

PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee was held at the Village Hall (Pulborough Social Centre) on Thursday 10 June 2004 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Mr I Kiverstein (Chairman) Mrs C Barnett
Mrs H Black Mrs J Botting
Mr M Foster Mr B Vincent

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mrs N Hompstead Mr N Ryan

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations.

3 MINUTES

ACTION

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 April 2004 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

(i) Pension Arrangements for the Clerk

Mr Kiverstein reported that there was no need for a loan to the Clerk because her contributions could be paid over time. However, the Parish Council had been required to pay the employers' contributions immediately and this had happened in the last financial year. Members noted that start date of 1 April 2003 noted on the correspondence would need to be corrected to 1 April 2001 in order to seek recovery of part of the National Insurance contributions for 2001/02 and 2002/03.

Clerk

(ii) Financial Regulations

The Clerk was reminded not to forget the issue of a Purchase Order system. This should be carried forward as an outstanding matter. Mr Kiverstein undertook to draft a standard paragraph emphasising that contractors' were responsible for their own health & safety for inclusion in letters of contract.

IK

(iii) Communications

The majority of those present commented favourably on the first edition of the Newsletter. It was unfortunate that publication had been delayed due to difficulties in securing advertising. Mrs Black said that she was slightly disturbed that many of the advertisers were from organisations outside Pulborough. She wondered whether the printers had contacted businesses on the industrial estate in Pulborough.

Copies were circulated of a letter from Crusader Cleaners Group containing suggestions for future editions. Members did not agree with the inclusion of contact details for Parish Councillors since these were shown on both the website and the noticeboards. However, they agreed that it would be helpful to list Sports and Social contacts. It was also agreed that the telephone number for Highways should be included under Useful Contacts.

Clerk

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- It was reported that the printers had suggested that future editions might be published in late August/early September, late November/early December and March. It was agreed to aim for these dates and to seek meetings of the Communications Group in time for contributions. **ACTION**
- (iv) Rent Increases**
It was reported that a discussion had been held with the Chairman of the Rugby Club following his complaint that the rent increases were excessive. Mrs Barnett suggested that the Clerk should note the dates by which any increases to Clubs should be notified in order to meet the terms of the Licences. **JB**
- (v) Employment Contracts**
Members agreed that the Clerk should draft an employment contract for the Assistant Clerk based on the NALC contract. This should be agreed with Mr Kiverstein unless it was necessary to consult Members on particular points. **Clerk**
- (vi) Recruitment of Assistant Clerk**
Mr Kiverstein reported that there had been five applications in response to the advertisements. All applicants had been invited for interview on 25 June. **Clerk/IK**
- Mr Kiverstein proposed that Mr Pettendrup should be appointed as temporary Assistant Clerk for an additional month. Mr Foster seconded and the proposal was agreed unanimously. **Clerk**
- (vii) Sports Pavilion**
Mr Vincent said that a Senior Planning Officer had advised that the revised plans for the sports pavilion should be acceptable to Horsham District Council. He suggested that the project planning process should start with a presentation to Pulborough Community Partnership and that a formal planning application should be submitted as soon as possible.
- Members felt that, whilst it was desirable to consult the community, the first step should be to seek the Parish Council's approval for the proposed project. Mr Kiverstein suggested that a planning application would be premature in advance of information on funding sources. It was agreed that Mr Vincent should present a formal proposal to the July meeting of Full Council. **BV**
- Mr Vincent asked whether the Parish Council would share the cost of the planning drawings, which was £1,695. Mr Kiverstein said that requests for funding should be submitted before incurring expenditure. Members noted, however, that there was a budget of £2,500 for the project in the current financial year.
- Mrs Botting proposed that the Parish Council should contribute £800 to the cost of the drawings on condition that

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no further expenditure on the project was incurred without the Council's prior approval. Mr Kiverstein seconded and the proposal was agreed unanimously.

ACTION

(viii) Insurance

It was reported that it had not been possible to obtain a firm quotation from Zurich Municipal prior to renewal of the current policy. However, preliminary enquiries suggested that the cost would be approximately double that of the current policy. Allianz Cornhill had explained that the increase in premium for the current year was based on four factors: a general increase of 8%, an increase due to the up rated valuation of the Parish Council's assets, the addition of new assets and the addition of new cover for Officials Indemnity and Libel and Slander.

It was agreed to seek quotations from two alternative insurers prior to renewal of the current policy and to review the valuation of the Parish Council's assets.

