

LONG ASHTON PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING

19:30, 11th June 2018, Jubilee Pavilion

Present: - Ms S Hardingham – Chairman

Mr C Cave

Mr N Moorcroft

Mrs J Pullin

Mr M Semple

Mr R Sterland

Miss M Uppington

Absent:

Mr M Harris

Mr P Jackson

Mr A Wilkinson

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

F18.47 - Election of Chairman

It was proposed by Cllr Miss Uppington and seconded by Cllr Semple that Cllr Hardingham be appointed as Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes (F&GP) committee for the next municipal year or until such time as a new chairman is elected. There were no other nominations so Cllr Hardingham was elected as Chairman.

F18.48 - Election of vice Chairman

Cllr Harris was elected as vice Chairman of the F&GP committee, subject to his agreement, for the next municipal year or until such time as a new vice chairman is elected. There were no other nominations. Proposed by Cllr Cave, seconded by Cllr Moorcroft. All in favour.

F18.49 - Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Harris and Wilkinson. Cllr Semple was welcomed to the committee.

F18.50 - Declarations of Interests and Grant of Dispensations.

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

F18.51 - Minutes of previous meetings

The minutes of the meetings held on the 16th April, 14th May and 4th June had previously been circulated. It was agreed to amend the minutes of 16th April 2018 so that F.18.45 a) reads "From Tyntesfield Medical Group asking the PC to contribute to a moving LED display board for LA surgery. It was agreed that the PC was unable to meet the request as it did not meet the PC grant guidelines." Following this amendment the minutes of the three meetings were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Cllr Cave and seconded by Cllr Hardingham. All in favour.

F18.52 - Exclusion of the press and public

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

F18.53 - Matters arising

- a) F18.26a - Purchase of anti – virus software. Ongoing.
- b) F18.26b - Issues around solo working. The Clerk confirmed that there is a panic alarm in her office and a draft policy is being prepared.
- c) F18.26d - Hedge at back of Paulman Gardens. Ongoing.
- d) F18.26e - Tree Protection Chancellors Park. The contractors have agreed to do the work and it should be completed soon.
- e) F18.26f - Hearing Loop. This is outstanding and will be addressed soon.
- f) F18.26i - BT broadband upgrade. This has been completed.
- g) F18.30 – Reinvestment of 12 month Triodos Bond. This has been now been reinvested as previously agreed.

- h) F18.36 – LACA. To enable the PC to consider significant provision in the budget at the end of the year, LACA needs to set out a clear vision of its proposals in a business plan as previously requested and ensure there is wide support among residents. A joint working group meeting should take place soon.

F18.54 - 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 £42,298.80 during April and May 2018 and to note receipts of £90,155.45 over the same period. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Moorcroft. All in favour.

F18.55 - Bi-monthly statement and Bank reconciliation

The bank reconciliation at 7th June 2018 and summary was presented. The total amount in all accounts is £573,193.88 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 Moorcroft. All in favour.

F18.56 - Review of Expenditure against Budget – Noted.

F18.57 - Accounts for the year 2017/18

- a) The draft Internal Auditors Report for the year end 31st March 2018 was presented at the meeting and reviewed. Bishop Fleming, the auditor, made the following comments:
- they would like to see a detailed schedule of the assets covered under the insurance policy. The current insurer Hiscox, groups together similar assets but an attempt would be made to provide more detail next year.
 - that three of the PC's bank accounts have balances in excess of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) limit of £85,000. The committee noted that given the PC's assets are spread across five institutions, the sums over the limit are a reasonably small percentage of the amounts held, and that all the institutions are subject to the Bank Of England stress test, it was considered that the risk was at an acceptable level.
 - the asset register could be modified to clarify the value of the assets not listed on the accounts and that the PC should consider whether the total of all the assets the PC holds rather than just those included in the accounts should be included in box 9 of the annual return. This will be considered by F&GP at its next meeting.
 - the figures in the insurance schedule are not directly linked to the asset register and asks the PC to consider whether insurance cover is sufficient. The Clerk will look at this in detail and report back to the next F&GP meeting.
 - at least once a quarter, someone other than the chairman should verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts). It was agreed that at each F&GP meeting a member would be confirmed to verify the bank reconciliations for that meeting.
 - the investment in the Local Authorities Property Fund had been treated as a long term investment. The clerk confirmed that this was the advice she had been given at a finance training session.

It was RESOLVED to recommend to full council that the actions outlined above would be undertaken.

- b) Audited accounts for the year 2017/18 - The market value of the Local Authorities Property Fund investment at 31/03/2018 was £40,414.98, however, the return received to date is £1,209.00 which exceeds the initial bid/offer spread reduction. It was RESOLVED to recommend approval of the 2017/18 audited accounts to the council meeting on 25th June

- c) Annual Governance and Accounting Statements – these were considered and the Chairman thanked the Clerk for the detail included in the supporting documents. It was noted that all councillors need to consider these fully before they are approved and signed at the Council meeting on 25th June. It was RESOLVED to recommend agreement of the Annual Governance and Accounting Statements to the council meeting on 25th June.

d) It was agreed to recommend to Council that the Letter of Engagement with Bishop Fleming for Internal Audit services be signed.

The above resolutions were all proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Cave. All in favour.

F18.58 – Frequent payments; payments to suppliers.

