

LONG ASHTON PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING

19:30, 22nd October 2018, Jubilee Pavilion

Present: Ms S Hardingham – Chairman
Mr P Jackson
Mr S McQuillan
Mr N Moorcroft
Mrs J Pullin
Mr R Sterland
Miss M Uppington

Absent:
Mr C Cave
Mr M Harris
Mr M Semple
Mr A Wilkinson

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

F18.94 - Apologies for absence - were received from Cllrs Cave, Harris, Semple and Wilkinson. The chairman welcomed Cllr McQuillan to his first meeting of the committee.

F18.95 - Declarations of Interests and Grant of Dispensations.

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

F18.96 - Minutes of previous meetings

The minutes of the meeting held on 13th August 2018 copies having been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Cllr Miss Uppington and seconded by Cllr Mrs Pullin.

F18.97 - Exclusion of the press and public

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

F18.98 - Matters arising

- a) F18.74b - Purchase of anti-virus software; ongoing.
- b) F18.74c - Issues around solo working; ongoing
- c) F18.74d - Hedge at back of Paulman Gardens; The PC will write to the residents now it is an appropriate time of year to cut the hedge.
- d) F18.74e - Tree Protection Chancellors Park; completed
- e) F18.79b - Changes to asset register; the internal auditor has been asked for advice.
- f) F18.84 - Hearing Loop; following discussion of the two different systems identified it was agreed to use removable boundary microphones as suggested by Bristol Sound System at a cost of £376.18 noting the equipment will be available for all users of the Jubilee Pavilion.
- g) F18.88 – Quote to cut Birdwell Hedge; a second quote is being obtained.
- h) F18.91 – Policy on residents identified as generating an unreasonably large volume of correspondence; implementation update – Following the Chairman’s letter the level of correspondence from the resident has reduced (although it is still higher than from other residents); it will continue to be monitored and the decision whether to implement the policy will be taken at the next council meeting.

F18.99 - Payment of accounts and Payments to Council.

A list of payments and receipts had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was RESOLVED to approve expenditure during August and September 2018 of £37,797.09

and to note receipts of £79,890 over the same period. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Jackson. All in favour.

F18.100 - Bi-monthly statement and Bank reconciliation

- a) Cllr Moorcroft agreed to review the submitted bank reconciliation.
- b) The bank reconciliations at 30th September 2018 and summary was presented. The total amount in all accounts is £585,565.67 including £41,600 in long term investment (LAPF). It was RESOLVED to approve the bimonthly statement and bank reconciliations. Proposed by Cllr Moorcroft and seconded by Cllr Miss Uppington. All in favour.

F18.101 - Review of Expenditure against Budget

The total expenditure for the year to 17th October 2018 was noted at £101,425 (53.1% of budget) with net income over expenditure of £64,173. It was noted that there is £500 allocated in the budget for grants specifically for groups working with young people and it was confirmed that the Youth Network will manage these awards again this year. It was agreed that successful grants will be paid directly by the PC. £450 of the community grant awarded to Plastic Free Long Ashton (PFLA), identified by them for a drinking fountain, has yet to be paid and is awaiting further information from the group. Cllr McQuillan will liaise with PFLA.

F18.102 - Accounts for the year 2017/18 – Completion of the External Audit

The PC has received an unqualified external audit report. The Chairman thanked the Clerk for her work for the audit.

F18.103 - Finance Items

- a) Reinvestment of Hampshire Trust Bank Bond which matures on 15th November 2018 – it was RESOLVED that the proceeds from the current bond (£76,730.59) be reinvested in a new 12 month at 1.7% with the same bank. Proposed by Cllr Moorcroft and seconded by Cllr Jackson. All in favour.
- b) Wreath for Remembrance Day – It was RESOLVED to approve expenditure of £30 for the wreath. Proposed by Cllr Moorcroft and seconded by Cllr Mrs Pullin. All in favour.
- c) Purchase of new PC laptop – It was RESOLVED to authorise expenditure up to £350 for purchase of a new laptop and software to enable minutes to be taken directly. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Sterland. All in favour.

F18.104 - Review of Internal Controls/Audit checklist

The internal audit review was carried out using the checklist provided by ALCA and had been circulated before the meeting. It was noted that the checklist suggests that cheque stubs are initialled by the Cllrs signing the cheques. Previously the bank has returned the cheques; however, this will no longer happen. It was agreed that sufficient audit trail is provided as the signing Cllrs initial the invoices so that the additional process of signing cheque stubs is not required. The checklist also notes that the published Cllr contact details should enable Cllrs to be contacted directly by the public by email and/or phone. This is not currently true for all Cllrs and it was agreed to add this to the next Council meeting agenda and to further remind Cllrs to use their council email address. Councillors will also be reminded to keep their declaration of interests up to date.

