

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

The Committee met at 9.04 pm on **Monday 4th September 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, Mrs S Young, Mrs V Chiswell and Mrs M Miller

In Attendance: The Clerk of the Council

283/17 Apologies for Absence

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

284/17 Declaration of Interests

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

285/17 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd July 2017 were signed as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr A Sosin and agreed unanimously.

9.06pm – Cllr Mrs J Sosin entered the meeting.

286/17 Public Question Time

There were no members of the public present.

287/17 Clerk's Report

1. Energy Efficiency Certificate

The Clerk had e.mailed a contractor but had not received any reply. The committee was informed that several contractors have been contacted in this manner but that no-one has ever replied. It was agreed that the Clerk will continue to try and find a contractor but that the item will be taken off the agenda until this has happened.

2. Electoral Registers

Cllr Mrs C Shaw said that she had completed and returned the form that was sent to her by Chelmsford City Council. She also told the meeting that the Emergency Planning Officer had contacted her to say that a printed copy of the Register is not required for the emergency plan. The other details relating to the plan are being dealt with as well.

Cllr A Sosin reported that having attended the City Council cabinet meeting on 4th July 2017 and raised the matter of the electoral registers, no reply has been forthcoming from the cabinet member. The Clerk said that she has now downloaded some new software and can open the files that are being sent. She will contact the City Council to ask for the registers to be re-sent.

3. Parish Hall Automatic Door

The Clerk told the meeting that the inside automatic door failed again on 1st September 2017. The office contacted Geze UK Ltd and they attended today, 4th September 2017. The engineer has reported that the mechanism is being damaged by people pushing and pulling the door open and closed. A notice is being prepared and will be put up on the door. An update report will be given at the next appropriate meeting.

4. **Allotment Site Water Tanks**

Cllr A Sosin asked if the work was going ahead to replace the tanks on the allotment site. The Clerk said that unfortunately when the estimate was prepared for approval, the full details had not been supplied. These have now been calculated and the cost of the work has increased. However, the Clerk believes that this additional cost can be accommodated from other budgets and so the work will go ahead as soon as possible.

5. **Lawn Cemetery Maintenance Contract**

The Clerk reported that a meeting had been held with the contractors, CGM Group Ltd, on 24th August 2017. A site visit was undertaken and discussions held. The contractors agreed that aspects of the contract were not being fulfilled and said that they would address these issues. They confirmed that improvements would be seen in the next two weeks.

288/17 Financial Transactions

1. The amended Expenditure for August 2017 is **£38060.28** (£35948.28 Net)
2. The Income for August 2017 is **£13855.40** (£13773.40 Net).
3. The August/September 2017 Expenditure to be paid from the Unity Trust current account in September 2017 is **£41493.91** (£40364.85 Net).

The Clerk told the meeting about the following items:

- Tennis Court Hire Income – The Clerk told the meeting that there is a new hirer who is using the tennis courts for a Baby Bouncers football class. This has been very successful and is likely to result in more classes being held.
- Parish Hall Hire – Cllr Mrs V Chiswell asked about the payment for the hall hire for the election. The Clerk explained that the City Council has always been charged the parishioner rate for the hire.
- A&J Lighting Solutions – The invoice is for repairs to an AWSC light. The Clerk confirmed that several lighting contractors, including the current one, have said that there is no point in having an annual check on the lights.
- Anglian Water Business – The invoice is for the sewerage charges for the period covering the water leak and is based on the water meter reading.
- EALC – This invoice is for a training course for the Clerk on the new Data Protection Regulations that come into force in 2018.
- Thorndon Security & Fire – The invoice is for the annual maintenance contract for the burglar alarm system at the Parish Hall and for the keyholding service for the same.
- Chelmsford YMCA – The cheque is for the 2017/2018 grant, which had not yet been paid, due to uncertainty about the use of the Bell Centre.
- Playscheme – The Clerk told the meeting that there had been discussion last year about paying the Playscheme workers by bank transfer but that this had not been implemented. However, taking into consideration the amount of money that now must be collected from the bank and the bank charges made for withdrawing the cash, the Clerk recommended that the bank transfer system should be put in place for 2018 and this was agreed.

