

LONG ASHTON PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING 19:30, 12th August 2019, Jubilee Pavilion

Present: Ms S Hardingham – Chairman
Ms S Barnes
Mr M Harris
Mr P Jackson
Mr D Johnson
Mr M Semple

Absent:
Mr A Cartman
Mr C Cave
Mr A Johnson
Mr T Weir
Mr A Wilkinson

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

F19.86 - Apologies for absence

Received from Cllrs Cartman, Cave, A. Johnson, Weir and Wilkinson.

F19.87 - Declarations of Interests and Grant of Dispensations.

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

F19.88 - Minutes of previous meetings

The minutes of the meeting held on the 10th June 2019 copies having been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Cllr Barnes and seconded by Cllr Harris. All in favour.

F19.89 - Exclusion of the press and public

It was agreed that the correspondence from 'Your Law' would require exclusion of the press and public, if any were present, due to its confidentiality.

F19.90 - Matters arising

- a) F19.65a – PFLA Community Grant. PFLA have responded to say that they are still investigating the long term feasibility of a water fountain – it was agreed to inform PFLA that an outside push top tap at the community centre would be acceptable, with appropriate measures to protect against frost and to isolate the tap from inside the premises.
- b) F19.65c – Planters; A planter and tree is now in place outside the Dental practice and, following the agreement of each of the four businesses to make a donation towards the cost, two planters and a bench will be installed in the Post Office area.
- c) F19.69a – Monuments; ongoing.
- d) F19.70 - Gardeners Walk play area and s106 money from Tydings Close; NSC have now provided a Purchase Order to the contractor and an installation date is awaited.

F19.91 - Payment of accounts and Payments to Council

A list of payments and receipts was presented. It was RESOLVED to approve expenditure at £43,521.05 during June and July and to note receipts at £21,413.25 over the same period. Proposed by Cllr Barnes and seconded by Cllr Harris. All in favour.

F19.92 - Bi-monthly statement and Bank reconciliation

- a) Cllr Harris was appointed to review the bank reconciliation.
- b) The bank reconciliation at 31st July 2019 and summary was presented. The total amount in all accounts is £578,302.64 including £41,600 in a 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.

F19.93 - Review of Expenditure against Budget – noted.

The report was considered and net income over expenditure at 8th August 2019 of £37,897 noted. The £500 remaining in the grants heading is for grants to youth organisations.

F19.94 - Finance Items Accounts for the year 2018/19

- a) Progress of external audit – the report is not yet available.
- b) Prolific Solutions have written offering a service to cover ICT related call outs for the photocopier, which the PC owns but pays a per page fee to Prolific to cover consumables and maintenance. It was agreed that the additional cost at £15 per month was not cost-effective and would not be taken up by the PC.

F19.95 - VES – to consider the costs of the proposed programme.

Cllr Hardingham gave the following report:

“Members of the VES working group have had a meeting on 12th August with NS Highways: there will be some delay and the costs are being revised. Much of the project is agreed, and should go ahead in January or February. Three additional items can be done this winter over and above the original VES budget of £32,000. These are in response to the consultation which shows there is much support for more traffic calming, but will cost £8,200 approximately with the same TRO being used to minimise costs; these are the areas that have given the PC cause for concern over a number of years, so it is beneficial that solutions can be followed up now.

Other costs have increased and NS costs quantified. Some parts of the project will be delayed until March/April. A full report will be made to Council on September 9th, but so that NS can proceed now within the timetable and in the hope that the full project can proceed without omitting any part, the committee was asked to approve additional funding for the VES.

Two parts of the project need a topographical survey before further progress, namely the area in front of Piccolo’s and the crossing outside the Co-op (because of drainage). NS will arrange the survey, but have no funds for this project. More detail will be provided at the next Council meeting on September 9th”

After careful discussion, it was RESOLVED to agree to expenditure up to £600 for the topographical survey from the professional fees budget and to recommend to Council £6,500 further funding for the VES from general reserves. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham, seconded by Cllr Semple. All in favour.

F19.96 - LACA/PC Joint working group

It was agreed to write to LACA to ask for the original working group letter to be circulated to all Trustees, and to agree a meeting date. It was agreed to approve Cllr Anderson’s request to join the working group.

F19.97 – Library; to receive report from working group and to agree budget allocation between capital and revenue expenditure.

A full report will be presented to the Council in September. The working group has held a productive meeting with LACA to discuss the long term vision of the community site noting LACA’s requirement for storage and office space for the PC. The working group propose considering the additional requirements separately to the library space in order to minimise costs. The working group is considering increasing capital costs and purchasing a container instead of a porta-cabin to give a more sustainable, long-term option which would have an asset value, compared to that of a second-hand terrapin which would likely require significant refurbishment before use. It was noted that there is budgetary provision of £22,000 for capital costs and £15,000 for running costs the latter is unlikely to be needed in full as the library won’t be open until 2020. Therefore, the Library Working Group has asked the Committee whether there could be flexibility in the library budget between the capital and revenue expenditure. It was RESOLVED to approve that there can be flexibility this year in allocation of the budgeted figures between capital and running costs.

Proposed by Cllr Semple and seconded by Cllr D. Johnson. All in favour. It was noted that an additional £1,500 was set aside for a hub feasibility study in this year's budget.

