

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

The Committee met at 8.19 pm on **Monday 6th March 2017** in The Parish Hall in Great Baddow. Councillor Mrs C Shaw chaired the meeting.

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

In Attendance: The Clerk of the Council

728/16 Apologies for Absence

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

729/16 Declaration of Interests

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

730/16 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th February 2017 were signed as a true record, with the following amendment: Item 660/16, second bullet point, first line to remove "attend" and replace with "attended". Proposed by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr A Sosin. This was agreed unanimously.

731/16 Public Question Time

There were no members of the public present.

732/16 Clerk's Report

1. **Energy Efficiency Certificate**
The Clerk has spoken previously to Utilitywise about the Energy Efficiency Certificate but the matter still needs to be followed up with the Account Manager.
2. **Committee Terms of Reference**
A meeting to discuss the Terms of Reference will be fixed as soon as possible.
3. **Electoral Registers**
The Clerk contacted Chelmsford City Council again on the matter of the copies of the Electoral Registers was informed that councillors must e.mail the City Council direct for copies of the Registers. The Clerk also reported that she had been unable to open the zip file of the full Register that had been sent to her and Cllr K Ronaldson confirmed that he could not open his file either. The Clerk had found out that the files have been zipped with software that cannot be used by Microsoft and will require different software. The Clerk will contact the Electoral Office again and ask them to provide the files in a format that can be used with Microsoft.
4. **Specifications for Contracts**
The grounds contracts specifications are still being drawn up and the Clerk has spoken to Cllr Mrs S Young. It has been agreed that the tenders will be posted by 15th March 2017.
5. **Parish Hall Payphone**
The Clerk still needs to contact British Telecommunication Plc to confirm that the line has been cancelled.



6. Recreation Ground Post Box

The Clerk confirmed that the Recreation Ground Office now has a formal postcode, which is CM2 9RL.

733/16 Financial Transactions

1. The amended Expenditure for February 2017 is **£35021.41** (£33446.94 Net).
2. The Income for February 2017 is **£16718.63** (£16682.21 Net).
3. The February/March 2017 Expenditure to be paid from the Unity Trust current account in March 2017 is **£33175.76** (£31928.98 Net).

The Clerk told the meeting about the following items:

Anglia Heating & Maintenance Engineers Ltd – An engineer had to be called out to one of the boilers in the Parish Hall. There had been a loss of pressure and there was concern that there may be a leak somewhere in the system. However, the problem has not happened again.

Berewood Ltd – The invoice is for the service of the Ransomes Triple mower. The Clerk reported that during the year, a lot of money has been spent on repairs to the Iseki Ride-on mower and as a result, the budget heading has been exceeded.

Essex & Suffolk Water – The bill for the water rates for the Recreation Ground is not being presented for payment at the current time because the amount is being appealed.

Geze Ltd – The invoice is for the repairs that were carried out to the outside front door at the Parish Hall. The Clerk told the meeting that the work was carried out extremely well with very little inconvenience to either staff or hirers.

RCCE – The invoice is for the membership of the Village Halls service.

Total Gas & Power Ltd – The invoice is for the electricity at the Recreation Ground. Unfortunately, a direct debit was not set up on this account, hence the need for a cheque. The Clerk will speak to the company about setting up a direct debit.

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

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

Date	Number	PAYEE	Amount	VAT	TOTAL
6/3/2017	301090	Berewood Ltd – Grounds Machinery Winter Service	1094.50	218.90	1313.40
6/3/2017	301095	Essex & Suffolk Water – water rates	652.66	-	652.66
6/3/2017	301096	Geze UK Ltd – repair to PH Front Door	822.00	164.40	986.40
6/3/2017	301097	LSH Client Prop Mgnt A/C – BC Lease	1073.75	-	1073.75

6/3/2017	301098	Darren O'neill – LC Contract Services February 2017	3200.00	-	3200.00
6/3/2017	301100	SD Grounds Care Ltd – GC Contract Services February 2017	2433.33	486.67	2920.00
6/3/2017	311102	Total Gas & Power Ltd – RG Electricity	662.43	132.49	794.92

734/16 Financial Review

The Clerk circulated a copy of the summary income and expenditure and reported that to 28th February 2017, the expenditure stands at 83.8% and the income at 103.8%. It was noted that the income figure has been somewhat artificially raised because it includes a payment of CIL monies.

It was noted that the income from the magazine advertising and bank interest are both still lower than had been expected. The number of advertisers in the latest edition of the magazine that has just been printed, was reduced by two. The Community Association has been invoiced for the repayment of the insurance premium and the lease rent but because the water rates are being appealed, this will be invoiced once the matter has been concluded. The Clerk still needs to be reimbursed for the food for the Allotments Evening but the invoice has been mislaid. This will be dealt with before the end of the financial year.

The income from the AWSC and the football pitches is still low but there are still some football matches due to take place before the end of the financial year. The income from the Lawn Cemetery and from the Parish Hall and Bell Centre hires have all exceeded budget. The report was noted.

