

LONG ASHTON PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING

19:30, 17th December 2018, Jubilee Pavilion

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

Absent:
Mr A Wilkinson

In Attendance: Dr Janet Turp (The Clerk), Mrs T Warren (Assistant Clerk, minutes), Cllr Cartman (until 20:22) and Cllr Lansley (until 20:22).

F18.114 - Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Wilkinson.

F18.115 - Declarations of Interests and Grant of Dispensations - Interests were declared during the meeting. Dispensations were requested by Cllrs Cave and Mrs Pullin for items relating to LACA to be able to take part in discussions and vote. It was RESOLVED to grant the dispensations as there would otherwise be no one to provide the necessary information on LACA to Council. Proposed by Cllr Moorcroft and seconded by Cllr Miss Uppington. All in favour, with Cllrs Cave and Mrs Pullin taking no part in the vote. A dispensation was requested by Cllr Jackson for items relating to the Youth Club and Youth Network to enable him to take part in the discussion but not to vote. It was RESOLVED to grant this dispensation as there would otherwise be no one to provide the necessary information on the Youth Club or Youth Network to Council. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Cave. All in favour, with Cllr Jackson taking no part in the vote.

F18.116 – Minutes - The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd October 2018 copies having been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Moorcroft. All in favour.

F18.117 - Exclusion of the press and public - There were no matters requiring the exclusion of the press and public.

F18.118 - Matters arising

- a) F18.98a - Purchase of anti-virus software; ongoing
- b) F18.98b - Issues around solo working; ongoing
- c) F18.98c - Hedge at back of Paulman Gardens; ongoing
- d) F18.98e – Changes to asset register; ongoing
- e) F18.98f – Hearing Loop; microphones are now in use
- f) F18.98g – Quote to cut Birdwell Hedge; ongoing
- g) F18.101 – PFLA Community grant; Cllr McQuillan will remind PFLA that the terms of the grant dictate it should be spent within the current financial year.
- h) F18.106 – Scheme of Delegation; ongoing

F18.119 - Library closure

It was agreed to bring forward agenda item 10 on the Library closure, to receive a report from the working group. Cllr McQuillan gave the report: The survey is now closed with approximately 550 responses. A positive response for a community-led library was received with approximately 10-12% of respondents offering to volunteer. A recent meeting suggested that Keedwell Church might be a suitable location and this is being investigated along with a portacabin on the community centre site. The long term aspiration is for the library to be located within a permanent community hub. Costings (previously circulated) have been prepared showing an initial capital cost in the region of £20,000 and an estimated maximum annual running cost of around £17,000 including allowance for one paid member of staff.

The meeting was adjourned at 19:41 to allow Cllrs Cartman and Lansley to answer questions about the information provided on the library and costs.

The meeting re-opened at 20:01

It was recognised that, although there were further investigations to be carried out as to the preferred location, if the 2019/20 budget did not allow for expenditure on setting up a community library, then the opportunity for a library in the village could be lost. It was agreed that a contingency of £2000 on the capital costs should be allowed

It was agreed to adjourn the meeting at 20.05 to allow Cllr Lansley to talk about the Community Engagement Project which she had suggested should be included in the budget.

The meeting was re-opened at 20:21

F18.120 - 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 October and November at £15,066.42 and to note receipts of £7,864.50 over the same period. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Moorcroft. All in favour

F18.121 - Bi-monthly statement and Bank reconciliation

- a) Cllr Moorcroft agreed to review the submitted bank reconciliation.
- b) To receive and approve the Bi-monthly statement and bank reconciliation. The bank reconciliation at 11th December 2018 and summary was presented. The total amount in all accounts is £582,668.75 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 Moorcroft. All in favour.

F18.122 - Review of Expenditure against Budget.

The total expenditure for the year to the end of November was noted to be 59.1% of budget.

F18.123 - Finance Items

- a) Spending of CIL money received from NSC; £7,216 has been received of which £5,400 came from CIL payments from the Apple Tree development. It was agreed that £4,400 should be spent on the VES and £1,000 on the Wild Country Lane junction meeting the requirements of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan the remainder will be left for future works.
- b) S106 money due to Long Ashton from the Kings Nursery Development – information and plan for expenditure; An initial meeting has been held with a NSC officer to discuss

the use of the £48,592 s106 money from the Kings nursery development which has to be spent or committed by the end of March 2019. The notes of the meeting have been circulated. A further meeting will be held in mid-January and the plans for the money brought to the Council meeting in January.

