

# LONG ASHTON PARISH COUNCIL

## FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING 19:30, 16<sup>th</sup> December 2019, Jubilee Pavilion

Present: Ms S Hardingham – Chairman  
Ms L Anderson (from 19:58)  
Mr C Cave  
Mr M Harris  
Mr P Jackson  
Ms McAllister Kemp  
Mr S McQuillan  
Mr M Semple  
Mr T Weir  
Mr A Wilkinson

Absent:  
Ms S Barnes  
Mr A Cartman  
Mr A Johnson  
Mr D Johnson

In Attendance: Dr Janet Turp (the Clerk), Mrs T Warren (Assistant Clerk, minutes) and Cllr Sellars.

F19.133 - Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Barnes, A. Johnson and D. Johnson.

### F19.134 - Declarations of Interests and Grant of Dispensations.

Interests to be declared during the meeting. A dispensation was requested by Cllr Cave for items relating to LACA, because as a LACA Trustee he has a pecuniary interest. It was RESOLVED to grant the dispensation requested to take part in discussion but not to vote so that the necessary information on LACA could be provided to the Council. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Wilkinson. All in favour. Dispensations were also requested by Cllr Jackson for items relating to the Youth Club as he has a pecuniary interest, and Cllr McQuillan as a NS Cllr, for the item relating to the NSC small grants application so that information could be provided to Council. It was RESOLVED that both Cllrs receive a dispensation to take part in discussions on these subjects but not vote. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Wilkinson. All in favour.

### F19.135 - Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2019 copies having been circulated and following the amendment of paragraph F19.129 to add Group after War Memorial Working, it was RESOLVED to accept the minutes as a correct record and these were signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Jackson. All in favour.

### F19.136 - Exclusion of the press and public

No matters on the agenda require the exclusion of the press and public.

### F19.137 - Matters arising

- a) F19.93 - Youth network grant – The process to award the 2019/20 youth grants will be launched early in 2020 and eligible youth organisations in the parish will be able to apply.
- b) F19.114a - PFLA (Plastic Free Long Ashton) Community Grant – No information has been received from PFLA about their plans to install a water fountain so it was agreed to write to LACA to confirm that the PC is happy for them to fit a water access point funded by the grant money not spent by PFLA. Cllr Cave will liaise with LACA regarding these works.
- c) F19.114b - Planters – The final payment from one of the four businesses near the Post Office is still awaited, so the planters will be purchased when the payment is made. It was agreed that the Clerk will chase the payment.

- d) F19.114d - Gardeners Walk play area and s106 money from Tydings Close – It was noted that whilst the play area has been completed and passed NSC inspection, the Operational Inspector advises that further inspection may be required.
- e) F19.114f - Alternative bankers – ongoing.
- f) F19.119 - Community Grant update – Payment of the grant has yet to be made to the ‘Build A Spitfire Group’ as they have requested payment to be delayed until they are sure they have the capacity to finish the project.
- g) F19.124 – The proceeds of the maturing Hampshire Trust Bank Bond have been reinvested.
- h) F19.129 - Theynes Croft car park – the stone is yet to be moved.

#### F19.138 - 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 £16,683.42 during October and November and to note receipts at £1,968.82 over the same period. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Cave. All in favour.

#### F19.139 - Bi-monthly statement and Bank reconciliation

- a) Cllr Harris was appointed to review the bank reconciliation.
- b) The bank reconciliation at 30th November 2019 and summary was presented. The total amount in all accounts is £615,107.65 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. The Triodos Bank fixed term deposit account with a zero balance has been closed.

#### F19.140 - Review of Expenditure against Budget – noted.

#### F19.141 - Working groups

- a) Skate park – no update at this time.
- b) Library – Cllrs have recently met with LACA Trustees. A site visit is planned for early 2020 to agree the exact location and dimensions of the proposed library container space. Cllr Cave confirmed that LACA agree with plans presented to date.
- c) The employment working group recommended that, given the projects being considered by the PC, the additional workload being placed on the clerk, succession planning and the need to improve community engagement it was appropriate to increase the staffing capacity of the PC by employing a full time Clerk by the end of 2020 and recruiting a part-time Community Engagement officer on a 12-month contract. The community engagement role would include managing the community library volunteers and the initial setting up of the community library arrangements: part of these costs have already been budgeted for in the library running costs.
- d) Publicity – It was noted that following completion of design work, a new logo for the Parish Council, banners, trifold leaflets and t-shirts have been produced and launched at the December Village market.

