

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

The Committee met at 8.00 pm on **Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2016** in The Parish Hall in Great Baddow. Councillor Mrs C Shaw chaired the meeting.

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

In Attendance: The Clerk of the Council

### **55/16 Apologies for Absence**

There were apologies for absence from Cllr Mrs S Young.

### **56/16 Declaration of Interests**

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

### **57/16 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2016 were signed as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr A Sosin.

### **58/16 Public Question Time**

There were no members of the public present.

### **59/16 Clerk's Report**

#### **1. Computers**

Further to the report last month, new IT equipment now needs to be purchased. A replacement computer for the Recreation Ground Office is required and an external hard drive is required for the main back-up. These items will be sourced and funding identified.

Following the SyncToy back-up software being disabled, back-ups have been carried out without the use of the incremental software. A new external hard drive has recently been purchased for use as the off-site back-up. This was because the drive was full but it was also very old and as a consequence, not very fast. The new drive will make the back-ups faster to do, although they will still take longer than with the software.

#### **2. Recreation Ground Keys**

The Clerk told the meeting that she was not aware of what was happening about the cutting of new keys but that she will investigate. Two more sets of keys would be given back by the end of this week and it is possible that these might be in better condition.

#### **3. Parish Hall**

The Clerk still needs to contact the builder about the problem with the down pipe at the front entrance of the hall but due to the additional workload created by the current staffing difficulties this has not been actioned yet. There have been no further problems reported with the damp.

#### **4. Tree Survey**

The Clerk has still not had a reply from Chelmsford City Council and the officer who dealt with Noakes Place has now been made redundant. The Clerk has spoken to Paul Van Damme at the City Council and will follow up the matter with him.

#### **5. Legionella Survey**

The contractor for the Legionella Surveys still needs to be contacted and this will be followed up.

6. **Energy Efficiency Certificate**  
Some of the more local registered auditors will be contacted. The Clerk will also speak to the Community Association about the Millennium Hall.
7. **Mobile Telephones**  
The Clerk is drawing up an agreement for the use of the personal mobile telephones for the staff to sign and in the meantime the informal agreement is still in place.
8. **Committee Terms of Reference**  
A date for a meeting to discuss the Terms of Reference still needs to be fixed.
9. **Recreation Ground Barriers**  
The quote that was requested from the City Council for new barriers at the Rothmans Place entrance to the Recreation Ground has not yet been received. This is being followed up by an officer from the City Council, after a meeting last week.
10. **Highways and Amenities**  
The Clerk has now met with an officer from Chelmsford City Council about the cost of emptying the dog waste bins and has the information that the Council requires. A full report will be written and the matter will be on an agenda for consideration. A survey of the Council's street furniture, including dog waste bins, will be carried out over the next few months, which should give the Council better information about its assets.
11. **Procurement Regulations**  
The Clerk told the meeting that a draft policy will be presented as soon as possible. The current staffing difficulties will hopefully be resolved soon and this will make time available to draft the policy.
12. **Electoral Rolls**  
This matter has not yet been followed up but the Clerk will contact the Electoral Office.
13. **Great Baddow Times**  
The Clerk told the meeting that the office has not received any complaints about non-delivery of the Great Baddow Times.

#### 60/16 **Financial Transactions**

1. The amended Expenditure for April 2016 could not be reported to the meeting because an internal transfer to top-up the Imprest account had not been entered following the End of Year closedown. This will be rectified and councillors will be informed as soon as possible. The matter will be on the June 2016 agenda for agreement.
2. The Income for April 2016 was **£201,621.35** (£201,510.79 Net).
3. The April/May 2016 Expenditure to be paid from the Unity Trust current account in May is **£41,100.90** (£38,806.89 Net).

The Clerk told the meeting about the following items:

Invoice to Acumen Wages. This is for the End of Year online filing and will be the last invoice, as the payroll has now been transferred to J&M Payroll.

Invoice for The Anglia Sign Casting Company. This includes the re-coating of a plaque that had become quite badly marked. The plaque looks much better and so others that are damaged in the same way will be re-coated in the next few months.

Invoice to Berewood Ltd. The new strimmers have been purchased for the Grounds but the Billy Goat sweeper has not yet been ordered. This is because it is the wrong equipment for the job that it is to be used for and so further enquiries are going to be made to find something that is more suitable.

Invoice to Clare Freeman. Ms Freeman is the RFO to Coggeshall Parish Council and agreed to give the Clerk assistance this year to do the End of Year accounts and the RBS closedown.

Invoice to Gilgen Door Systems UK Ltd. Some problems have been experienced with the automatic door at the front of the Parish Hall and an engineer had been called out to look at it. This invoice only covers the call-out. A quote for the remedial work has been received but has not yet been actioned.

The above items were proposed for acceptance by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr Mrs V Sadowsky and were agreed.