Disappointment was expressed at the short timescale and it was agreed the committee will write to the Chief Executive to convey its frustration at the failure of NSCs processes to identify monies outstanding to spend in good time. Cllr Cave has spoken to the Chief Executive and requested a process to ensure this situation does not reoccur. It was noted that Leigh Woods may have approximately £1,600 outstanding to spend.

- c) Risk assessment of reserves. The PC agreed to consider this item at the next meeting when reserves are considered.
- d) It was RESOLVED to agree that the Clerk can attend the SLCC Practitioners Conference in February 2019. Proposed by Cllr Miss Uppington and seconded by Cllr Moorcroft. All in favour.

F18.124 – LACA

Regular meetings are held with LACA with the aim of monitoring finances, identifying a clear business plan and strategy and to settle the basis of the grant. At the recent meeting LACA's process for developing a strategy was discussed, together with the grant application, reduction of energy costs the skate park, library and other joint projects. The joint meetings should continue.

LACA has made a grant request of £29,500 with an additional contingency of £1,500 for VAT advice and Peel Park costs to be reimbursed. It was noted that this was less than the previous year and also included the business rates as the appeal to NSC was unsuccessful. Following discussion of the information provided detailing operational costs, income and designated reserves it was RESOLVED to agree to give the grant requested. Proposed by Cllr Moorcroft and seconded by Cllr Sterland. All in favour.

F18.125 – Youth Club

To discuss the Youth Club's grant request and to agree funding for 2019/20; It was noted that the request of £17,700 was a small increase on the previous year's grant of £17,500 and represents a 4% increase since 2012 when the service moved from a NSC to a community-based one.

The PC noted the terms of the 2018/2019 grant included a request to carry out a community project. Although a project hasn't been completed this year the Youth Club completed a mural project on the LACA café in 2017 and are seeking funds from the Co-op for an inter-generational project for 2019 based around refurbishment of the youth shelter. The PC requested advance notification on any projects being carried out.

Cllr Jackson confirmed that the Youth Club had engaged with 100 young people over the previous 12 months and typically 30-40 attend weekly over the three nights. Long Ashton's YC cost compare favourably with Flax Bourton's YC budget of £9,000 for one evening a week. . The YC had been active in fundraising and in addition to the PC grant the YC itself met £7,000 of the costs last year. The PC noted the Youth Club's benefit to the community.

20:49 Cllr Jackson left the room as he has a declared pecuniary interest.

It was RESOLVED to agree a grant of £17,700. Proposed by Cllr Harris and seconded by Cllr McQuillan. All in favour.

20:51 Cllr Jackson re-joined the meeting.

F18.126 - Grant Applications

a) To agree sum to give to the Network for youth organisation grants for 2019/20 – It was agreed that the PC will earmark £500 for youth grants in 2019/20.

b) 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 £3400 available for grants in addition to the £500 for youth grants. It was RESOLVED TO make the following grant payments proposed by Cllr Cave and seconded by Cllr Miss Uppington. All in favour:

- Friends of Keeds Wood and the Brake (Cllr Sterland declared an interest in this application as a member of the group and took no part in the discussion) - £200 for the provision of first aid training with the condition that any spare spaces should be offered to members of other groups.
- Memory Café - £500
- Crime Prevention Scheme - £0. The PC agreed to cover costs of room hire as needed by the group rather than making a grant as long as the scheme has Police approval.
- Storyfest – £0. As funds are limited this year the PC did not feel it could support this application.
- Citizens Advice Bureau – £600.
- Flax Bourton Youth Club – £0. Given the level of support that the PC gives to its own Youth Club it was agreed not to support this club. It was noted that it is possible that some Flax Bourton residents attend the LA Youth Club's meetings from time to time.
- Wellspring Counselling - £300.
- MS Therapy Centre - £300.
- St Peters Hospice - £500.
- Above and Beyond - £200.
- Nailsea Community Transport - £800.

F18.127 - Community Grant; to confirm amount, timetable and any conditions that will apply, and to review application form and guidance: It was agreed that the grants should be spent within 9 months of awarding rather than by the end of the current financial year. Applications will be due in May, details will be published in June's newsletter, and the decision meeting will be in October. Following discussion and given the increase in other grants awarded it was RESOLVED to reduce the total community grant to £1,500 allowing two grants to be available at £1,000 and £500 each with the current terms and conditions amended as above. Proposed by Cllr Sterland, and seconded Cllr Cave. All in favour.

