

# LONG ASHTON PARISH COUNCIL

## FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES

### 19:30, 13<sup>th</sup> August 2018, Jubilee Pavilion

Present: - Ms S Hardingham – Chairman  
Mr M Harris  
Mrs J Pullin  
Mr M Semple  
Mr R Sterland  
Miss M Uppington  
Mr A Wilkinson

Absent:  
Mr C Cave  
Mr P Jackson  
Mr S McQuillan  
Mr N Moorcroft

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

F18.70 - Apologies for absence – received from Cllrs Cave, Jackson, McQuillan and Moorcroft.

F18.71 - Declarations of Interests and Grant of Dispensations.

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

F18.72 - Minutes of previous meetings

The minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2018 copies having been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham, seconded by Cllr Miss Uppington.

F18.73 - Exclusion of the press and public

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

F18.74 - Matters arising

- a) F18.48 - Cllr Harris confirmed that, following his election as vice chairman of the committee in his absence he was happy to agree to serve as Vice Chairman of the committee.
- b) F18.53a - Purchase of anti-virus software; this is ongoing.
- c) F18.53b - Issues around solo working – ongoing - a policy is being prepared.
- d) F18.53c - Hedge at back of Paulman Gardens; ongoing.
- e) F18.53d - Tree Protection Chancellors Park; the area around 16 trees has been cleared to protect them against trimmer damage as agreed. It was suggested, by the contractor, that matting and bark should be used to stop further growth at a cost of £19.40 per tree. It was RESOLVED to accept this quote and proceed with the work. Proposed by Cllr Harris and seconded by Cllr Wilkinson. All in favour.
- f) F18.61 - Internal Audit meeting; this will take place on 1<sup>st</sup> October.
- g) F18.65 - Village Enhancement Scheme; Diamond Fund Bid; as LACA are submitting a bid to the fund it was agreed that the PC would not submit a competing bid. An application will be made to the Police scheme which allows bids up to £5,000.
- h) F18.67 - Community Grant – payments have been made to Plastic Free Long Ashton, with a retention for further detail on the drinking fountain, and to Manshed following their confirmation that ownership of the tools would pass to the group following payment of the grant of £500.
- i) F18.64 - The drafting of the document retention policy is ongoing.

#### F18.75 - 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 June and July at £26,793.52 and to note receipts of £1,414.04 over the same period. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Sterland. All in favour.

#### F18.76 - Bi-monthly statement and Bank reconciliation

- a) Cllr Wilkinson agreed to review the submitted bank reconciliation.
- b) The bank reconciliation at 9<sup>th</sup> August 2018 and summary was presented. The total amount in all accounts is £546,108.22 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 Harris. All in favour.

F18.77 - Review of Expenditure against Budget; the total expenditure for the year to 8<sup>th</sup> August 2018 was noted at £61,748 with net income over expenditure of £23,764.

#### F18.78 - Accounts for the year 2017/18

It was noted that the external auditors had acknowledged receipt of the return and the date for comments from members of the public has passed but there has been no further communication from the auditors.

#### F18.79 - Internal Auditors Report

- a) Adequacy of insurance cover – A report from the RFO shows that the value of insurable assets with a value of greater than £250 (the excess on the insurance) was covered by the insurance policy. The PC had previously agreed not to insure the play equipment against damage although it is covered by public liability insurance. The Insurance cover was therefore agreed to be adequate.
- b) Modification of the presentation of the asset register and what assets to be included on the annual return; it was noted that current Parish Council policy is to only list assets with a value of greater than £1,000 in the accounts and to only include these assets in box 9 (total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets) of the annual return. It was discussed whether all items on the asset register (ie those fixed assets with a value >£50) should be included in the annual return. It was noted that as items are valued in the annual return at acquisition value any recorded value would not completely represent the PC's assets but that it would be more accurate to include all items with a non trivial value. It was RESOLVED that subject to internal auditor advice, that all fixed assets with an initial acquisition value of over £50 should, in future, be included in the annual return to provide a more accurate picture of the PC's assets. Proposed by Cllr Sterland and seconded by Cllr Hardingham. All in favour. Box 9 for 17/18 will need to be restated in the next Annual Return (18/19) to reflect this.

It was also agreed that the asset register would be modified to make it clearer which items were included in the accounts, the insurance asset list and the annual return list.

#### F18.80 - Taylor Wimpey Areas

- a) Transfer of the Taylor Wimpey areas and lease to LACA; no update.
- b) Public Art; no update
- c) Replacement of trees; ongoing
- d) Annual Play area inspection reports; these reports had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that the inspection reports showed no urgent or high risk defects in the Kings Croft or Chancellors Park play areas. Some repairs to mitigate lower risks were identified and it was agreed that these should be carried out. The clerk has already asked for a quote to remove the logs from Chancellors Park. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk takes advice as to suitable repairs on areas highlighted in

the reports and proceeds with quotes if the costs seem reasonable. Proposed by Cllr Wilkinson and seconded by Cllr Miss Uppington. All in favour.

F18.81 - Parish Council office working group report; no new information to report.