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

Date	Number	PAYEE	Amount	VAT	TOTAL
3/5/2016	300818	Berewood Ltd – New strimmers	2111.01	422.20	2533.21
3/5/2016	300823	EALC - Affiliation fee and training course	1375.74	-	1375.74
3/5/2016	300825	George Browns Ltd – GC Mower Repairs	580.83	116.17	697.00
3/5/2016	300834	SD Groundscare Ltd – GC Contract Services	3878.57	775.71	4654.28
3/5/2016	300835	Jean Swain – Community Celebration tea	1140.00	-	1140.00
3/5/2016	300836	Tees Law – Bell Centre Lease Legal Fees (Interim invoice)	2754.65	533.40	3288.05

8.46pm – Cllr Mrs D Ronaldson left the meeting

#### 61/16 Financial Review

The Clerk circulated a copy of the summary income and expenditure to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2016. The expenditure to date stands at 5.8% of budget and the income at 42.1%

8.50pm – Cllr Mrs D Ronaldson entered the meeting

It was agreed that was not possible to discern any trends with only one month's figures and the report was noted.

#### 62/16 Ring Fenced and Available Monies

The Clerk circulated a report about the ring fencing and earmarking of monies from the budget. It was noted that the title of the S106 monies does now include CIL payments.

It was noted that the accounts from which the figures have been taken have not yet been audited. It was proposed by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and

seconded by Cllr A Sosin that the suggested ring fenced monies be accepted and agreed. The adjusted general reserve stands at £131,838.00.

Cllr K Ronaldson raised the matter of the earmarked reserves for the cemetery paths. This was because the Clerk had mentioned in another meeting that the paths etc. are really needed as soon as possible. At the current rate of saving, it would be some years before the costed figure of £50,000.00 will be reached. Currently the earmarked figure stands at £15,000.00, with another £5,000.00 due from the 2016/2017 budget. It was agreed that as part of the budgeting process for 2017/2018, the Clerk will obtain a more up to date quotation for the work.

#### **63/16 Bad Debts**

The Clerk had circulated a report prior to the meeting. After some discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk will investigate putting in place a more robust system for checking unpaid invoices.

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr Mrs V Sadowsky that the following debts be written off:

Dennis Barker (GBT Advertising)	£132.00
Kixa Self Defence (Parish Hall Hire)	£288.00
San Yama Gakko (Parish Hall Hire)	£31.50

#### **64/16 Imprest Account and Autopay**

The Clerk had circulated a report about the Imprest Account and the Autopay prior to the meeting. Following on from the April meeting, the Clerk had reviewed the limits for the Imprest account and the Autopay account, which currently stand at £25,000.00 and £20,000.00 respectively. The recommendation is that the levels are left as they are and that the matter is reviewed in October 2016. This was agreed.

#### **65/16 Recreation Ground Fencing**

1) The committee considered the recommendation of the Grounds committee to pay an amount not exceeding 1/3 of the total cost of replacing the fence. This amount is to be based on the original quote sent to the Council by the property owner. It was proposed by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr K Ronaldson that £950.00 should be paid of the quote that was submitted. The costs of the planning application are to be borne by the property owner.

2) The committee was told that when contact was made with the City Council, the property owner was told that planning permission will be required for the replacement fence. As part of the process, the Council's agreement to the proposals is required. Plans had been circulated and after discussion it was agreed that the committee is happy with the proposed design.

#### **66/16 Internal Grounds Review**

The Clerk had circulated a report prior to the meeting, which was discussed.

1) The report of the Internal Grounds Review Working Group was received and noted.

2) It was proposed by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr Mrs J Sosin that the following recommendations are confirmed:

1. The objectives of the Working Group are approved

2. No permanent staff appointments should be made at the current time
3. The Internal Grounds Review must consider all the options available, including that of contracting out some or all of the grounds services
4. A complete review of all the sports charges should be undertaken
5. The staff cover being provided by the Games Attendant should be finished
6. A person should be appointed on a short term, part time basis to help cover the day to day work
7. The remaining staff are only asked to cover evenings where there are bookings during the Games Attendant's absence on annual leave
8. Contact with other groups and agencies should be followed up to look at increasing usage of the facilities and investigations should continue into additional concurrent services that the Council could provide
9. The Administrative Assistant should be approached to undertake certain work at the Lawn Cemetery and the Old Burial Ground on a temporary basis

3) The last recommendation concerned the temporary delegation of powers to the Working Group to make urgent decisions regarding the grounds staffing situation. There was much discussion and it was agreed that the matter would be deferred to be discussed by the full Council.

**67/16 Matters for Information**

- Cllr Mrs J Sosin reminded those present about the surgery and pre-meet on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2016.
- The Clerk told the meeting that due to a consultant's appointment that had been arranged at very short notice, she would have to leave the office at 12.30pm on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2016.
- Cllr Mrs V Sadowsky told the meeting that some councillors had met with teg at Luxfield on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2016. There was a discussion of the group's plan and about ownership of the adjacent land. The Clerk told those present that despite attempts being made, it had proved impossible to find the owner of the adjacent land, which is not registered. Cllr Mrs C Shaw mentioned that by the time of this meeting, the plan had changed from the details that had been circulated by e.mail, to a different and cheaper project. It was agreed that the Council would put the matter on the agenda for 13<sup>th</sup> June 2016 and asked that draft plans be submitted for consideration. It was also made clear that those plans must come from the group as a whole and not from individual members. The Clerk reported that she had been contacted by a member of the group about the owner's consent form that forms part of any bid to Tesco but advised that this could not be agreed until after the June meeting. The Clerk will reply in this manner.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.42pm.

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