

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

The Committee met at 8.00 pm on Monday 9th March 2015 in Committee Room 1 at the Parish Hall in Great Baddow. Councillor Mrs C Shaw chaired the meeting.

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

In Attendance: Assistant Clerk of the Council

706/14 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

707/14 Declaration of Interests

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

708/14 Public Question Time

There were no members of the public present.

709/14 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th February 2015 were signed as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr Mrs D Ronaldson.

710/14 Clerk's Report

1. Bollards in Noakes Place/Recreation Ground

Glenn Parkington at Chelmsford City Council has confirmed that an order has been placed for the bollards, and arrangements will now be made for the installation.

2. Purchase of Dennis Mower

Following the decision of this committee on 9th February, an order was placed for a new Dennis mower, and the machine has now been delivered. The invoice will be presented in April 2015 for payment in the new financial year.

1. Bus Shelters

Cllr A Sosin reported that he and the Grounds Manager had met a representative from Queensbury Bus Shelters last week, to view the location for a new bus shelter, and the replacement of an existing shelter. The Assistant Clerk confirmed that quotations had not yet been received for these works, and this will be chased. The matter will be placed on the Council agenda for 16th March 2015.

711/14 Financial Transactions

1. The reports detailing the income and expenditure for February 2015 and the expenditure to be paid in March 2015 were discussed.
2. The income for February 2015 was **£6374.74** (£6179.42 Net) and the expenditure for February 2015 was **£35610.63** (£34651.44 Net). March expenditure (for February invoices being paid this month) is **£44102.37** (£43017.49 Net).

The complete income and expenditure for February 2015 and the expenditure for March 2015 was proposed for acceptance by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr Mrs S Young. This was agreed.

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

| Date | Number | PAYEE | Amount | VAT | TOTAL |
|-----------|--------|--|---------|--------|---------|
| 9/03/2015 | 300330 | Great Baddow Bowling Club - edging | 607.40 | | 607.40 |
| 9/03/2015 | 300333 | Berewood Ltd – mowers service | 1312.70 | 218.79 | 1093.91 |
| 9/03/2015 | 300334 | British Gas – BC & PH heating | 2001.48 | 294.98 | 1706.50 |
| 9/03/2015 | 300339 | Essex & Suffolk Water – RG Bowls and TF Sewerage | 833.68 | | 833.68 |
| 9/03/2015 | 300340 | FRS Countrywear Ltd – protective clothing | 1070.94 | 157.73 | 913.21 |
| 9/03/2015 | 300342 | LetchWood – IT Equipment | 1957.84 | | 1957.84 |
| 9/03/2015 | 300350 | Barham and Moore – GBT Printing | 1076.00 | | 1076.00 |
| 9/03/2015 | 300352 | P Tuckwell Ltd – New mower | 625.00 | | 520.83 |
| 9/03/2015 | 300356 | British Gas – RG electricity | 613.84 | 102.30 | 511.54 |
| 9/03/2015 | 300357 | Anglian Water – RG Sewerage | 850.13 | | 850.13 |

The following items were noted:

1. High cost of heating the Bell Centre – the handyman will be asked to check the timer and thermostat settings on a regular basis, and to slightly reduce the temperature of the radiators.
2. Shield for the centenary board, to commemorate the 2014 winner - it has been noticed that similar shields for the previous three years have not been engraved. It was agreed that these should now be inscribed.
3. Risk assessment templates – these have been purchased from the Institute of Groundsmanship, and it was agreed that the Grounds Manager should be asked to report on their effectiveness at the next meeting of the Grounds Committee on 30th March 2015. It was noted that the cost should come from the Grounds Committee training budget.
4. Office assistance – the Clerk had indicated that further assistance with the accounts, in order to prepare for the end of year, would not be required, but it was agreed that additional help could be requested if this became necessary.

712/14 Financial Review

A comparison of the income and expenditure to the end of February 2015 was circulated and noted. There were no major concerns but it was noted that the income from both the sports courts and the cemetery remains low.

713/14 Banking Arrangements

1. To confirm changes to the banking arrangements, and transfers between accounts. It was agreed that the Clerk should contact the Parish Council's internal auditor, or the EALC, to obtain advice on whether a Clerk/RFO should be authorised to transfer funds without the additional confirmation of two further signatories to the account. No decision would be made on this matter until the necessary advice had been received.

2. To agree payment by direct debit for the Council's broadband services. It was proposed by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr A Sosin that a direct debit should be set up for this account. This was agreed.

