

## **Report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee to the Parish Council**

The Committee met at 8.00 pm on **Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2014** in Committee Room 1 at the Parish Hall in Great Baddow. Councillor Mrs C Shaw chaired the meeting.

Present: Councillors Mrs C Shaw, A Sosin, Mrs J Sosin, Mrs V Sadowsky, T Miller, Mrs D Ronaldson, K Ronaldson, G Jarvis and Mrs S Young

In Attendance: The Clerk of the Council

### **666/13 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence, as all the members of the committee were present.

### **667/13 Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Pecuniary Interests or Registerable Non Pecuniary Interests.

### **668/13 Public Question Time**

There were no members of the public present.

### **669/13 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2014 were signed as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Mrs D Ronaldson and seconded by Cllr A Sosin.

### **670/13 Clerk's Report**

#### **1. Outside Redecoration**

Cllr T Miller asked about this item and the Clerk said that it had been inadvertently left off the agenda. However, there was no further progress to note.

#### **2. Banking Arrangements**

The Clerk reported that the main bank account with NatWest has now been closed and the funds transferred to Unity Trust Bank. There are still the matters of opening a Petty Cash Account and the arrangements for paying in to be sorted out. These will be attended to as soon as possible but in the meantime, monies taken in the office are being banked into the NatWest Petty Cash (Imprest) A/C, which is still open.

#### **3. May Fair Funds**

The Clerk has still to contact the ex member of the May Fair about the remaining funds.

#### **4. Great Baddow Arts Project**

A meeting was held on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2014 and another has been arranged for 14<sup>th</sup> March 2014. In the meantime, further work will be undertaken by the artists.

#### **5. Bell Centre Telephone**

The line has now been cancelled.

#### **6. Toddlers Play Area**

Cllr Mrs C Shaw asked about the water that appears to be settling on the wet pour surface under the swings. As the new play equipment has not yet been commissioned, Wicksteed have not been out to the site. The matter will be dealt with when the new equipment is commissioned but it is thought that the problem is similar to that experienced on the wet-pour surface under the see-saw.

### 671/13 Financial Transactions

1. The amended expenditure for January 2014 was **£32704.85** (£315065.07 Net).
2. The amended income for January 2014 was **£6831.92** (£6615.06 Net). The amendments to the February 2014 Expenditure could not be made because the bank statements have not yet been received.
3. The total income for February 2014 was **£8943.27** (£8760.24 Net) and the total expenditure for March 2014 was **£35822.14** (£34500.69 Net). The figures were proposed by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr Mrs J Sosin.

The following cheques were issued to cover expenditure of over £500.

Date	Number	PAYEE	Amount	VAT	TOTAL
3/3/2014	300007	Berewood Ltd – GC Machine Service & Mower	1914.05	319.00	1595.05
3/3/2014	300008	British Gas – PH and BC Heating	3115.68	304.64	2811.04
3/3/2014	300011	E.On – RG Electricity	601.13	28.63	572.50
3/3/2014	300014	Essex & Suffolk Water – Water Rates	874.24	-	874.24
3/3/2014	300020	SD Grounds Care Ltd – Bowling Green Supplies	772.80	128.80	644.00

### 672/13 Financial Review

A comparison of the income was circulated by the Clerk. Whilst the income for the football pitches and the All Weather Sports Courts is still low at about 63% of budget, the cemetery income has risen to 88% of budget. Unfortunately none of these budgets is expected to reach budgeted income total by the end of the financial year. The income for the halls is much improved and now stands at 99.8% for the Parish Hall and only £477.00 short of last year's total for the Bell Centre. The comparison and information was noted.

### 673/13 Code of Conduct

Whilst undertaking the review of the draft Standing Orders, the Organisation, Methods & Personnel subcommittee had requested the Clerk to speak to the Monitoring Officer at Chelmsford City Council about part of the section on Code of Conduct complaints. This involved the Council considering what, if any, action should be taken against a councillor who may be found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct. The Monitoring Officer's reply suggested that the Parish Council should look at adopting a local protocol to avoid inconsistent approaches in the future.

Only the City Council can investigate and consider initially what action for a breach, if proved, would be appropriate. The Monitoring Officer suggested two options and it was proposed by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr K Ronaldson that Option 1 should be recommended to the Council to be adopted as the local protocol. This states that the Council will accept that any investigation and hearing carried out by the City Council that led to the recommendations was thorough and there would be no reason to look behind the findings and suggested sanction. The Council would approve the findings and impose the sanction suggested. This option was agreed as it creates minimal work for the Council, avoids any issues of councillors knowing the member

involved and emphasises the objective and detached assessment carried out by the City Council and the importance of following the Code and providing a consistent interpretation.

**674/13 All Weather Sports Courts**

It had been agreed in March 2012 that work to install additional gates to the All Weather Sports Courts should go ahead. The Parish Council was given permission by Chelmsford City Council in early 2013 to use S106 monies to undertake this work. A re-quote was required, as the original quote was incorrect but difficulties were experienced in obtaining this. A new quote has now been obtained and it was proposed by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr Mrs S Young that the quote from Doe Sport Ltd should be accepted and that the work should go ahead, with the monies coming from the S106 payments.

**675/13 Toddlers Play Area**

Following the committee meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2014, Cllr Mrs S Young and the Clerk had investigated changing the choice of multi use equipment. Unfortunately it had not proved possible to keep the cost within the budget available and so the issue has been referred back to this committee. In the meantime, the office had also received another quotation for the equipment from Play & Leisure Ltd.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr Mrs S Young that the Clerk should investigate the use of other S106 monies. It was also proposed that the Clerk should seek references for Play & Leisure Ltd, as their equipment design was preferred.

**676/13 Website**

The Clerk told the meeting that the timetable for the staff training had slipped because Mike Letch has been unwell. However, the aim is still to have the website running by the end of the financial year.

**677/13 Matters for Information**

- Cllr Mrs V Sadowsky gave her apologies for the surgery and pre-meet on Saturday. Cllrs Mrs J Sosin and A Sosin also gave their apologies.
- Cllr Mrs C Shaw reminded the meeting about the surgery and pre-meet on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2014.
- The Clerk told the meeting that she had received notice from the EALC about the new Local Audit and Accountability Act. Comments have to be sent to NALC by 12 noon on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2014. It was agreed that comments will be made by the deadline and be on the agenda to be ratified by the full Council.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.33 pm.

Signed.....Chairman.....Date