

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

The Committee met at 8.25 pm on **Monday 5th June 2017** in The Parish Hall in Great Baddow. Councillor Mrs C Shaw chaired the meeting.

Present: Councillors Mrs C Shaw, A Sosin, Mrs J Sosin, T Miller, G Jarvis, Mrs S Young, Mrs V Chiswell and Mrs M Miller

In Attendance: The Clerk of the Council

119/17 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs D Ronaldson, who had substituted Cllr Mrs M Miller and Cllr K Ronaldson.

120/17 Declaration of Interests

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

121/17 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd May 2017 were signed as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr A Sosin. This was agreed unanimously.

122/17 Public Question Time

There were no members of the public present.

123/17 Clerk's Report

1. Energy Efficiency Certificate

The Clerk has spoken to Utilitywise and progress is being made on the matter of the Energy Efficiency Certificates.

2. Electoral Registers

The Clerk said that the problem of opening the Zip file had still not been resolved and that she had not yet been able to contact Chelmsford City Council again. Cllr Mrs C Shaw reported that she had still not received any updates and will e.mail the City Council herself.

3. Specifications for Contracts

The grounds contracts specifications were posted onto the Contracts Finder website on 11th May 2017 and the closing date for submissions is Friday 9th June 2017.

4. Insurance

The Clerk told the meeting that both insurance claims have been paid in full, less the excess of £250.00 on each claim. The contractors have been out to the sites and the repairs are in hand.

5. Water Supplies

The Clerk has contacted Utilitywise about the new Water Supply companies but difficulties are being experienced in obtaining a quote because of the number of accounts that the Council has. A company called Everflow has given an initial quote which would give a saving of £300.00 over three years but the biggest benefit would be that the separate accounts could be billed on one invoice. It was agreed that the Clerk should progress the investigations.

The Clerk told the meeting that a report will be presented to the committee at the meeting on 3rd July 2017, about using more Direct Debits and starting to use Online payments.



6. Parish Hall Automatic Door

The Clerk told the meeting that the office has contacted Geze UK Ltd but no reply has been forthcoming. The matter will be chased.

124/17 Financial Transactions

1. The amended Expenditure for April 2017 is **£38674.61** (£37333.07 Net).
2. The amended Expenditure for May 2017 is **£39362.08** (£38105.20 Net).
3. The Income for May 2017 is **£34521.68** (£34483.50 Net).
4. The May/June 2017 Expenditure to be paid from the Unity Trust current account in June 2017 is **£41555.86** (£39458.29 Net).

The Clerk told the meeting about the following items:

- CIL Income – The Clerk told the meeting that a report will be presented to the next meeting on 3rd July 2017 relating to the S106 and CIL monies. The total monies held by the Parish Council is now nearly £45,000.00 and the City Council would like to know whether some of the money is to be spent.
- Berewood Ltd – Part of the invoice is for repairs to damage on the Iseki Ride-on Mower. The Clerk is speaking to the contractor about how the damage came to be done.
- CommuniCorp – It was confirmed that Cllrs Mrs J Sosin and Mrs C Shaw receive copies of Clerks & Councils Direct.
- Digital Copier Systems Ltd – This invoice is for the quarterly charges for the photocopier use. Cllr Mrs J Sosin asked what this included and the Clerk said that it covers maintenance, repairs and toner cartridges. The only additional thing that the Council must pay for is the paper that is used.
- Grenville Nurseries – The Clerk told the meeting that she has been informed that this supplier will no longer be accepting cheques.
- Papalarny – The invoice is for the disco booked for the Playscheme 2017. Also booked is Team Kinetix and a large assault course type inflatable.

~~8:57pm – Cllr A Sosin left the meeting~~

- SD Grounds Care Ltd – This month's payment also includes payment for maintenance work on a mower and the purchase of grass seed. Cllr A Sosin told the meeting that one of the contractors had told him that the grass seed being used at the cemetery was of too high a grade. The Clerk said that she was also aware of this and will be speaking to the Grounds Supervisor.
- J W Steele – The invoices are for the emergency repair to the outside door at the Parish Hall and for the adjustment of the gents' toilet door at the Recreation Ground.

8:59pm – Cllr A Sosin re-entered the meeting

- Thomsons – It was noted that this cheque was for an extremely small amount and the Clerk said that she will be proposing that in future all payments under £10.00 will be made from the office cash and not on account.
- Total Gas & Power – The Clerk told the meeting that in the original agreement with the company, Direct Debit orders had been required and that the Council had agreed these. Unfortunately, when they were set up, some of the orders had not been completed. The Clerk will check these and make certain that the orders are established.

1. **Great Baddow Times Honorarium**

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Editor's Honorarium currently stands at £55.00 per issue and has not been reviewed for many years. Out of pocket expenses are in addition to this and include telephone calls, car journeys to the printers, e-mails etc.. It was proposed by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr Mrs M Miller that the honorarium be set at £80.00 per issue and that this should be reviewed in early 2018. This was agreed unanimously.

2. **Great Baddow Times Advertisement**

A copy of Mr Beaver's e.mail of 30th May 2017 regarding non-delivery of the Great Baddow Times and a report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Editor will be notified that Mr Beaver no longer wishes to advertise. The Council prints and delivers over 6000 copies of the magazine. Whilst it is true that delivery may have been sporadic in some areas, the following factors should be considered:

- 100% delivery cannot ever be guaranteed
- The magazine, including Mr Beaver's advert, has been available on the Council's website since publication
- As well as the delivery, the magazine is also available in the Parish Council office and the library

Cllr Mrs S Young raised the matter of advertisers paying for their adverts before the magazine is issued. It was agreed that this should be an agenda item for a future Finance & General Purposes committee meeting to consider.

