

LONG ASHTON PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING

19:30, 15th April 2019, Jubilee Pavilion

Present: Ms S Hardingham – Chairman

Mr C Cave

Mr M Harris

Mr P Jackson

Mr S McQuillan

Mr N Moorcroft

Mrs J Pullin

Mr M Semple

Mr R Sterland

Miss M Uppington

Mr A Wilkinson

Absent:

Mr A Batt

In Attendance: Dr Janet Turp (The Clerk), Mrs T Warren (Assistant Clerk, minutes).

F19.27 - Apologies for absence - received from Cllr Batt

F19.28 - Declarations of Interests and Grant of Dispensations

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

F19.29 - Minutes of previous meetings

The minutes of the meeting held on the 18th February having been circulated, and following the amendment of F19.06(d) to read 'there is only one Parish Cllr' were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Cllr Miss Uppington and seconded by Cllr Hardingham. All in favour.

F19.30 - Exclusion of the press and public

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

F19.31 - Matters arising

a) F19.06b – Plastic Free Long Ashton (PFLA) Community grant.

A report has been received from PFLA confirming that the grant money has been spent (with the exception of the money retained by the PC for a water fountain) and that Long Ashton is not far off obtaining certification as a Plastic Free community with 4 out of the 5 objectives achieved and two plastic free events to be organised to achieve the fifth. Litter pickers and gloves have been bought, a Terracycle bin is now in use at the Post Office and re-usable water bottles and coffee cups have been bought whose sale will provide funds for to enable PFLA to become financially sustainable. A report will be placed in the next newsletter.

b) F19.10b – Reinvestment of Nationwide Bond into a new 12 month bond has been completed.

F19.32 - Payment of accounts and Payments to Council

A list of payments and receipts was presented to the meeting. It was RESOLVED to approve expenditure during February and March at £22,168.72 and to note receipts of £2,302.76 over the same period. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Cave. All in favour.

F19.33 - Bi-monthly statement and Bank reconciliation

a) Cllr Miss Uppington agreed to review the bank reconciliation.

b) The bank reconciliation at 31st March 2019 and summary was presented. The total amount in all accounts is £546,226.44 including £41,600 long term investment. It was RESOLVED to approve the bimonthly statement and bank reconciliation. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Jackson. All in favour.

F19.34 - Review of Expenditure against Budget - This was noted.

F19.35 - Finance Items

- a) Reinvestment of 12 month Triodos Bond; it was noted the PC has sufficient liquidity to be able to invest the funds from the maturing bond into a fixed term bond if desired. A list of available deposit accounts and bonds was considered, it was RESOLVED to reinvest monies in a Triodos Business Fixed Term Deposit Bond for a 12 month period at 0.9% gross AER. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham, seconded by Cllr Cave. All in favour.
- b) Insurance policy; update and to confirm the long-term agreement (3 years) – As the additional cost for adding the defibrillators was just over £20 the Zurich Policy had been accepted. It was RESOLVED to enter into a three year long term agreement with Zurich. Proposed by Cllr Moorcroft seconded Cllr Wilkinson. All in favour.
- c) To consider request for support for insurance for village parade – this will be covered by LACA's insurance policy so support from the PC is not required.
- d) To approve spending on the planters to use the High St. clean-up fund allocation. It was RESOLVED to agree spending of the High St Clean-up fund at £769 on a planter in the shaded area outside Chestnut Dental practice, to include a suitable tree, with the dentist to pay the balance and to delegate agreement of the size of the planter and tree to the Clerk in consultation with Cllr Hardingham. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham, seconded by Cllr Cave with 1 abstention.

F19.36 - Gardeners Walk play Area

- a) Sovereign's revised quotation package was circulated and discussed. It was noted that NSC's project management fee is 10%. It was RESOLVED to accept the 'option 3' quotation at £23,689.58 and to pass this to NSC to proceed with works. Proposed by Cllr Moorcroft, seconded by Cllr Cave. All in favour.
- b) Of the £48,592.49 s106 money £17,000 has been spent by LACA on playground improvements and the expenditure on the play area agreed above. It was RESOLVED that any residual money should be held by the PC to be spent on the resurfacing of the community centre tennis courts and /or the skate park project and also to pay the legal costs associated with the lease for the land at Gardeners Walk. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham, seconded by Cllr Moorcroft. All in favour.