#### F19.142 - Grant Applications

a) Grants for Youth Organisations are currently made through the youth network and it was RESOLVED to allow £500 for grants to youth organisations in 2020/21. Proposed by Cllr Jackson and seconded by Cllr Cave. All in favour. It was agreed that in future years the management of youth grants may return to the PC.

#### b) Grant applications:

To consider grant applications received and to agree which to fund and at what level. Following discussion of the applications received it was agreed to make £4,500 available for grants in addition to the £500 for youth grants. It was RESOLVED to make the following grant payments at a total of £2,888. Proposed by Cllr Cave and seconded by Cllr Jackson. All in favour.

- |                       |        |
|-----------------------|--------|
| • Home Start          | £1,000 |
| • Long Ashton Growers | £ 138  |
| • MS Therapy Centre   | £ 300  |

- Nailsea & District Community Transport £1,000
- Wellspring Counselling Ltd £ 450

It was agreed not to support the application from Storyfest, as this had been supported reasonably recently and only covered one of the Parish's schools nor the application from NSC for 'Stay and Play'. Although the PC is keen to see the latter continue it was not clear that this was dependent on PC funding and was again an example of the PC being asked to pick up NSC costs. Cllr McQuillan would talk to the children's centre team and it was agreed that the clerk will write to NSC to say that the PC was sympathetic to their application and to request that they keep the PC updated if the provision of this service becomes under threat of closure. The balance of the grant budget would be available for grant applications during the year.

#### F19.143 - Budget 2020/21

(a) The draft 2020/21 budget had been circulated to Cllrs and was discussed in detail; it was drawn up on an indicative basis of no increase in the precept for a householder based on 2742.5 Band D properties (compared with 2660 for last year). This gave expenditure after income of £200,228 which after allowing for Taylor Wimpey area and Peel Park expenditure of £18,000, and a reserves adjustment of £5,000, left £177,228 to be funded from the precept. However, additional funding had been requested by LACA (£5,000), the Skate Park (£9,000) and for road safety measures (£5,000). Inflation was noted at 1.5% (CPI) or 2.1% RPI.

The Youth Club had requested an increase in their grant to £18,000 from £17,700 last year. This was discussed.

Cllr Jackson left the room.

It was RESOLVED to agree a total grant for 2020/2021 at £18,000 to the Youth Club. Proposed by Cllr Harris and seconded by Cllr McQuillan. All in favour. The Chairman requested regular financial updates.

Cllr Jackson re-entered the room.

The following were noted:

- The budget allows for an increase in administrative staffing, the detail of which will depend on grade, experience and start date. It was noted that there may be extra software costs associated with the community engagement post. It was agreed that the PC's software provision would be reviewed when new software for the library is bought.
- Burial Ground Salaries have increased as the new gardener is a qualified gardener and is paid accordingly.
- Theynes Croft Car Park Maintenance (£1,500) and Climate Change Emergency (£500 – for room hire costs) are new additions to the budget.
- Gardeners Walk Play Area (£1,000) – there is no S106 money for maintenance costs so this will need to be funded from the general budget.
- Library running costs – these have been budgeted at £9,000 for 2020/2021 with any staffing costs included in admin salaries.
- Skate Park £1,000 has been included as last year.
- The £1,000 agreed for planning was omitted in error and needed to be added.

b) Additional funds requested

1. LACA - LACA has requested a grant of £34,500 for next year, with the increase needed to meet future years' maintenance plans. There was a lengthy discussion about the needs for repair and maintenance of the complex with a general recognition that provision needed to be made somewhere for the required works. Councillor Cave confirmed that any increase in staff costs would be paid for by an increase in hall fees and not by the PC grant. There was concern that LACA's figures did not take into account the possibility of outside grants nor the

s106 funds to come from the Barrow development, so clarification is still needed.

