

PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of the Finance & Policy Committee was held at the Village Hall on Thursday 20 February 2003

Present: Mr L Ampstead (Chairman) Mrs H Black
Mrs J Botting Mr D Jolliffe
Brigadier W Shackell Mr P Williams

In Attendance: Mr A Forman Mr D R Phillips

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Miss K Medhurst Mrs K Watson
Mr J Shaw

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mrs Black declared an interest in items relating to Pulborough Social Centre as Chairman of the Trustees.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2003 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

3.1 Matters Arising

ACTION

1). Insurance

It was reported that Mr Ampstead and the Clerk had met informally without Brigadier Shackell because it had not been possible to arrange an evening meeting.

2) Freedom of Information Act

Mr Jolliffe said that he would meet the Clerk on the following Tuesday morning to review the optional classes of information.

DJ/Clerk

3) Financial Relationship with Pulborough Social Centre

Mr Ampstead said that he had still not received information on what rent was required and when. Mrs Black said that rent would be payable from 1 April. The Trustees would consider the new annual charges the following week.

HB

4) Purchase Order System

Members agreed the draft format which had been circulated with the Agenda.

5) Business Management Plan

Mr Ampstead said that no comments had been received on the draft so he and the Clerk would attempt a redraft in consultation with Brigadier Shackell.

LA/WS/Clerk

6) Office Computer

Members noted that the new computer had been installed and connected to the photocopier. It was agreed to purchase a new computer printer. Mr Phillips said that Laserjet colour printers were available from PC World for £300. Brigadier Shackell proposed that the Clerk should be authorised to purchase a colour printer for up to £300. Mrs Black seconded and the proposal was agreed

ACTION

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- unanimously. It was agreed that the existing printer should be available for the Clerk to use at home. **Clerk**
- 7) **Banking**
Members noted that NatWest Bank had not yet replied to the Parish Council's letter of complaint. Mr Ampstead suggested that a meeting should be arranged with the Manager. It was also agreed to arrange a meeting with Barclays Bank to explore their services. **Clerk
Clerk**
- 8) **Loan from the Public Works Loans Board**
Members noted that the current loan was for a period of 15 years from 31 March 1995. It was secured by an automatic charge on the revenues of the Council.
- 9) **Parish Council Newsletter**
Mr Williams registered extreme disappointment about the delay in publishing the Newsletter.
- 10) **Community Awareness Day**
Brigadier Shackell and other Members congratulated Mr Ampstead on the arrangements for the highly successful Community Awareness Day.
- 4 **STANDING ORDERS**
Mrs Black congratulated Mr Williams on the revised draft Standing Orders. Mr Williams said that in removing financial items to the Appendix on Financial Regulations, he had inadvertently removed a mandatory item (item 5.3 of Financial Regulations). Mr Ampstead proposed said that Committees should be required to invite quotations rather than tenders for expenditure in excess of £1,000. He further proposed that Committees should be empowered to spend £1,000 rather than £500 at the discretion of the Chairman and with the agreement of the Committee provided that the proposed expenditure was within the Committee's agreed budget. Mr Williams seconded and the proposal was agreed unanimously. **Clerk**
- Members were asked to submit any further comments to the Clerk. The proposed Committee Terms of Reference should be circulated to the Committees for comment and the revised Standing Orders should be recommended to full Council at its meeting on 27 March. **Members
Clerk
Clerk**
- 5 **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT**
Mrs Botting proposed that the draft format for the Parish Council's publication scheme should be adopted and that the scheme should be available by 28 February on the Parish Council's web site, on the notice board in the main car park and at the Library. Brigadier Shackell seconded and the proposal was agreed unanimously. Mr Ampstead and Mr Jolliffe undertook to produce terms and conditions of employment before the next meeting. **Clerk/JS
LA/DJ
ACTION**

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6 ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE

Members noted details of the package from RBS Accounting Solutions but decided that the advantages over the current package did not justify the cost. Brigadier Shackell proposed that the Parish Council should subscribe to the new version of Impact at a cost of £45 plus Annual Support at a cost of £55. Mr Williams seconded and the proposal was agreed unanimously.

Clerk

7 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Mr Williams proposed that the Parish Council should adopt the draft Financial Regulations which had been circulated with the Agenda. Brigadier Shackell seconded and the proposal was agreed unanimously. Brigadier Shackell noted that there was no note of responsibility for seeking grants..

Clerk
Clerk

8 INSURANCE

Members noted the position in relation to insurance of the Parish Council's assets. It was agreed to check whether the bowling green was insured and to write to the Chairman of Pulborough Cricket Club to ask whether it would be more appropriate for the Parish Council to insure the cricket practice nets. Members agreed that the risk of damage to street furniture did not justify the cost of insurance.

Clerk

Members considered that it would be appropriate to review the insurance value of certain assets. It was agreed to ask Arun Mowers for a valuation of the main items in the tractor shed and to ask the Groundsman whether both tractors were needed. It was also agreed to ask Monkhouse & Partners for a valuation of the rebuilding cost of the pavilion. Mr Phillips requested a meeting to clarify the respective responsibilities of the Parish Council and Pulborough Sports & Social Club for buildings insurance on the pavilion. It was also agreed to clarify the insurance position and to write to the Men's Club.

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk

It was reported that the Parish Council's previous external auditors had suggested that the Fidelity Guarantee should be increased to 50% of the Precept plus the Parish Council's year end balances. Mr Williams proposed that the Fidelity Guarantee should be increased to 50% of the Precept plus the Parish Council's year end balances. Brigadier Shackell seconded and the proposal was agreed unanimously.

