-

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

***for all Bayston Hill residents’***

**Clerk to the Council/RFO: Vacant**

**Locum Clerk: Anne Cousins**

**Chairman: Cllr Fred Jones**

**5 July 2016**

**Draft Minutes of a Finance Committee Meeting held at 7.30 pm on Monday 11 April 2016 in the Memorial Hall.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Present**: | Cllrs Parkhurst (Chairman), Gordon, Clarke, Jones, Ms Candy and Keel. |
|  |  |
| **In attendance:** | Caroline Higgins Clerk. |

F14.16 **APOLOGIES –** Cllr Gouge - On holiday

F15.16 **DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST** –Cllr Clarke stated his wife was employed as the key holder at Long Meadow and that he was the Parish Council representative for Bayston Hill Crown Green Bowling Club. No other declarations beyond those recorded in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

F16.16 **PUBLIC SPEAKING/QUESTIONS** **AT COUNCIL MEETINGS** – There were no members of the public in attendance at the meeting and no written questions submitted.

F17.16 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 JANUARY 2016 –**

* F4.16 The Committee confirmed that the minutes of the October meeting had only been agreed as accurate after a minor amendment.
* F9.16 Cllr Keel queried the calculation of the precept increase, which appears inaccurate. It was confirmed that the additional £6,000 collected through the precept was on top of the increased tax base of £119,000 not on top of the previous year’s tax base of £117,000, bringing the precept value to £125,000.

Following discussion of these points, Cllr Gordon proposed and Cllr Keel seconded that the minutes were accurate. This was agreed unanimously.

F18.16 **MATTERS ARISING** –

* F54.15 Costs of projector & laptop for viewing meeting paperwork – The Clerk tabled a report detailing options for a laptop and projector for the display of meeting paperwork on the existing projector screen. The Committee discussed the options and the benefits of a portable projector over a fixed position one. Cllr Clarke proposed, Cllr Gordon seconded and the committee resolved to approve a budget of £500 for the purchase of a budget laptop and portable projector based on the Clerk’s recommendation.
* F8.16 Review of Cost Codes – It was resolved to defer this review to the next meeting. Cllr Keel proposed the committee record its thanks to the Clerk for the work undertaken so far to reorder the cost codes.

F19.16 **REVIEW OF THE PURCHASE OF THE NEW TRACTOR AND ASSOCIATED STORAGE COSTS** – The Clerk tabled a summary of the costs to date which were noted by the Committee. It was explained that the purpose of the review was a paper audit of the legality of the expenditure and the item was deferred to the next meeting. It was noted by the Clerk that there had been additional expenditure on a concrete base for the container and a shelter between the two containers, which should be included in the deferred review.

F20.16 **PLAY PARK RE-FIT – REVIEW OF COSTS -** The Clerk tabled a summary of the costs incurred to date and the cost codes from which funds had been allocated by the previous Clerk, together with details of additional expenditure that would be required to complete the refurbishment but had not been included in the original quotation. The Committee noted that the allocated cost codes had not held sufficient funds to cover the approved costs, although there had been sufficient funds elsewhere in the budget to cover the expenditure. It was noted by Cllr Candy that virement was the responsibility of the Finance Committee but in this instance had been approved by the Amenities Committee. It was pointed out by Cllr Clarke that all those in the Finance Committee except Cllr Candy were members of the Amenities Committee and the relevant committee whilst it was agreed that the correct procedure had not been followed in this instance, the decision was unlikely to have been different if put to the Finance Committee.

Cllr Jones proposed that the situation be noted and the current position be accepted with acknowledgement of the confusion arising during the inter-regnum period between permanent Clerks.

Cllr Clarke proposed that the virement be approved retrospectively.

Cllr Candy proposed that it be noted that Cost Code 88 (Long Meadow Play Equipment) did not hold £16,000 as reported to the Amenities Committee, leading to approval of a budget and virement of funds that were not available.

The Clerk suggested that funds be re-allocated from the £8,500 available from the BMX code and that other unallocated funds be identified for retrospective virement to make up the shortfall in code 88.

It was eventually resolved to review the procurement of the new play equipment as a paper audit at the Finance Committee meeting scheduled for October.

F21.16 **PROCUREMENT REVIEW –** The Clerk tabled a report on procurement procedures which the Council noted, with thanks. The Chairman explained that a Procurement Review was generally a paper audit, such as had been requested for the tractor and trailer purchase and subsequently deferred until the July meeting.

F22.16 **FIVE YEAR PLAN –** The Clerk tabled a report with a skeleton 5-year plan for further discussion and development by the Council. The Committee considered the implications of devolution of threatened services by Shropshire Council and agreed that a separate meeting to discuss the risks and costs to the Council would be required.

Cllr Keel expressed concern about expenditure of the Parish Plan Grant, which he considered should remain within the control of the Parish Council. The Clerk confirmed that the grant had been placed in an earmarked reserve and that any expenditure from the grant would be put to the Council for approval.

F23.16 **BANK MANDATE –** It was proposed by Cllr Clarke, seconded by Cllr Keel and resolved unanimously that the new Clerk, Caroline Higgins and the Council Chairman, Cllr Fred Jones be added to the Co-operative Bank Mandate, which would be authorised outside the meeting.

F24.16 **BANK ACCOUT REVIEW -** The Clerk recommended that the Council spread its funds across at least three separate banks, so that no bank holds in excess of the £75,000 protected by the FSCS Deposit Guarantee Scheme. She provided details of two high street banks offering suitable community accounts with the benefit of online banking. Cllr Clarke proposed a third option be identified and offered to provide details of an alternative bank for consideration at the next meeting.

Cllr Clarke then proposed that the Clerk arranges to open an account with Unity Trust Bank and transfer a maximum of £75,000 from the Council’s reserves into it. This was seconded by Cllr Keel and the motion was carried unanimously.

F25.16 **PAYMENTS –** The Clerk tabled a list of payments for approval. Cllr Gordon proposed, Cllr Jones seconded and all agreed to approve the payments *en bloc.*

F26.16 **BANK RECONCILIATION –** The Clerk explained that despite several attempts to reconcile the bank statements with the Scribe Accounts Package, this had been unsuccessful. The statements for three accounts had been agreed but the Working Account remained unbalanced. Efforts were continuing to produce a year end bank reconciliation for submission with the Annual Return. It was resolved unanimously to defer this item to the next Finance Committee meeting.

F27.16 **NETT POSITION BY COST CENTRE & CODE SUMMARY** – The Clerk reported she had been restructuring the cost codes for the new financial year and that the year-end position for 2015/16 had not yet been finalised. Cllr Jones proposed the report be noted. He was seconded by Cllr Gordon and the motion was carried by a majority vote. Cllr Candy abstained from the vote.

F28.16 **REVIEW THE FINANCE ROLLING PROGRAMME –** The Committee noted that a number of key tasks had not been completed during the period when the Clerk’s position was covered by a part time locum due to her restricted hours. It was proposed by Cllr Candy that those tasks usually arising in the first 6 months be deferred for 6 months and the remaining tasks be deferred for 12 months to enable the new Clerk to address them at a manageable rate. This was resolved unanimously.

F29.16 **ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING –**

1. Review of the purchase of the new tractor and associated storage costs (carried forward from last meeting)
2. Additional meeting to consider devolution of services and development of a 5-year plan

F30.16 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC -** Cllr Jones **proposed,** Cllr Gordon **seconded** and it was **RESOLVED** to exclude the public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to discuss the following confidential matters.

**Members moved on to the confidential items at 8.45 pm**

**Meeting closed at 9:00 pm**