F18.105 - To Review the following (circulated)

- a) Small Grant Awarding Policy – The policy was reviewed and agreed with the following addition as point 9. If an organisation is acting on behalf of other groups as a facilitator it can submit multiple applications for grants in one year providing that such grants are not in related fields or projects.

- b) Job descriptions (Clerk and as Responsible Financial Officer - RFO); these were reviewed. The Clerk job description was agreed with no changes and the RFO was agreed with an amendment to extend the control of cheques to control of cheques and/or electronic payments as appropriate.
- c) Freedom of Information – available Information guide. This document showing how the PC makes information available was agreed subject to amendments showing which information is now available on the website.
- d) Complaints Procedure Policy. This document was reviewed and agreed with no changes.
- e) Policy on residents identified as generating an unreasonably large volume of correspondence with the Parish Council - The Policy was agreed with no changes.

F18.106 – New Policies

- a) To adopt the Document Retention and Disposal Policy. The draft policy, needed to meet the requirements of GDPR, was considered and adopted following minor amendments. The Chairman thanked the Clerk for the work completed on this draft policy.
- b) Scheme of delegation; it was agreed to accept the Clerk's proposal that a single document be drafted to identify how the PC delegates its duties to committees and staff. It was noted that this will be subservient to other policies and will be added to the Councillors Pack. The draft will be circulated to the chairmen of the committees and council for comment.

F18.107 - Taylor Wimpey Areas

- a) Transfer of the Taylor Wimpey areas and lease to LACA – no update. It was agreed that the Clerk will write to NSC asking for an update on the s106 matters.
- b) Public Art – no update.
- c) Replacement of trees – ongoing
- d) Annual Play area inspection reports – update on repairs. Repairs are in hand for all items identified as a medium risk in the annual reports. The uprights on the swing in the Kings Croft area will be replaced under guarantee by Playdale but the PC would still have to pay significant installation and delivery costs so a second quote is being obtained from a local contractor. It was noted that one of the Village Orderlies visually assesses the play areas every week, an operational inspection is carried out by a contractor monthly and a detailed inspection annually.
- e) Replacement for logs in Chancellors Park play area - The logs and their pins and concrete has been removed. It was agreed that the Clerk will investigate a replacement item which is suitable for younger children.

F18.108 - Parish Council office working group report.

It was agreed to keep this under review as it will be prudent to consider long term staffing requirements.

F18.109 - General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) – Ongoing nothing new to report.

F18.110 - Library closure

Cllr McQuillan gave a report. The library's exact closure date it is still unclear. There are about 20 people on the working group's email list with an attendance of about nine at meetings. To date there has been about 350 responses to the working group's survey with a mix of answers. It is hoped that there will be 500 survey results by the time the consultation ends and the results will be presented to the Council meeting on 19th November.

NSC is proposing a mobile library service, to meet their statutory responsibilities, the group is working to analyse the survey responses and assess what is required from volunteers to allow sustainable options to be suggested. The existing computers are old and not thought suitable for transfer. The PC has no power to run a library so any new facility would be run in association with NSC. It is thought that any books will be provided by NSC/Libraries West with the same rotation and ability to order books.

Porta-cabins are being considered as a mid-term option. The working group is liaising with LACA via Cllr Cave. One option in the long term might be a multi-use hub space to include a youth centre, storage, meeting rooms and a library. It was agreed to put the discussion of long term planning of facilities for LACA, the Youth Club and the library, on the full council agenda.

F18.111 – LACA; meeting feedback.

A joint working group meeting has taken place with LACA. The current year's finances suggest that the finances are getting onto a sustainable footing. LACA have started to look at producing a longer term strategy but this is likely to take some time. The next meeting will take place on Monday 19th November at 09:00. LACA's appeal against NSC's decision to withdraw Discretionary Relief for Business Rates was declined essentially because of its improved finances.

F18.112 - Correspondence

- a) From CCLA LAPF prices and dividend yield September 2018; the next dividend is expected to be 3.09p a return of 4.27%.
- b) CCLA Market Report August; noted
- c) CCLA Market Report September; noted
- d) From HSBC - to inform the PC that as cheques can now be banked via image scanning they are no longer able to return cashed cheques.
- e) From Hiscox re pre-Brexit changes; Hiscox are making changes to the way their business is structured to accommodate Brexit; noted.
- f) From resident re reserves; a resident has written asking the PC to have a reserves policy. The Clerk has replied confirming what information is currently available.

F18.113 – Items for information

Cllr Pullin reported that a site visit to the Garden of Remembrance had taken place when it was agreed that the area needs to be more attractive and it is likely that works to trees and shrubs will be needed. Plot holders would like to see slabs and pebbles covering the surface. Cllrs Moorcroft and Mrs Pullin will draw up some options to be discussed at the Council meeting in November.

Date of next meeting Monday 17th December 2018

Meeting closed at 21:40.