F19.98 - Parish Council office working group to consider future options for the Parish Council office, possibly within the library building.

The current office space is recognised as not being ideal. However, it is likely that for cost considerations the community library building will not be able to accommodate the PC office. It was agreed that options need to be fully explored in conjunction with the vision of a community hub, and to meet the requirements of LACA, the PC and library.

F19.99 - Skate park

Cllr Jackson gave the following report:

"The Working Group has met recently to discuss the project. It was noted that Clevedon Town Council are currently building a skate park. It would be useful to make contact to understand their experiences, and would like the Clerk to make contact. The working group has prepared four draft principles for discussion and agreement:

1. The skate park project be classed as a Parish Council project:
2. The skate park Working Group will lead the process on behalf of the Parish Council (including tender, consultation, planning permission & build)
3. To recognize the need for regular discussion with Long Ashton Community Association (LACA) for awareness and to discuss and work any concerns
4. It is intended that the working group will raise funding and donate this to the Parish Council. To support this, the working group has discussed forming a charity"

It was noted that the PC does not have the power to impose the location of the skate park as LACA lease the land and will be maintaining the facility. Following discussion around the principles of the skate park, it was agreed that the skate park should be a PC project in partnership with LACA, that the working group will lead the process of behalf of both the PC and LACA and that it will work with LACA to deliver the project. It was agreed to delegate drafting the detailed wording of the principles of operation to Cllrs Hardingham, Jackson, D. Johnson and the Clerk and to be brought, together with the working group's terms of reference, to full council for approval.

F19.100 - PC for the 2020s:

- a) Workshop; the recent workshop was noted to have been positive and well attended. The facilitator's report is awaited. It was suggested that a corporate strategy or vision is outlined to include Leigh Woods issues. Cllrs were asked to complete the questionnaire.
- a) PC branding - Cllrs Barnes and D. Johnson are to review this item and identify any volunteers who may wish to assist.
- b) Participation in meetings by members of the public; it was noted that a resident wishes to speak before the next Council meeting. It was agreed this item will be considered in a review of Standing Orders.
- c) PC to book village market stand on 2nd November. Cllrs to confirm attendance for this and the Apple Day on 6th October.
- d) Increased use of social media; it was suggested that a community engagement working group should be set up at the next council meeting on Sept 9th.

F19.101 - Youth Club management Committee

It was agreed that as Committee meetings are now being held 5 times per year, that the committee is full and a meeting having taken place recently that no additional oversight is needed.

F19.102 - Advertising banner masts

It was noted that NSC had removed advertising boards from the highway but it is not known whether these had been returned to their owners. Cllr Barnes is reviewing advertising options and suitable sites within the parish.

F19.103 - Community Grant; decision meeting on 9th October.

It was agreed to invite the grant applicants to an information meeting prior to the decision meeting. Cllr D. Johnson will Chair the decision meeting.

F19.104 - Internal audit /controls

Cllr Barnes and D. Johnson have reviewed the internal audit and controls with the clerk. There were a few small items of detail to be followed up but generally everything was in place and a report will be available shortly.

F19.105 - Asset Register

The register has been amended to include changes suggested by the Internal Auditor. The changes were noted.

F19.106 - Taylor Wimpey Areas

- a) Transfer of the Taylor Wimpey areas and lease to LACA – no update at this time.
- b) Public Art; no update at this time.
- c) Replacement for logs in Chancellors Park play area – on-going.
- d) Replacement bench for Kings Croft play area update – a new contractor is being sought with a quote awaited.
- e) Annual play area reports – the reports were noted and it was agreed to delegate authority to the Clerk in consultation with Cllr Barnes and Hardingham to approve expenditure on the identified works. A quote has been sought.

F19.107 - To agree to purchase new monitor for Assistant clerk

It was agreed to give approval to the Clerk to purchase a new monitor for the Assistant Clerk, up to a cost of £110. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Barnes. All in favour.

F19.108 - Correspondence

- a) From CCLA – Market Reports, LAPF prices, PSDF factsheets; noted.
- b) From CCLA – Re redemption; noted.
- c) From NSC requesting permission for re-use event on 8th October – It was agreed that the PC would support this event and accept the cost of the venue hire for this year and in the future.
- d) From HSBC re bank charges; the increase in bank charges was noted and it was agreed that the Clerk should investigate accounts allowing online banking with dual-authorisation, noting that HSBC do not offer this facility.
- a) From DIAL requesting grant – it was agreed to respond that they could apply for a grant next year.
- b) From Wellspring re grant funding – The award of a National Lottery grant to Wellspring was noted
- c) From resident re car club; it was agreed to respond to the resident to confirm that in principle, the PC supports this initiative and is happy for the resident to investigate further with the possibility that the Theynes Croft Car Park might be a suitable location.
- d) From 'Your Law' re incident – The PC insurers have been notified of the letter and have made a site visit but are likely to agree that the responsibility does not lie with the PC and they will inform Your Law appropriately.

F19.109 - Matters for information

- a) Finance briefing for all Cllrs 30th September, 7.30 pm, Pavilion – noted.
- b) NALC are running a survey about the recent elections for Cllrs to complete; the chair had replied questioning why the election papers had to be taken by hand to NSC in Weston.

Meeting closed at: 22:05

Date of next meeting – Monday 21st October 2019