It was RESOLVED to approve the circulated list. Proposed by Cllr Miss Uppington and seconded by Cllr Cave. All in favour.

F18.59 – Investment Strategy

The current PC Investment strategy has been amended to take account of the 2018 Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments. It was RESOLVED to recommend the revised strategy to Council. Proposed by Cllr Cave and seconded by Cllr Moorcroft. All in favour.

F18.60 - Banking

The list of current authorised signatories for bank accounts was reviewed and agreed to be recommended to Council with no amendments.

F18.61 - Internal audit

It was agreed that the PCs internal audit arrangements and effectiveness should be reviewed, based on the ALCA checklist, by a working group consisting of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of F&GP and the Clerk.

F18.62 - Taylor Wimpey Areas - update

- a) Transfer of the Taylor Wimpey areas and lease to LACA – No update at this time.
- b) Public Art – with the outstanding s106 path designation issue being clarified, this matter should be resolved soon.
- c) Replacement of trees – It was noted that the PC has a ten year obligation, from initial planting, re the specified trees in Chancellor Park. The advice of Gordano Tree Services is being sought for recommendation on the most suitable types of trees.
- d) Playground maintenance – The Clerk has obtained a quote at £410.00 for maintenance works. It was RESOLVED that works go ahead based on this quote. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Cave. All in favour.

F18.63 - Parish Council office working group report. No new information

F18.64 - The new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The Clerk encouraged all councillors to use their council email addresses in light of GDPR requirements and confirmed the data audit is ongoing.

- a) Document Retention – The PCs current document retention guidance and NALC's legal topic note LTN 40 were discussed. It was agreed that the Clerk draft a document retention policy for the PC taking into account the NALC guidance.
- b) Social Media Policies – A draft policy based on the SLCC template, was discussed; the policy will apply to all types of social media use. It was confirmed that Cllrs Semple and Thomas, together with the Clerk, are permitted to post material on Facebook in the council's name. It was RESOLVED to adopt the policy. Proposed by Cllr Semple and seconded by Cllr Moorcroft. All in favour.

F18.65 - Village Enhancement Scheme: Diamond Fund Bid

The Diamond Fund, operated by the airport, is only open to applications this year and it would appear that bids were expected to a maximum of £3,000. It was agreed that, subject to further information from the airport, a grant application should be made for some aspect of the VES scheme.

F18.66 - Library closure; update.

In an initial response to the PCs enquiry about the possibility of the library computers being placed in the café LACA have expressed concern about storage, security and space. NSC has also responded about the possibility of the library computers being available for use elsewhere. It is likely that the most cost effective approach would be for the computers to be transferred but stripped of the operating system and any software. These would then need to be provided and managed by the PC or other organisation. Various options are being considered for continuing library provision; maybe one computer could be placed in the café in its own secure cabinet, NSC may have a temporary modular unit surplus to their requirements or one could be hired. Cllr Cave to look into these. The urgency of considering the way forward was stressed in order to ascertain the level of public support for any solution which might entail a substantial increase in the precept.

F18.67 - Community Grant

- a) The clerk, Cllrs McQuillan, Sterland and the chairman recently attended a meeting with Rosie Payne of PFLA (Plastic Free Long Ashton) to gain further detail on the recent community grant application. Most aspects of the grant application are in a position to go ahead except the plans for the drinking water fountain are still in a very early stage so it was RESOLVED £1,050 of the grant be paid immediately and to pay the remaining £450 when a firmer proposal is available, whether for a drinking fountain or other approved initiative. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Sterland. Agreed with one vote against and one abstention.
- b) Manshed application – It was noted that the equipment applied for in the grant had been purchased in advance by a member of the organisation with the expectation that these could be sold to the group if a grant was received. It was agreed that as long as evidence was produced that these had been sold to the group then the PC would still be prepared to pay the £500 grant previously agreed. Proposed by Cllr Moorcroft, seconded by Cllr Cave. Agreed with one vote against.

F18.68 - Correspondence

- a) From Vision ICT re GDPR implications and offering to upgrade the website so that it has a SSL certificate. It was agreed that as there is very little data obtained from the website an SSL certificate was not needed.
- b) From CCLA Local Authorities' Property Fund prices/yield April 2018 – noted.
- c) From CCLA Local Authorities' Property Fund prices/yield May 2018 – noted.
- d) From CCLA LAPF Fund Profile March 18 – noted.
- e) From CCLA LAPF Fund factsheet March 18 – noted.
- f) From Bishop Fleming re changes to engagement terms following GDPR. Noted and agreed.
- g) From MS Therapy Centre – thank you for grant - noted.
- h) From Wellspring Counselling Ltd – thank you for grant – noted.
- i) From NS Citizens Advice Bureau – thank you for the grant – noted.
- j) From MS Therapy Centre – thank you for the grant – noted.
- k) From St Peter's Hospice – thank you for the grant – noted.
- l) From Girl Guiding – the Guides have sent an updated thank you for the grant for LED lighting as their installation has resulted in a significant reduction in their electricity costs – noted.

F18.69 - Matters for information. It was noted that cover for the Clerk's holidays will be provided by the Assistant Clerk (to review emails and telephone calls to the Parish Office).

Meeting closed at 21:19

Date of next meeting – Monday 13th August 2018