

LONG ASHTON PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING 19:30, 21st October 2019, Jubilee Pavilion

Present: Ms S Hardingham – Chairman
Mr M Harris
Mr P Jackson
Mr D Johnson
Mr S McQuillan
Mr A Wilkinson

Absent:
Ms S Barnes
Mr A Cartman
Mr C Cave
Mr A Johnson
Mr M Semple
Mr T Weir

In Attendance: Dr Janet Turp (The Clerk), Mrs T Warren (Assistant Clerk, minutes) and one member of the public.

At 19:30 a member of the public addressed the committee during public participation on monuments and the PC's grant policy.

F19.110 - Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Barnes, Cave, Semple, and Weir. It was noted that the committee's Terms of Reference state that membership of the Committee includes the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of the Highways and Burial Ground and Planning Committees so Cllrs Anderson and Lloyd-Jones will be invited to attend future meetings.

F19.111 - Declarations of Interests and Grant of Dispensations.

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

F19.112 - Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th August 2019 copies having been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Cllr D. Johnson and seconded by Cllr Jackson. All in favour.

F19.113 - Exclusion of the press and public

No matters necessitated the exclusion of the press and public

F19.114 - Matters arising

a) F19.90a – PFLA Community Grant

PFLA have been informed that LACA is happy to arrange to have a water access point fitted using the grant money awarded to PFLA if that would be easier. In response to a resident enquiry, the Clerk will write to PFLA to enquire whether Long Ashton has gained 'Plastic Free' status yet. If the PFLA group is no longer active then its activities can be included in the discussions about climate change and wider environmental issues.

b) F19.90b – Planters; final payments are awaited from businesses.

c) F19.90c – Monuments; ongoing. It was agreed that availability of the Churchyard Charity funds should be investigated.

d) F19.90d - Gardeners Walk play area and s106 money from Tydings Close; the play area installation should be completed this week.

e) F19.104 - Internal audit /controls – report noted.

f) F9.08d – Alternative bankers

It was noted that Triodos Bank and Unity Trust bank offer dual authorisation and other banks are being investigated.

g) F19.08h - From Your Law re incident. The PC insurers have written to say that the claim has been refuted and passed to the party responsible for the area where the accident occurred.

F19.115 - Payment of accounts and Payments to Council

A list of payments and receipts was presented at the meeting. It was RESOLVED to approve expenditure at £37,495.14 during August and September and to note receipts at £88,335 over the same period. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Wilkinson. All in favour

F19.116 - Bi-monthly statement and Bank reconciliation

- a) Cllr Harris was appointed to review the bank reconciliation. It was noted that HSBC no longer accepts PO boxes as the primary correspondence address.
- b) The bank reconciliation at 30th September 2019 and summary was presented. The total amount in all accounts is £625,855.25 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 Harris. All in favour.

F19.117 - Review of Expenditure against Budget

This was considered and net income over expenditure at 16th October 2019 of £86,662 noted. £2,910 of the Election costs budget remains unspent, as there was no election, and can be made available for alternative uses. It was agreed in principle in principle that if the money earmarked for the Leigh Woods parking scheme is no longer required by NSC for the residents parking scheme, which is meant to be self-funding, it will be retained for expenditure within Leigh Woods.

F19.118 - Skate Park

a) Key Principles

It was RESOLVED to agree to the following Key Principles

1. The skate park project is a Parish Council led project, recognizing that LACA is a key stakeholder
2. The working group recognises the need to liaise closely with LACA for two-way communication, including appointing a LACA trustee onto the working group.
3. The working group will lead the process (including tender, consultation, planning permission & build) but always subject to Parish Council approval
4. It is intended that the working group will raise funding; this may be done by the working group forming a charity.

Proposed by Cllr Jackson and seconded by Cllr Hardingham. All in favour.

b) Skate Park Working Group Terms of Reference

The draft ToRs were discussed and following minor amendment it was RESOLVED to agree the terms of reference as modified and appended. Proposed by Cllr Jackson and seconded by Cllr McQuillan. All in favour. Because of timing in the standard contract terms a sub-committee with delegated powers may be required and this will be discussed when the decision making requirements are clearer.

c) Skate Park budget increase.

It was noted that £1000 is allocated in this year's budget for initial works and this will not be sufficient to cover the two key pre-tender items of expenditure that are necessary before the end of this financial year; (1) a site survey as part of tender document at an estimated cost of £1500 and (2) the purchase of a licensed copy of an NEC (New Engineer Contract) estimated at an upper limit of £300. It was agreed that these items are necessary and it was RESOLVED to agree to this expenditure and to vire £1,000 from the election budget to the Skate Park budget. Proposed by Cllr Jackson, and seconded by Cllr McQuillan.