F18.128 – Budget:

The draft 2019/20 budget had been circulated to Cllrs and was discussed in detail. The precept will be based on 2660 Band D properties which is only slightly raised from last year. This has been queried with NSC as the Audley Redwood and other developments are largely occupied so it was expected to show a much larger increase. It was noted that the Tax Support Grant (£1,690 last year) has been completely removed this year and that inflation is around 3% (depending on the index chosen).

Although Cllrs supported the aims of the Community Engagement Project it was thought that these could be achieved by Cllrs without spending on a contract for these services so it was agreed not to proceed with the project at the present time, although it was recognised that there are time pressures on Cllrs and the new Council to be elected in May may have a different view. It was RESOLVED to remove this item from the budget; proposed by Cllr Moorcroft, seconded by Cllr Cave carried with 6 in favour, 3 against and 1 abstention.

It was agreed to set a budget of £284,480, to include £32,000 spend on the Village Enhancement Scheme, £11,000 on road safety schemes for Hollis Close, Yanley Lane and the Wild Country Lane junction, £10,000 for Leigh Woods parking scheme, £22,000 library set up costs and £15,000 library running costs. After allowing for income this gives £272,203 to be found. It was agreed that this would be funded by using £66,650 of earmarked reserves, £5,400 of CIL money, £28,153 from general reserves and a precept of £172,000.

It was noted that the Parish Council aims to keep 6 to 9 months expenditure as general reserves. Based on last year, 6 months expenditure is about £80,000. Using £28,153 from general reserves will leave the reserves at just above the 6 month level.

A precept of £172,000 will increase the band D payment to the parish council to £64.66 a year an increase of 8.2% or 41p a month per band D home. It was recognised that this is above the level of inflation but was thought reasonable given that the PC is taking on responsibility for the library and the consultation showed a willingness to increase the precept to pay for the library. The precept for Long Ashton residents will still be one of the lowest of the service villages.

It was RESOLVED to recommend the amended draft budget, based on a precept of £172,000, to Full Council for adoption. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Moorcroft. All in favour.

F18.129 – Taylor Wimpey Areas

- a) Transfer of the Taylor Wimpey areas and lease to LACA – no update
- b) Public Art – no update
- c) Replacements of trees – tree suggestions are awaited.
- d) Annual Play area inspection reports – update on repairs; a quote is still awaited for the repair of swings at Kings Croft.
- e) Replacement for logs in Chancellors Park play area; quotes are awaited for toddler play equipment.
- f) To agree to replace the bench in the Kings Croft play area. The PC noted the bench legs are rotting. It was RESOLVED to give the Clerk authority to proceed with replacing the bench at a cost of up to £300. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham and seconded by Cllr Miss Uppington. All in favour.

F18.130 – Parish Council Office; working group report; No new information.

F18.131 – General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR); No new information.

F18.132 – Battles Over

The accounts for the event are being finalised and are expected to show a shortfall. Some Cllrs were disappointed that the PC is not meeting this shortfall but PC policies do not allow grants to be awarded retrospectively and the PC had previously declined to underwrite the event. A public appeal for donations (to be made payable to “Long Ashton 11.11.18”) to meet the outstanding costs of the 11 11 18 event is to be made.

F18.133 – Correspondence

- a) From HSBC re best tariff – confirmation the PC is on the best tariff was noted.
- b) From Hampshire trust Bank - confirmation of reinvestment of the bond was noted.
- c) CCLA Market Report October – circulated and noted.
- d) CCLA Market Report November – circulated and noted.
- e) LAPF prices October LAPF prices November – circulated and noted.

- f) From LACA seeking permission for outdoor gym equipment on Peel Park; it was agreed that the PC has no objection to the placing of the equipment but that Taylor Wimpey's solicitors and NSC need to be informed as the land has not yet been transferred to the PC. It was noted that the equipment's position should not prejudice the location of a skate park.

F18.134 – Matters for information

- a) Changes to Public Sector Deposit Fund having been circulated, were noted.
- a) Office arrangements over the Christmas period; it was noted that the office is closed from Friday 21st December and re-opens on Wednesday 2nd January. Cllrs Hardingham and Moorcroft agreed to be the emergency contact numbers.
- b) Arrangements to fill the casual vacancy left by Cllr Collins resignation; notices are to be put up and the applicants to be considered at the next Council meeting.

F18.135 – To agree date for additional meeting if one is required following NS finalising of Tax Support Grant or any other relevant change or announcement. It was agreed that if an additional meeting was needed it would be held on 14th January at 19:00 before the next planning committee meeting.

Date of next meeting Monday 18th February 2019

MEETING CLOSED AT: 22:03