd January 2018.

F17.134 - To agree date for additional meeting if one is required following NS finalising of Tax Support Grant or any other relevant change or announcement.

A brief F&GP meeting will be held before the Planning meeting on 8th January, if necessary.

Date of next meeting: Monday 12th February 2018 Meeting closed at: 22:09