- d) It was RESOLVED to approve the purchase of a single source NEC 3 Engineering and Construction Short Contract. Proposed by Cllr Jackson and seconded by Cllr McQuillan. All in favour. It was noted that an electronic contract would be required.

F19.119 - Community Grant

- a) Future grants - Attendance at the decision meeting was disappointing with only 6 Cllrs and 10 members of the public present in addition to those giving presentations. It was agreed that due to poor public participation and the low number of applications in recent years, the Community

Grant would not be continued. The £1500 granted would be added to the PC grants budget. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr D. Johnson. All in favour.

- b) Community Grants award – at the recent decision meeting the Scouts Hall project won the vote for the £1,000 grant and the Build A Spitfire Group for the £500 grant. It was noted that whilst the Build a Spitfire group has some cross-over with Man Shed, who received last year's community grant, it was agreed that Man Shed is involved in many community projects and can be treated as an umbrella organisation in the same way as Transition LA is. It was RESOLVED that the Community Grants be awarded to the Scouts and the Spitfire Group. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Harris. All in favour.

F19.120 - Publicity proposal

To discuss the publicity and communications proposal and to agree to fund publicity items. Cllr D Johnson had prepared a report which was circulated. It was noted that the PC does not have clear, professional material to identify it when engaging with the public and it was suggested that branding across all methods of communication is revisited and an easily identifiable logo produced. Quotes for the design work (logo – based on the village sign, banner, leaflet, headed notepaper, compliment slips, business cards) had been obtained from three local companies and were £1,180, £390 and £250.

It was RESOLVED to agree that:

- The Parish Council accepts the lowest quote for the work and that £1000 is vired from the election costs budget to the miscellaneous admin budget and the costs met from there.
- The Clerk is given delegated authority to enter into such agreements as is needed, up to a maximum total value of £1,000.
- A small group, consisting of Cllrs Barnes, D Johnson and McAllister Kemp and the clerk will agree the logo and the content of the material to be produced.

Proposed by Cllr D Johnson and seconded by Cllr Jackson. All in favour. It was noted that the PC should own the copyright for any logo produced.

It was agreed that appointments to the Community Engagement working group should be made at the next Council meeting and they should undertake a review of the Parish Council's community engagement and communications work, including social media and other communications methods.

Work on the advertising banner masts is ongoing.

F19.121 - Financial Regulations

Only minor changes are required for these to meet the changes to the NALC model regulations so they will be reviewed in April.

F19.122 - Employment working group

It was RESOLVED to create an Employment Working Group and Cllrs Hardingham, D Johnson, McQuillan and Wilkinson were appointed to the group to make recommendations on staffing to inform next year's budget. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr McQuillan. All in favour.

F19.123 - Recycling initiative; grant request

A request from the Post Office owners for a PC grant or sponsorship to support the siting of solid Terracycle bins at the rear of the PO building was discussed. It was agreed that the PC responds to say they are very supportive of the principle but want to think about the plan in the context of the wider village priorities. It was agreed to invite the Post Office owners to the 'LA CAN' meeting on 13th November and that Cllrs D Johnson and McQuillan visit the Post Office to discuss their ideas further.

F19.124 - Finance Items

- a) Accounts for the year 2018/19 -To note the external auditors report – the auditors gave the PC return an unqualified report. The Chairman thanked the Clerk for her work on the return.
- b) Reinvestment of Hampshire Trust Bank Bond – It was RESOLVED to reinvest the proceeds of the maturing bond (£78,035.01) into a new Hampshire Trust 1 year Business Bond at 1.76%. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded Cllr Wilkinson. All in favour.
- c) Wreath for Remembrance Day – It was RESOLVED to approve expenditure under s137 of £30 for the purchase of a Remembrance Day wreath. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Wilkinson. All in favour.
- d) Burial ground planting – The new gardener has planting in mind for the burial ground. It was noted that about £300 has been spent in this financial year. It was RESOLVED to approve expenditure of a further £200 in this financial year for plants for the burial ground. Proposed by Cllr Wilkinson and seconded by Cllr Jackson. All in favour. It was agreed to ask the gardener for a planting scheme for next year so a budget can be decided.