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr Mrs S Young that the invoice should not be waived for the reasons above and that Mr Beaver should be asked to pay it. This was agreed unanimously.

128/17 Financial Budgets

1. **Pension Fund Deficit Budget**

Up to 31st March 2017, the Pension Fund Deficit was calculated as a separate amount on the PN11 and was budgeted for under a separate heading within the F&GP committee budget. Each committee also has a budget heading for the employer's percentage rate contribution for the members of staff employed under those committee headings.

From 1st April 2017, the Deficit is now collected as part of the percentage rate payable by the employer and it is not possible to separate the general contribution part and the deficit part. If the whole amount of the employer contribution continues to be taken from the committee budgets, it will mean that those budget headings will appear to be heavily overspent.

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs S Young and seconded by Cllr Mrs J Sosin that the recommendation be accepted and that the current "Pension Deficit" budget under F&GP is split between the committees. This was agreed unanimously.

2. **Unbudgeted Expenditure for the Wall Lights at the Parish Hall**

The wall lights in the Parish Hall were highlighted last year by the annual electrical inspection, as needing work doing on them because they were unsafe. The fittings are old and because of the way that they have been attached to the walls, the shades can be lifted and it is possible to touch live wires.



- Chelmsford Star Co-operative Society – The payment is a refund for monies that were paid for a cemetery interment, which was later cancelled.
- HMRC – The Clerk told the meeting that HMRC has written to say that it requires future payments online. The Clerk will speak to the payroll company about making arrangements for this to happen. It has been agreed by Council but is not currently in place. However, with many companies etc. now requesting Direct Debit orders and online payments, the timing for this to happen now, may be right.

The above items were proposed for acceptance by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr Mrs S Young and were agreed unanimously.

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

Date	Number	PAYEE	Amount	VAT	TOTAL
5/6/2017	301189	Berewood Ltd – Mower maintenance and repair	666.54	133.32	799.86
5/6/2017	301202	Darren o'neill – LC Contract Services May 2017	5200.00	-	5200.00
5/6/2017	301203	Northumbrian Water Ltd – RG Water Leak Repair	3836.00	767.20	4603.20
5/6/2017	301206	SD Grounds Care Ltd – GC Contract Services May 2017, mower repair and grass seed	4281.80	824.36	5106.16
5/6/2017	301211	Total Gas & Power Ltd – RG Electricity	560.78	97.06	657.84
5/6/2017	301213	Chelmsford Star Co-operative Society – LC fee refund	514.00	-	514.00

125/17 Financial Review

The Clerk circulated a copy of the summary income and expenditure and reported that to 31st May 2017, the total expenditure stands at 11.6% and the total income at 46.8% of budget. As this is still only the second month of the new Financial Year, it is not possible to discern any trends. However, it was noted that the cemetery fees and Parish Hall and Bell Centre hire fees stand at 18.4%, 19.3% and 22.6% respectively of budget. The report was noted.

126/17 Recreation Ground Water Leak

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting. An e.mail reply had been received from NWG Business about the appeal against the water usage charge for August 2016 to February 2017, stating that no allowance is to be made because the Parish Council is a business customer and because the problem was on a private supply. The Clerk told the meeting that there were several mitigating factors that had not been considered and recommended that the appeal against the invoice should be pursued. This was unanimously agreed by the committee.

127/17 Great Baddow Times

It was noted that Lisa Silk has been appointed as the Editor of the Great Baddow Times, following a decision by the full Council.

The electrician was requested to look at this to see how remedial work could be accomplished. Originally it was thought that the light fittings/cables could be channelled into the wall and the light shades could then be attached to the wall in more places, making them safe. However, when this was actually tried, it was found that the walls are too strong to be channelled and the electrician recommended that new fittings would have to be installed because these could be better secured to the wall.

The inspection for this year has recently been carried out and it has been noted that immediate action to deal with the lights is now required. There is currently no estimate for this work because this will be dependent on which fittings the Council chooses.

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs V Chiswell and seconded by Cllr Mrs S Young that the Clerk and one or two councillors are delegated to choose new fittings, obtain a quote and go ahead with the work, providing the cost is below £1500.00. The money for the works should be taken from Reserves. This was agreed unanimously.

3. **Unbudgeted Expenditure for RG Office Refurbishment**

Since Mrs Dixon's move from to the office to the Grounds Supervisor's role, she has reported that several matters need to be addressed in the Recreation Ground office regarding a refurbishment. It should be noted that some electrical works have already been carried out, a new computer has been installed and the shower has been de-commissioned.



The works suggested include new furniture, repainting (including floor paint to minimise the concrete dust that is currently present), removal of the shower area and electrical works to allow the re-arrangement of the office. The electrical works have not been quoted because what will be actually needed, is not yet known.

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs S Young and seconded by Cllr Mrs J Sosin that £1500.00 should be allowed to cover a refurbishment and that the money taken from Reserves. This was agreed unanimously.

129/17 **Matters for Information**

- Cllr Mrs J Sosin reminded those present about the surgery and pre-meet on Saturday 10th June 2017 at 9.30am. Cllr Mrs C Shaw gave her apologies.
- Cllr Mrs C Shaw reported that she had received a reply to her correspondence about the parking in The Causeway. It was reported that officers have attended regularly and from 10 patrols, 8 PCNs have been issued.
- Cllr Mrs M Miller reported that complaints had been received about the lack of parking space in The Chase car park. Cllr Mrs V Chiswell also reported that the parking in Tabors Avenue and Lodge Avenue is increasing all the time. It was noted that the two problems have probably been exacerbated by the enforcement of parking regulations in the Vineyards and the introduction of parking regulations in Buckleys.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.41 pm.

Signed.....  Chairman.....  Date 12th June 2017