735/16 Water Supplies

1. Recreation Ground Water Leak

The water leak in the Recreation Ground access road was repaired by Northumbrian Water/Kemac on 16th/17th February 2017. The water was turned off for short periods but it did not have a severe effect on the Council's staff or any of the other Recreation Ground users. The access for all other users was also maintained throughout the works. The invoice for the repair is awaited.

An invoice has been received from Essex & Suffolk Water for the water usage for the last six months, which is over £4000.00. This has been queried and Essex & Suffolk Water has put the invoice on hold. On the advice of Essex & Suffolk Water, Anglian Water has been informed that the invoice is being appealed. The Clerk was also informed that the water meter for the Recreation Ground was replaced in October 2016 because there was a problem. This was not notified to the office.

2. Invoices for Water Supplies

With effect from 1st April 2017, changes are being made to the supply of water and sewerage services to all non-household customers. This is taking place under the Water Act 2014 and is to introduce more competition for non-household customers, who will be able to choose who will provide their retail water and sewerage services.

Both Northumbrian Water Group and Anglian Water have set up new retail companies and the Council's accounts will be transferred automatically to these companies on 1st April 2017, unless the Parish Council decides to switch supplier.

It was agreed that the Clerk should contact Utilitywise and ask them to provide a comparison with other companies and then the matter will be referred back to the committee for further consideration.

736/16 Pension Payments

1. Further to the 2016 Valuation, the employer's rate for the next three years has been confirmed as follows:

2017/2018	19.9%
2018/2019	20.8%
2019/2020	21.7%

The rate for 2016/2017 is 16.7%. However, it would seem that following the Actuary's report, the separate cash deficit amount is to be stopped.

2. It was proposed by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr Mrs S Young that the Contribution Rates for employees for 2017/2018 are confirmed and that the previous decision to raise these rates only at the end of a financial year, is confirmed. This was agreed unanimously.

737/16 Parish Hall

The front wooden door of the Parish Hall was repaired on Monday 20th February 2017 when a new spring was installed underneath the door by Geze UK Ltd. Three days later, on 23rd February 2017, during a period of very high winds, the door was damaged when it was caught in a strong gust, which caused the area of a previous repair to split and the door to break away from the bottom hinge. A temporary repair has been carried out by J W Steele Ltd and a quotation has been requested from them for a new door. The quote is awaited. The Clerk told the meeting that she will speak to the insurance company about making a claim for replacement door/s.

The Clerk told the meeting that arrangements have now been made with Geze UK Ltd to return to repair the inner automatic door, which is currently faulty and requires manual operation. The engineers should be attending tomorrow, 7th March 2017.

738/16 Grounds

Following a visit to the Doe Show in early February 2017, the Grounds Supervisor arranged to have a demonstration of a Karcher vacuum sweeper at the Recreation Ground. The sweeper is being offered at a special price, providing the order is placed before 31st March 2017.

In 2001, the Parish Council bought a second hand Hako sweeper, which was used for some years to very good effect. This machine reached the end of its life in 2011 and was replaced with a Countax Vacuum Sweeper ("Billy Goat" sweeper). This has proved not to be very effective and indeed it has recently been confirmed by Nigel Cornwell from Berewood Ltd, that this type of sweeper is not suitable for the kind of work the Council needs to do. It is more suited to leaf collection rather than sweeping surface stones etc. from sports surfaces and car parks.



The machine and a hard brush is on offer for £2595.00, which is saving of £1756.00 on the normal price. After purchase, there will also be the opportunity to obtain a battery powered leaf blower, free of charge from Karcher.

The New Equipment budget for this year did have a balance of £2490.00 and the Grounds Supervisor was looking to use the remaining balance to purchase the sweeper. However, the arrangement with Berewood for the Stiga Mulching Mower, which was agreed by the Finance & General Purposes committee in October 2016, fell through. The Clerk confirmed that this matter will be pursued as soon as possible.

It was proposed by Cllr A Sosin and seconded by Cllr Mrs S Young that the purchase of the Karcher sweeper should go ahead before 31st March 2017 by using the £1890.00 left in the New Equipment budget and that balance to be taken from reserves. This was agreed unanimously.

739/16 Matters for Information

- Cllr Mrs C Shaw reminded those present about the surgery and pre-meet on Saturday 11th March 2017 at 9.30am.
- Cllr Mrs C Shaw asked whether the PDF of the Great Baddow Times magazine has been received. The Clerk said that she will contact the Printing Place.
- Cllr A Sosin asked about the copies of the magazine for delivery. The Clerk said that she will ask the Administrative Assistant to sort out the right number and then contact him to let him know when they are ready for collection.
- Cllr Mrs C Shaw asked about the recent reply from Essex County Council Highways concerning the verges in Loftin Way. She asked if the Highways would share the results of the inspections that they will be carrying out and the Clerk said that she will pass on this request.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.43 pm.

Signed..........Chairman.....*13th March 2017*.....Date