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

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

291/17 Proludic Play Equipment

Further to the playground inspection at the beginning of the year and a site visit from Proludic in July 2017, a quote for replacement parts etc. had been received. A copy of the quote was circulated.

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr Mrs S Young that the quote of £3981.86 should be accepted. This was agreed unanimously.

The Clerk told the meeting that the Proludic quote does not include the work to lift the tiles, level the ground and re-lay the tiles. The Council has been advised by Proludic that it will be cheaper for the Council to employ its own local tradesmen to undertake this part of the job and quotes will be sought. This was noted.

292/17 Matters for Information

- Cllr Mrs J Sosin reminded those present about the surgery and pre-meet on Saturday 9th September 2017 at 9.30am.
- Cllr A Sosin told the meeting that he and Cllr K Liley had visited Braintree and Gosfield to look at solar lights that have been installed in two venues. He asked that the matter of the consideration of the installation of a solar light in Sawkins Avenue be placed on the next agenda for the Highways & Amenities committee on 16th October 2017.
- Cllr Mrs C Shaw told the meeting that she and Cllr Mrs V Chiswell had attended the Fun Day organised by the Great Baddow East Neighbourhood Association. She reported that it had been a good day with lots of activities and she had been informed that the money raised was to be spent on helping to support the vulnerable elderly.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 10.00 pm.

Signed.....*J S Sosin*.....Chairman.....*11th September 2017*.....Date

Date	Number	PAYEE	Amount	VAT	TOTAL
4/9/2017	301281	A&J Lighting Solutions – AWSC Light Repair	470.00	94.00	564.00
4/9/2017	301283	Anglian Water Business Ltd – RG Sewerage	3628.92	-	3628.92
4/9/2017	301285	The CGM Group (East Anglia) Ltd – LC Contract Services August 2017	2010.42	402.08	2412.50
4/9/2017	301286	Chelmsford City Council – Non Domestic Rates	2730.00	-	2730.00
4/9/2017	301290	Elm Horticulture Ltd – Sports Contract Services August 2017	1000.00	200.00	1200.00
4/9/2017	301292	LSH Client Prop Mgmt A/C – Bell Centre lease	1073.75	-	1073.75
4/9/2017	301293	NWG Business – RG Water Rates	3143.77	-	3143.77
4/9/2017	301294	Prime Irrigation Ltd – Repairs to bowling green irrigation system	518.94	103.79	622.73
4/9/2017	301297	Thorndon Security & Fire – PH burglar alarm system maintenance	517.00	103.40	620.40

289/17 Financial Review

The Clerk circulated a copy of the summary income and expenditure and reported that to 31st August 2017, the total expenditure stands at 37.8% and the total income at 53.2% of budget. The Clerk said that there were no specific issues to raise and the report was noted.

290/17 Financial Regulations

- 1) Direct Debits and Online Payments – The Clerk told the meeting that the Council is paying additional charges to several suppliers for paper bills and the ability to continue to pay by cheque. Also, several suppliers have said that they are no longer willing to accept cheques. Therefore, the Clerk was recommending that additional powers be drafted into the Financial Regulations to allow for more payments to be made using direct debits and online payments. The Clerk also said that if online payments are to be made, a new process of enabling this will have to be implemented. Internet access to the bank was also discussed and it is probable that some members' log-in details may have expired. The Clerk will find out from the bank what will have to be done to update the log-in details.
- 2) Payments of under £10.00 to be paid from office cash and not on account – The Clerk told the meeting that writing cheques for less than £10.00 in value is costing a lot of money and that the Financial Regulations should be changed to reflect that amounts less than this should be paid from office cash. Cllr A Sosin said that the amount should be altered to read £20.00 and this was agreed.

The Clerk said that these two matters will be factored into a full review of the Financial Regulations. These Regulations will be placed on the next appropriate agenda for formal consideration by this committee with recommendations to be made to full Council.