F19.37 - LACA/PC Joint working group

The LACA representatives were reminded about the need for a business plan to be drawn up. Cllr Pullin replied that the plan is ongoing with new trustees finding time to work on it.

F19.38 - Library

The working group will meet on 17th April to discuss the next steps to carry out a survey of suitable sites for a porta-cabin and further engagement.

Cllr D Johnson advised that two Architect Planning degree students are carrying out a project based around the community centre as part of their studies. The students will meet with the Clerk, Cllrs and LACA representatives. It was agreed that the student's printing costs and similar can be met by the PC but that other expenses will need to be met from the Chairman's allowance.

F19.39 - Community Grant

Two grants are available at £1,000 and £500 of which the application deadline is 14th May. An extra F&GP meeting will be held on Monday 20th May at 7p.m to review the grant applications.

F19.40 - Reserves

- a) The amounts in the TW areas, Christmas Lights and the VES consultation earmarked reserves were reviewed to take account of recent expenditure and were finalised at £180,048, £1,509 and £603 respectively. The Earmarked Reserves supporting document was amended to remove a duplication of wording in the Planning section.
- b) General reserves – to note new JPAG advice and to agree target level for reserve. The JPAG advice on general reserves has been updated and advises that general reserves should be between 3 and 12 months of Net Revenue Expenditure (NRE), with councils with higher precepts towards the lower end. It was estimated that at the end of 2018/19 the PC general reserves will be about 8.5 months of NRE but that planned expenditure will take it to about 6 months NRE at the end of 2019/20. The correct level of reserve for the PC was discussed to ensure a reasonable level to allow for unexpected expenditure and also if there were any delay in receiving the precept

so that the PC can continue to operate for a reasonable time; it was RESOLVED to aim to keep General Reserves at around 6 months of NRE. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham, seconded by Cllr Miss Uppington. All in favour.

F19.41 - Taylor Wimpey Areas

- a) Transfer of the Taylor Wimpey areas and lease to LACA – no update
- b) Public Art; update from Taylor Wimpey – no update
- c) Replacement of trees; no update
- d) Annual Play area inspection reports – update on repairs. The two damaged posts on swings in the Kings Croft play area have now been replaced.
- e) Replacement for logs in Chancellors Park play area; Ongoing
- f) Replacement bench for Kings Croft play area; ordered

F19.42 - Parish Council Office Working Group; no update but item to remain on the agenda.

F19.43 - To Review the following (previously circulated)

- a) Standing Orders – changes had been suggested to take account of NALC's amendments to the April 2018 model standing orders, these were reviewed and it was RESOLVED to recommend to Council that the Standing Orders be adopted with these amendments Proposed by Cllr Hardingham, seconded by Cllr Semple. All in favour.
- b) Financial Regulations – The financial regulations were reviewed and it was agreed that further clarification was needed as to what the clerk could authorise and that the following should be added to section 4.1 The Clerk is authorised to purchase revenue items required for the day to day running of the office (stationery, stamps, printer and computer consumables, small items of equipment and similar) as long as expenditure within 1 month does not exceed £300. It was RESOLVED to recommend the amended Financial Regulations to Council. Proposed by Cllr Cave, seconded by Cllr Wilkinson. All in favour.

F19.44 – Long Ashton Action Plan 2019/2020

The draft Action Plan was reviewed. It was RESOLVED to recommend the document to Council, with the suggestion that it is reviewed in November before consideration of the budget. Proposed by Cllr Jackson, seconded by Cllr McQuillan. All in favour.

