

 ***‘protecting and improving the quality of life***

 ***for all Bayston Hill residents’***

**Clerk to the Council/RFO: Caroline Higgins**

**Chairman: Cllr Fred Jones**

**25 November 2016**

**Minutes of the joint meeting of the Finance and Amenities Committees held at 7.30 pm on Monday 14 November 2016 in the Memorial Hall.**

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| **Present**: | Cllrs Jones (Chairman), Keel, Parkhurst, Clarke, Gordon, Gouge, Mrs Lewis; Ms Candy, and Breeze  |
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| **In attendance:** | Caroline Higgins, Clerk; two members of the public |
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J1.16 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN –** Cllr F Jones was elected unanimously to take the chair. He welcomed Cllr Whittall back following her recent operation.

J2.16 **APOLOGIES –** Cllr Miles (working). His apologies were accepted.

J3.16 **DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST** – There were no new declarations beyond those recorded in accordance with the Code of Conduct. Cllr Clarke reiterated that his wife was the key-holder for the Long Meadow play park and that he was the Parish Council representative for Bayston Hill Crown Green Bowling Club.

J4.16 **PUBLIC SPEAKING/QUESTIONS** **AT COUNCIL MEETINGS –** No public present

J5.16 **APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES –** It was **resolved unanimously** that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 17 October 2016 be approved. It was **resolved unanimously** that the minutes of the Amenities Committee meeting held on 26 October 2016 be approved.

 It was noted that there were no members of the press and public present and it was **resolved unanimously** to approve the confidential minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 17 October 2016.

J6.16 **NETT POSITION BY COST CENTRE AND CODE SUMMARY –** The Clerk circulated and explained a summary of the financial position and forecast outturn at the year end. The joint Committees noted that further clarification was required about the remaining funds held on behalf of the LJC and in earmarked reserves. (**Action Clerk; Cllr Clarke & Cllr Keel)**

J7.16 **BANK REVIEW –** The Clerk referred to a supplementary report (J7.16 – Investment with CCLA) and recommended the Council consider investing its core reserves (Precept Reserve), presently standing at £55,855 and possibly a proportion of its Earmarked Reserves into the CCLA Local Authorities Property Fund, which is an investment management fund managed by and for the charities, churches and local authorities sector. It was noted that the fund is suitable only for reserves which are not required within 5 years.

 **It was proposed by Cllr Keel, seconded by Cllr Lewis and resolved by a majority vote (7 – 1) to recommend that the Precept Reserve be set at £60,000 in 2017-18 financial year.**

**It** **was proposed by Cllr Lewis, seconded by Cllr Keel** **and resolved unanimously to recommend that £60,000 be invested in the CCLA Property Fund.**

The risk to investment of retaining funds above £75,000 in any bank was noted by the joint Committees and it was **resolved** to recommend that additional accounts be opened and the balances spread to take advantage of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme**. (Action – Clerk)**

J8.16 **ACTUARIAL REVIEW –** The joint Committees noted the results of the recent Actuarial Review of the Local Government Pension Scheme and that the level of employer contributions would reduce from 24.6% to 21.2% in April 2017. The Clerk was thanked for her report.

J9.16 **BUDGET FORECAST 2017/18 –** The Clerk tabled a provisional budget illustration and the joint Committees noted that recent temporary changes to staffing structures and reductions to the level of employer contributions would impact positively on the budget. It was **resolved** to recommend that the staffing structure be carefully reviewed within the next 3 months to ensure adequate time is allocated to maintain Council assets. **(Action – Personnel Committee & Clerk)**

 It was proposed by Cllr Clarke, seconded by Cllr Whittall and **resolved** unanimously to recommend a revised maintenance budget of £2,000 per annum for Parrs Pool, subject to review in 12 months.