Clerk

(ix) Outstanding Matters

Members noted that the following matters were outstanding but would be dealt with as soon as possible:

- Employment Contracts
- The Clerk's job description
- Parish Council investments
- Health & Safety
- Business Plan

IK/Clerk

4 HEALTH & SAFETY ASSESSMENT FOR FINANCE & POLICY

Mrs Black said that she had analysed the assessment. She raised the following concerns for the Committee's consideration:

- 1) It was the responsibility of the Finance & Policy Committee on behalf of the Parish Council to ensure the physical safety at all times of all Parish Council employees. Whilst this could be achieved when working in the office, it could not be guaranteed whilst working from a home environment. Mrs Black asked whether the Parish Council needed separate insurance to cover this contingency.
- 2) The Parish Council was also responsible for providing adequate working conditions for all office bound staff. Mrs Black asked how the Parish Council could do this for staff working from alternative premises.

Mrs Black also asked:

- 3) Whether staff were covered by any form of insurance whilst travelling on Parish Council business.
- 4) Whether cash was kept in the Parish Clerk's office desk – the answer was negative.
- 5) Where the cheque book was kept – the answer was in the locked office drawer.
- 6) Whether all Parish confidential matters were kept in a manner which ensured their confidentiality. The Clerk said that there

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was an issue about computer security and it was agreed to ask Mr Jim Noble if he would kindly set up a password.

**ACTION
Clerk**

- 7) What burglary prevention methods were employed to ensure that no burglar or thief could access Parish Council information.

Mrs Black said that these were the only relevant points in the assessment. It was agreed to consult Mr Ryan before producing a revised draft for the Committee.

IK

Mr Kiverstein thanked Mrs Black for her excellent work on the assessment.

5 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

Members noted the Notice of Audit from Mazars and received the following items for consideration:

- Main Accounts
- Supporting Statements
- Supporting Documents 16 – 20
- Draft Annual Return

Mr Kiverstein said that he had now met the Parish Council's Internal Auditor, Mr Stuart Pollard. He had found Mr Pollard knowledgeable, experienced and thorough, and considered that the service provided was economical for the Parish Council. The Internal Auditor had complimented the Parish Council on the accounts. He had not identified any need for changes in either procedures or figures and had agreed that the Parish Council had done its best to comply with the requirement for two signatories in respect of the Wages & Salaries Account. Mr Pollard's only suggestion had been for minor amendments to Supporting Statement 1 to clarify the position on assets.

Mr Kiverstein thanked the Clerk for her work and proposed that the Committee should recommend the accounts to Full Council for approval. Mr Foster seconded and the proposal was agreed unanimously.

Clerk

6 QUOTATION FOR PLAY EQUIPMENT REPAIRS

Mrs Barnett reported that the Recreation & Open Spaces Committee had accepted the report of a recent statutory inspection of the children's playgrounds. Unfortunately, the quotation for repairs had not been available at the time and the Committee had asked for the quotation to be considered by the Finance & Policy Committee. There was a budget of £4,000 for 2004/05.

Mrs Barnett proposed that the Parish Council should accept the quotation from Ash Reid Design for the following items:

	£
- replace seat eyebolts on cantilever swing	71.00
using longer steel washer backing plates	

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-	generally rub down Wicksteed 3 tower Rainbow unit, prime and apply two coats of special playground equipment paint (using four colours)	925.00	ACTION
-	treat and repaint stool deck on Honeycomb Whirl	42.00	
-	remove framework of damaged flat bench seat to tip and make safe	40.00	
-	supply and fit anti-slip tread plates to 3 Parkplay balance bars	<u>177.00</u>	
	Total cost	1,255.00	

and that the Parish Council should address the recommendations in respect of repairs to the fence and gate and cutting back bushes. Mr Kiverstein seconded and the proposal was agreed unanimously.

Clerk

7 PARISH EMERGENCY PLAN

Members received copies of a Guide and Plan format provided by Horsham District Council. It was agreed that this was an important matter. Mr Kiverstein proposed that all Members should consider the documents and come to the next meeting prepared for a discussion. Mrs Botting suggested that all Members should complete the Plan format in time for the meeting.

Members

8 PAYMENTS

		£
SEEBOARD Contracting	Streetlighting Maintenance	106.93
Viking	Stationery	203.17
Mayfield Nursery	Hanging Baskets	260.00
Harwoods	Petrol	25.15
Total Butler	Gas Oil	185.07

9 CORRESPONDENCE

1) Royal Society for the Blind

It was reported that a request had been received for a donation to a holiday home at East Preston. It was agreed that the Society should be invited to submit a grant application form.

Clerk

2) Letter from Mr Peter Donaldson

Mrs Black undertook to respond to a letter from Mr Donaldson to the Chairman complaining about several matters in Pulborough.

HB

3) Accident at the MSF

It was reported that a solicitors' letter had been received concerning an alleged accident on 1 January 2004. The letter had been forwarded to the Parish Council's insurers.

10 URGENT MATTERS RAISED BY COUNCILLORS

There were no matters raised.

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm

.....Chairman

..... Date