21:18 – meeting suspended to allow a member of the public to speak

21:19 – meeting reconvened

F19.125 - To Review the following (previously circulated)

- a) Small Grant Policy; the policy was reviewed. Given concerns raised about grant applicants complying with their organisation’s grant policy it was RESOLVED to agree to amend the policy to add the sentence “Any applicant is to confirm that they have complied with their organisation’s internal grant application process, if any” to the guidance and to add the sentence “Have you complied with your organisation’s internal grant application process, if any?” to the application form. A resident has questioned whether the PC can legally exclude businesses from those it will give grants to and this will be checked.
- b) Clerk’s job description. It was RESOLVED to approve the Clerk’s and RFO’s job descriptions with the amendment to add ‘and updated as required’ following “To be reviewed annually in October each year’. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Harris. All in favour.
- c) Freedom of Information - available information guide. This had been amended to take account of new documents available on the website and the closure of the library. It was RESOLVED to accept the amended document. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Jackson. All in favour.
- d) It was RESOLVED to agree to adopt the Complaints policy following updating of the Chairman’s contact details. Proposed by Cllr Harris, seconded by Cllr Jackson. All in favour.
- e) It was RESOLVED to agree to adopt the Policy on Residents identified as generating an unusually large volume of correspondence with the Parish Council with no amendments. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr McQuillan. All in favour.

F19.126 - NSC summit meeting and meeting at Clevedon TC

A report will be available shortly. The next meeting at Clevedon TC will be on 3rd December 2019 and representation will be discussed at the next Council meeting.

F19.127 - Library

A draft budget for the library for this financial year showing comparative costs of a used modular building and refurbished shipping containers was discussed. It was noted that the most expensive option was estimated to be about £12,000 over the initial budget but was for a 10 year building rather than the 3 year building originally envisaged. It was noted that the purchase of used shipping containers or modular buildings would mean that the size, facilities, ability to customise and availability could not be guaranteed. The Committee agreed in principle that additional funds could be found from reserves as this is a project that the PC sees as a priority to support. Cllr McQuillan agreed to provide an updated breakdown of running costs, to provide further information on the number of volunteers, to clarify the professional fees included in the budget and to confirm any CIL/S106 monies available from NSC. This item will be brought to full Council. It was agreed the Clerk will take advice from SLCC re the funding of the running costs.

21:51 – The member of the public left the room.

F19.128 - LACA/PC Joint working group

A meeting with LACA has been held; the new Treasurer is in place and their draft long term strategy is being drawn up and includes the skate park, a permanent library and hub. LACA will consult with the PC before its strategy is finalised.

F19.129 - Theynes Croft Car Park

It was agreed that the Clerk will contact the PC representative on the War Memorial working group to discuss removal of stone from the disabled parking space.

F19.130 - Taylor Wimpey Areas

- a) Transfer of the Taylor Wimpey areas and lease to LACA – no update.
- b) Public Art – update from Taylor Wimpey – none.
- c) Replacements for logs in Chancellors Park play area – ongoing.
- d) Replacement bench for Kings Croft play area – awaiting contractor fitting.
- e) Play area repairs – contractors have been requested to proceed with works.

F19.131 - Correspondence

- a) From NSC - Consultation on Baytree Special School – It was agreed the Clerk responds to NSC to confirm its support for the additional school and that the PC is pleased to see better provision for those living in the north of North Somerset.
- b) From CCLA; PSDF factsheets, market reports and LAPF prices - Noted.

F19.132 - Matters for information

- a) Precepts – it was noted that no cap will be applied to PC precepts in 2020/2021.
- b) Web accessibility requirements – new regulations will apply to the PC's website from September 2020.

Meeting closed at: 22:02

Date of next meeting – Monday 16th December 2019

Terms of reference for the Skatepark Working Group

Membership

Councillors Jackson, Semple, Cartman, Weir, Cave and Barnes; plus LACA representative plus residents to be invited.

Areas of responsibility

1. To draw up proposals for approval by the Parish Council for a skatepark to be designed and built as envisaged by the NDP and supported through a 250 signature petition from young people in order to develop a safe and accessible skatepark that can be used by a range of users including skateboarders, cycle/BMX, scooters and wheelchair.
2. To consider the siting of the skatepark, in particular two sites are to be considered by the working group with recommendations to be made to the Parish Council as follows
 - Adjacent to the Club Room and between this building and the swings
 - At the rec end of Peel Park.
3. To consult with young people and residents.
4. To liaise with North Somerset officers and other organisations as appropriate, in particular to liaise closely with LACA for two-way communication
5. To obtain indicative costings.
6. To recommend implementation in segments and/or stages for the purposes of funding and timing.
7. To report back to the F&GP Committee for process and financial matters and to full Council for review of recommendations and associated decision making.
8. To apply for funding for any part of the scheme from outside organisations.
9. To investigate forming a charity.