 It was **resolved** unanimously to review the joint energy agreement to ensure it represents best value. **(Action – Clerk)**

 **Income –** The joint Committees reviewed the forecasted income and discussed an appropriate level of income to budget for. It was noted that income levels could not be guaranteed. The Clerk was asked to seek guidance at a forthcoming budget training event. **(Action: Clerk).**

J10.16 **NEW PROJECTS –**

1. **50th Anniversary of Bayston Hill Parish Council** - The joint Committees noted the forthcoming 50th anniversary of the foundation of the Parish Council. The joint committees discussed setting a budget to mark the event but agreed that the celebrations should neither add to the Clerk’s current workload nor unduly load the budget. Cllr Clarke suggested a historical review of the parish records and exhibition of the archives which might be presented at the Annual Parish Meeting. It was **resolved** that Councillors consider ideas for discussion at the next full council meeting. **(Action – All Councillors)**
2. **Asset Renewals –**

**Replacement Mower -** Cllr Clarke proposed that a budget of £5,000 be set aside from the Asset Renewal reserve to replace the existing gang mowers, which are becoming uneconomic to maintain. After a short discussion on the merits of retaining mowing capacity in-house it was **resolved** **unanimously** to allocate a budget of £5,000 from the asset renewals reserve to purchase a new mower and for the Clerk and Cllr Clarke to identify a suitable unit.

**LED Lighting –** The joint Committees discussed the economic and amenity value of replacing street lamps with LED lanterns. It was **resolved** to allocate sufficient funds to the reserve to enable the Council to replace **a minimum of 20 lanterns per year on a rolling programme.** The Joint Committees then resolved to by a majority of 5 – 2 to replace any old style lamps requiring repair with LED lanterns **in addition to the 20 planned renewals.**

**Longmeadow Play Area –** It was noted by the joint Committee that the wetpour tarmac around the roundabout still required repair. It was resolved to retain a reserve for the repair in the 2017/18 budget If not completed by the end of the 2016/17 financial year.

It was then resolved that the Amenities Committee discuss its wider requirements for asset renewals at its next meeting and bring proposals to the Full Council for discussion. (**Action – Amenities Committee).**

1. **Enhancement of Parish Amenities –** Cllr Candy spoke in support of a suggestion from the Clerk that the Council reviews the use of its facilities and considers how they can be improved to widen the type and number of users, particularly women; girls and older people. Cllr Keel drew attention to the availability of grant funding for improvements to changing facilities through the FA Premier League. Other suggestions included encouraging Park Runs and British Military Fitness classes on the playing fields and the installation of outdoor gym equipment; use of the Common for small coaching courses, in consultation with residents. Walking Football clubs; Walking for Health groups; the installation of a cricket net and introduction of Kwik cricket. Cllr Clarke proposed that the Council ensures there is sufficient demand and suggested the Parish Plan review be used to assess demand. Cllr Keel proposed that the consultation be undertaken at the next Parish meeting.

Cllr Lewis **proposed that the Council prepares a funding bid to improve its facilities**, Cllr Candy seconded her and thus it was **resolved**. Cllr Candy agreed to work with Cllr Keel to prepare a proposal. **(Action: Cllrs Candy & Keel; in conjunction with the Clerk).**

It was further **resolved to consult Energize for advice and for the issue to be referred to the Amenities Committee for review.**

1. **The Burgs** – The Joint Committees noted that access had not yet been agreed with the landowner but that the Council retained the ambition to provide an interpretation board in due course. It was therefore **resolved** to recommend that the earmarked reserve be retained in 2017/18

J11.16 **APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS –** It was proposed by Cllr Whittall, seconded by Cllr Candy and **resolved unanimously to approve the list of payments tabled by the Clerk.**

J12.16 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC -**  At 9:29pm it was **proposed** by Cllr Whittall, **seconded** by Cllr Lewis and **RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public under LGA 1972 ss 100 (2), so as to discuss confidential matters.

J13.16 **CONFIDENTIAL COMMITTEE MINUTES** – The confidential minutes of the Finance Committee meeting dated 17 October 2016 and the confidential minutes of the Amenities meeting held on 26 September were read and agreed.

J14.16 **PROJECTION OF STAFF COSTS** – The joint committees reviewed the projection of staff costs for the next financial year and recommended that the total sum of £52,800 should be included with the 2017/18 budget, (summarised to protect confidentiality of individual employees).

J15.16 **ADDITIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT –** In order to facilitate the completion of the Clerk’s CILCA portfolio, the joint committees resolved to authorise 20 hours of administrative support by a locum clerk.

**Meeting closed at 9:30pm**