F19.45 - Three year Budget; to consider draft, agree any changes and to recommend to Council

The draft document was discussed and following minor amendments to the skate park and Leigh Wood enhancement budgets it was RESOLVED to recommend the budget to Council. Proposed by Cllr Jackson, seconded by Cllr McQuillan. All in favour

F19.46 - External Audit; Auditor's requirements for the financial year 2018/2019

The PC will not be subject to an Intermediate Audit as it not one of the 5% randomly selected and both expenditure and income are below £200,000. The deadline for the auditors to receive the annual report is 1st July. As part of the governance review, the PC needs to review the effectiveness of internal audit which can be carried out at June's F&GP meeting.

F19.47 - Annual Parish meeting

Representatives from the war memorial group and Tyntesfield will be attending as speakers. In addition to the committee reports updates on the Library and VES will be given. Cllrs were asked to help with serving refreshments and setting up the hall.

F19.48 - Facebook

Cllr Semple will continue to update the Facebook page until an alternative is agreed by the new council. It was agreed to suggest to the new council that a business account is considered.

F19.49 - Youth Club management Committee

If a second PC representative for the Youth Club management committee is not appointed at the annual meeting, it was agreed that an extra level of oversight will be discussed including financial controls and visibility.

F19.50 - Co-option of Councillors for new council

It was noted the PC will lose the General Power of Competence on May 7th as there will not be sufficient elected Cllrs. The process to co-opt Cllrs if insufficient people stand for election is different from that for a casual vacancy. If it is done within 34 days of the new Council being formed then the procedure is simpler. Cllrs could be co-opted at the Annual meeting on 13th May. Declarations of Interests forms need to be completed within 28 days of taking office.

F19.51 - Correspondence

- a) JPAG – Revised practitioners guide; this is to be included in Cllrs purple folders
- b) CCLA – Market Reports - noted
- c) LAPF prices - noted
- d) PSDF factsheets - noted
- e) Great Western Air Ambulance asking for support – it was agreed to send them details of the PC grants procedure.
- f) Resident re Grant policy – the resident asked the committee to look at its grant policy in light of general Power of Competence. The PC considered the residents' comments, however, it believes the Grant Policy is fully compliant and in any event the PC will lose the GPC after May 7th. It notes that it has made no grants to the RBL in the recent past and believes that it is right for grants not to be made retrospectively as the grants are designed to allow something to happen and if the request is retrospective it has already happened.
- g) Long Ashton Girl Guiding; a thank you for the grant of £150 was noted.

F19.52 - Matters for information

Gardener recruitment – there has been no response to the first round of advertising and it was agreed the vacancy will be re-advertised including placing adverts in the Post Office and the Long Ashton & Failand newspaper.

F19.53 - Quote for replacement of Dog Bins.

It was RESOLVED to accept the quotation at £450 + VAT. Proposed by Cllr Moorcroft, seconded by Cllr Harris. All in favour.

F19.54 - Quote for work on Birdwell Rec and Burial Ground

The current contractor has reduced his 19/20 price to £130 and no additional quotations have been received as yet. It was RESOLVED to accept the reduced quotation of £130 (noting that additional works have been included) and not to seek further quotes. Proposed by Cllr Harris, seconded by Cllr Cave, all in favour.

The Clerk and Assistant Clerk left the meeting at 21:13.

F19.55 - Staff salary matters

After thorough discussions, the working group evaluated the clerks role as remaining at LC2+ (medium parish) but borderline for LC3- (large parish), subject to clarification as to interpretation of the job evaluation scheme. Advice will be sought from SLCC on those points. The working group recommended a re-evaluation of the clerk's role in 12 months' time if circumstances change. The working group also recommended an increment for exceptional performance by the clerk to point 40 on the old scale, which is point 34 on the new scale. This committee can decide on the increment to take effect from 1st April 2019. It was RESOLVED to accept the recommendations of the working group, proposed by Cllr Hardingham seconded by Cllr Wilkinson, all in favour.

Cllr Hardingham thanked the committee for all their work during their period of office.

Meeting closed at: 21:20

Date of additional meeting Monday 20th May 2019 at 7 pm

Date of next ordinary meeting Monday 10th June 2019 at 7:30 pm