Clerk

Clerk

Mr Ampstead noted that the Parish Council's current policy was based on a population of up to 5,000. He said that the 2001 Census showed a population of over 5,000. The Clerk said that she relied on population estimates provided by the District Council which were 4,740 for 2002. It was agreed to ask the District Council for a revised estimate.

ACTION

Clerk

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9 RISK ASSESSMENT

Brigadier Shackell commended the draft contributions to the risk assessment from the Planning & Services and Recreation & Open Spaces Committees. He proposed that these should be added to the format. Mr Ampstead seconded and the proposal was agreed unanimously.

Clerk

The risk assessment register was agreed subject to the following additions:

- loss of data
- office equipment
- an additional column to show when the risk had been reviewed

Clerk

Brigadier Shackell suggested that the Parish Council's papers should be archived in plastic boxes. It was agreed to check the cost and to report back to the Committee.

Clerk

Mr Williams thanked Brigadier Shackell for his initial work on the risk assessment register. It was agreed that an amended version should be prepared for the Committee's next meeting.

The Clerk informed the Committee that the Parish Council was not complying with current Health & Safety legislation in relation to its offices, its buildings, sports facilities and open spaces.

Clerk

10 GRANT APPLICATIONS

1) Pulborough Community Transport Scheme

Mrs Botting proposed that the Parish Council should award a grant of £200 now to the Community Transport Scheme and promise sympathetic consideration to a further grant of £200 in November. Brigadier Shackell seconded and the proposal was agreed unanimously. It was agreed to invite Pulborough Community Care Association to the September meeting of the Committee to present their grant requests.

Clerk

2) Other Grant Applications

Members agreed in principle to the grant application from 4 Sight for £125. It was agreed to invite Pulborough Medical Group to a future meeting of the Committee to present their grant request.

Clerk

3) Chanctonbury Leisure Centre

Members noted the letter of response to the Parish Council's refusal of a grant.

11 PAY AND SALARY INCREASES 2003/04

ACTION

Members noted that the Parish Council had awarded weekly and hourly paid staff an increase of 3.5% in 2002/03 because it had been decided not to make staff wait for the delayed County Council settlement. In the event, the County Council had increased basic pay by 4% in 2002/03 and agreed an award of 3.5% for 2003/04. Mr Ampstead said that the Clerk's pay was

Clerk

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dependent on population. If the population exceeded 5,000, the Clerk should move to spine point 22 on the NALC salary scales.

Brigadier Shackell proposed that staff should be awarded an increase of 4% with effect from 1 April 2003 and that, subject to clarification of population, the Clerk should move to spine point 20 on the revised NALC scale. Mr Jolliffe seconded and the proposal was agreed unanimously.

Members noted that the rates of pay for 2003/04 and the additional costs for basic hours would be as follows:

<u>Hourly Paid Staff</u>	<u>Hourly Rate</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>
Assistant Parish Clerk	£6.76	£0.26	£202.80
Groundsman	£5.91	£0.23	£194.94
Village Warden	£5.74	£0.22	£275.56
MSF Administrator*	£4.77	£0.18	£66.83
TOTAL			£740.13

<u>Weekly Paid Staff</u>	<u>Weekly Rate</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>
Cleaner	£59.38	£2.28	£118.77
MSF Administrator*	£11.88	£0.46	£23.75
TOTAL			£142.52

* The MSF Administrator receives a weekly retainer plus an hourly rate based on 7 hours per week

<u>Annually Paid Staff</u>	<u>Annual Rate</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>
Clerk	£15,447.36	£963.72	£963.72

Note: The Clerk's increase is based on a move from spine point 19 of the NALC salary scales - £7,719 x 30 hours plus £2,442 staff allowance – to spine point 20 - £8,281 x 30 hours plus £2,529 staff allowance

TOTAL ANNUAL COST, ex NI **£1,846.37**

12 PAYMENTS

It was reported that the Parish Council's balance at the Bank on 14 February 2003 was £53,450.96.

		£	
WF Electrical	Christmas Ties	4.70	ACTION
London Electricity	Gas	236.80	
BT	Office Telephone	81.76	
BT	Telephone – Alarm	48.62	
Ash Reid	Playground Inspection	129.25	
FWAG	Annual Sub	35.00	
Community Transport	Grant	200.00	
SCPFA	Annual Sub	15.00	
November Wages and Salaries		£	

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J C Jupp	MSF	135.92	
G Martin	Caretaker	228.40	
B Tee	Village Warden	558.42	
S Pinnock	Assistant Clerk	455.39	Clerk
M J Leadbeatter	Groundsman	183.80	
Inland Revenue	Tax and NI	<u>340.90</u>	
Total		1,881.50	

13 CORRESPONDENCE **Clerk**

- 1) **Parish Council Elections**
Copies were circulated of a letter containing the timetable for the Elections. It was agreed that nomination papers would be held in the Parish Council office.
- 2) **Stuckey Carr Donation**
Members noted that Stuckey Carr & Co had kindly agreed to make a donation of £50 towards the cost of hanging baskets and village signs. It was agreed to write expressing the Parish Council's very grateful thanks.

14 ITEMS RAISED BY COUNCILLORS

- 1) **Rivermead Bus Shelter**
Mr Jolliffe reported that young people were entering the bus shelter. Mr Williams undertook to change the entry code.
- 2) **West Sussex Market Towns**
Mr Ampstead said that there would be a Network Meeting on Friday, 7 March. The event was free of charge and Members would be welcome to attend for part or all of the day.

The meeting closed at 10.30 pm.

..... Chairman

..... Date