714/14 Addition to schedule of Highways Projects

Cllr A Sosin outlined the proposal to add a further project to the Parish Council's list of highways schemes that it is supporting, for consideration by the Essex County Council highways panel. It was agreed that this project, to address the problems of crossing Galleywood Road at the Bells Chase junction, should be added to the list. The project will require local support and Cllr A Sosin, with the assistance of other councillors, will address this matter.

715/14 Application for Hire of the Recreation Ground

The Assistant Clerk had circulated copies of the application prior to the meeting. It was noted that the application was requesting hire on Sunday 30th August and Monday 31st August, and a query was raised as to whether the facilities would be needed on Saturday 29th to set up. The Assistant Clerk will contact the applicants on this matter. It was agreed that the application should be approved, subject to the usual terms and conditions relating to safety and insurance, and to the provision of risk assessments. It was also agreed that the fee of £125 per day, applicable for commercial hires, will apply to this application.

716/14 Electrical Repairs in the Recreation Ground buildings

A quotation from Sterling Electrical Contractors had been circulated prior to the meeting detailing the work that is now required in the Recreation Ground buildings. It was agreed that the quotation, totalling £1099.57 plus VAT, to replace a defective fan heater, clean the extractor fans and replace corroded lighting units, should be approved. Proposed by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr Mrs S Young, with monies to be taken substantially from the Changing Rooms Repairs budget. Cllr Mrs S Young raised the matter of maintenance of the electrical items such as fans and lighting units, and queried whether a schedule was in place to ensure that regular checks are carried out.

717/14 Website

Cllr Mrs J Sosin informed the meeting that the new website was not live, as there had been problems with the transfer of information when attempts had been made to upload it. The old website will remain online whilst the problems are addressed.

718/14 Matters for Information

- Cllr K Ronaldson noted that, whilst the Parish Council had not formalised a volunteer policy, an advertisement had been placed in the Great Baddow Times for a volunteer tree warden. Cllr Mrs C Shaw confirmed that the warden would be working in Great Baddow but would be under the auspices of Chelmsford City Council.
- Cllr K Ronaldson noted that the Vineyards car park is now very congested following the closure of the lower section at the Marrable House end.
- Cllr Mrs J Sosin informed the meeting that a reply had been received from Clem Dobson Associates with regard to the parking arrangements in the Vineyards car park for parish council employees, and it is hoped that a temporary agreement can be reached
- Cllrs A Sosin and Mrs s Young informed the meeting that the work to de-silt the ponds in Noakes Place is due to start on 16th March. Some

notices have been placed at park entrances, but it was noted that these have not been placed at the Rothmans Road or Kingfisher Lodge entrances. The Assistant Clerk will circulate information received from Glenn Parkington at the City Council to all councillors.

- Cllr Mrs C Shaw reminded the meeting of the pre-meet on Saturday 14th March, and Cllrs Mrs J Sosin and A Sosin gave their apologies.

It was resolved that the meeting would be closed to the public and press under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted in the following item

719/14 Office Staffing

1. Holiday pay for contractual overtime.

Cllr Mrs S Young outlined the changes to regulations concerning the payment of holiday pay for contractual overtime. It was agreed that the Clerk should obtain further information and submit a report to the Council meeting on 16th March 2015.

2. Matters arising in relation to staff salaries.

Further information had been received from Acumen Wages Service which confirmed the underpayment to one employee. Arrangements are in hand to correct this matter and a letter of apology will be written by the Clerk and the Chairman of the Council. Some uncertainty remains with regard to a second employee and further information is awaited. If this is received prior to the March salary payments, it was agreed that any necessary correction should be made. It was proposed that it would be good practice to check the first payment for a new member of staff, and to carry out further checks when a change in scale is made, as well as random spot checks as required. It was also agreed that the Clerk should investigate alternative wages companies as a few problems have now arisen with the current provider.

An additional query had been raised by a staff member in relation to salary scales, and it was agreed that the Clerk should be asked for further information on this matter.

3. Additional Responsibilities Allowance

It was agreed that the Assistant Clerk and Administrative Assistant should continue to receive the allowance until the Clerk returns to full time working. Proposed by Cllr Mrs J Sosin and seconded by Cllr Mrs C Shaw. A vote of thanks was given to the Assistant Clerk and the Administrative Assistant for their work during the period of the clerk's sick leave.

4. Unused Annual Leave

The Committee considered the unused annual leave of three employees. It was agreed that, due to long term sickness, the Clerk should carry over 5 days to the 2015/16 leave year and a payment should be made for the remaining 18 days. It was agreed that HR advice should be taken with regard to the unused leave of the Deputy Grounds Manager who remains on long term sick leave, and that he should be contacted once this has been received. The unused leave of the caretaker was noted.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 10.10 pm.

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