It was agreed that the terms of the grant need to be specified by the PC including the allocation of £2,500 to the playground reserve, adoption of the PC's biodiversity policy, agreement of LACA's long term strategy and business plan, the use of LACA's reserves and whether part of the grant should be retained in reserve by the PC.

It was RESOLVED to increase the budget for LACA to £34,500 subject to the considerations above. Proposed by Cllr Wilkinson and seconded by Cllr Harris. All in favour. Cllr Cave took no part in the vote.

21:21 - Cllr McQuillan left the room

21:21 - Cllr McQuillan re-entered the room

2. Skate Park - The skate park working group have requested a further £9,000 in addition to the £1,000 allocated. This is primarily so the group has matched funding available when applying for external grants. It was noted that there is £11,120 in the Youth Provision Earmarked reserve and that some of this could be allocated to the skate park subject to agreement of full council. It was agreed that a small increase in the budgeted provision could be made but that consultation within the parish is needed to assess the willingness to increase the precept to allow for funding of the skate park. It was agreed to add another £2,000 to the skate park budget. At the 2019 Annual Parish meeting it was stated that funding would be from public fund raising, however, a new council has since been elected.
3. VES - The present VES budget will be used by the initial works on Weston Road in the retail area, works to the zebra crossing near Theynes Croft, changes to the speed limit near Wild Country Lane, parking restrictions on Lovelinch Gardens and works to Piccolo's forecourt area. There are no remaining funds for the raised crossing at the Co-op or for further enhancement of the public space or for extending the 20 mph limit through the village. There is £5,000 already allocated in the budget but this will be insufficient so an additional £5,000 was being requested. It was agreed to add another £4,000 to the VES/road safety budget.

It was RESOLVED to increase the budget provision for LACA to £34,500, for the skate park to £3,000 and for the VES/road safety to £9,000 and to recommend the amended draft budget of £226,080, based on a precept of £188,000, to Full Council for adoption. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Weir. Carried with 1 abstention.

After allowing for income this gives £212,203 to be found. It was agreed that this would be funded by using £18,000 from earmarked reserves (for the Taylor Wimpey areas/Peel Park maintenance), £6,203 reserves adjustment (from general reserves, unspent from this year) and a precept of £188,000.

It was noted that a precept of £188,000 will increase the PC demand on a band D property payment to £68.55 a year, representing an increase of 6% or just under £4 per year. It was recognised that this is above the level of inflation but was thought reasonable given that the PC is taking/ has taken on responsibility for Theynes Croft car park, the play area at Gardeners Walk and consultation has shown a desire for increased traffic calming and there is support for the skate park. Constraining the precept would mean that the PC would be unable to undertake identified projects or it would take much longer to achieve them. The precept for Long Ashton Parish residents will still be one of the lowest of the service villages.

#### F19.144 - Finance Items

a) F19.124(d) - Burial ground planting scheme for 2020/21; the Gardener had prepared a planting scheme proposal at a cost of £1,034.50 this was reviewed and after discussion it was

RESOLVED to approve expenditure of £650. Proposed by Cllr Jackson and seconded by Cllr Semple. All in favour.

b) A screen for the Jubilee Pavilion – it was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

#### F19.145 - Taylor Wimpey Areas

a) Transfer of the Taylor Wimpey areas and lease to LACA – The PROW across Peel Park has now been designated.

b) Public Art – The Clerk will write to Taylor Wimpey to advise them of the designation of the PROW across Peel Park.

c) Replacements for logs in Chancellors Park play area – ongoing.

d) Replacement bench in the Kings Croft play area – completed.

e) Annual play area repairs – Most of these have been completed and the repair to the team swing will be done when there is dry weather.

#### F19.146 - Correspondence

a) From CCLA – PSDF factsheets, market reports and LAPF prices; noted

b) From St Peter's Hospice – six month report; noted.

c) From Above and Beyond – six month report: noted.

#### F19.147 - Matters for information

Office arrangements over the Christmas period. The office will be closed from 17:00 Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> December and reopen on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2020.

F19.148 - To agree date for additional meeting – none required.

Meeting closed at 22:01

Date of next meeting – Monday 17th February 2020