F18.82 - The new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The Clerk again encouraged all councillors to use their council email addresses in light of GDPR requirements. If there are issues with these accounts these should be raised with Vision ICT and if there are facilities that Cllrs require that are not available Cllrs should inform the clerk so they can be raised with the provider. It was agreed to add this item to the agenda for the next Council meeting.

F18.83 - Library closure

The library working group has met but a report was not yet available. It was noted that there are some volunteers already and there are non-Councillors on the working group but the public did not as yet seem very engaged. Congresbury, Redland and Clifton libraries have remained open with volunteer-run services. Though a mobile library has been promised on two afternoons a week it was suggested that the service it can offer is not as good as a fixed library. The PC is not aware of the library consultation dates having been set and no draft has been received. It was agreed that NSC be contacted re their plans for the consultation. It was agreed that the PC needs further understanding of residents' views on level of support for a library and an article should be included in the October newsletter. This will also help the PC to set the precept at an appropriate level.

F18.84 - Hearing Loop

Two companies have been approached to give advice and quotes for the provision of suitable microphones to link with the Pavilion's T-loop for council meetings.

F18.85 – LACA

Cllrs Hardingham, Sterland, Wilkinson and the Clerk will meet with LACA on the 14<sup>th</sup> August. The Chairman noted that any significant increase in the precept would need to have support from residents.

F18.86 – ELAS use for Employment Law and HR, and/or Health and safety services.

ELAS can provide the above services at £50 per month for employment law/HR advice and £73 per month for health and safety advice. It was agreed that as the PC has access to ALCA, NALC, SLCC and its insurer for advice and only employs a small number of staff that the services of ELAS were not required.

F18.87 - Repair of Village Sign

It was agreed that the offer from Mashed to volunteer to carry out repairs to the sign should be accepted on the basis that they were acting as PC volunteers for this task. It was agreed the PC would meet the cost of materials (a new post and postcrete) which is likely to be around £75.

F18.88 - Quotation to cut hedges

- a) Birdwell rec; the quote received to cut back the overhanging hedges was considered and it was agreed to obtain a further quote for comparison and for the Clerk to proceed with instructing works on the best quote. Cllr Moorcroft's advice will be sought on the extent of work required.
- b) Kings Croft; the quote received from idverde of £120.33 to trim back overgrowth at the end of Kings Croft around the dog bin was considered and it was agreed to proceed.

F18.89 - Tour of Britain race; 4<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Decoration to mark the event going through the village was considered. Although there was some support for a welcoming banner it was agreed by the majority that this wouldn't

be cost effective for the 10 minutes or so that the cyclists would be passing through the village. It was noted that the event is on the first day of term and so the schools may not be able to attend the event.

#### F18.90 - New vacuum cleaner for the PC office

It was noted that the existing vacuum cleaner is not in good working order. It was agreed that a replacement with a cost up to £100 could be purchased.

#### F18.91 - Recommendation to Council that the policy on residents identified as generating an unreasonably large volume of correspondence with the Parish Council should be implemented.

The policy was read and it was explained that it had been adopted because of pressure on the clerk's time. It was noted that this policy has never been implemented to date, however, it was noted that a large amount of correspondence has been generated recently by one resident and it was agreed that the chair would write to them to point this out. If this is not effective then the Council would implement the policy fully.

#### F18.92 – Correspondence

- a) From CCLA LAPF prices and dividend yield June 18; noted
- b) From CCLA Local Authorities' Property Fund June 18 factsheet and profile; noted
- c) CCLA June Market update; noted
- d) From resident re use of the swale in Peel Park as a footpath; this had been passed to LACA as they manage the area and Cllr Mrs Pullin confirmed that LACA are responding to the resident.
- e) From residents re hedge cutting in Peel Park; the residents' concerns on birds nesting in hedges which are being trimmed along the fence line between the park and Fenswood Court gardens was noted. This had also been passed to LACA and Cllr Mrs Pullin noted that a response had been sent explaining some hedges needed to be cut for health and safety reasons at this time and the other hedges were cut at the same time to minimise costs. The contractor walked the hedges prior to cutting to make sure there were no nesting birds but as these are not farm hedges the strict prohibition on cutting does not apply.
- f) From Pension Regulator re re-enrolment; under the automatic enrolment regulations re-enrolment has to be considered every three years. It was agreed that this would be done by the third anniversary of enrolment ie 1<sup>st</sup> February 2019.
- g) The 2019-2020 Local Government Finance Settlement; technical consultation document has been issued. It was noted that the document suggests that as PCs have generally not had unreasonably large increases in precept this financial year than the deferral of setting referendum principles for town and parish councils would continue. The average band D parish precept in 2018-19 nationally had increased by 4.9% (£3.02) compared to Long Ashton's increase of 2.9% with the Parish having the second lowest precept of the service villages in North Somerset. It was agreed that any significant extra expenditure would need clear support from residents before considering the PC budget in December. It was noted that the Government had previously stated that where an increase in precept was due to taking on services from a higher authority the referendum cap wouldn't apply.

#### F18.93 - Matters for information

Plans for the parking scheme in Leigh Woods are progressing but the cost has yet to be finalised.

Date of next meeting – Monday 22nd October 2018

Meeting Closed at 21:25