

Clerk to the Council/RFO: Caroline Higgins

Chairman: Cllr Keith Keel

30 November 2017

Minutes of a Full Council Meeting held at 7.00 pm on Monday 27 November 2017 in the Memorial Hall.

Present: Cllrs Keel, (Chairman); Breeze (Vice Chair); Jones; Parkhurst; Clarke; Engler; Mrs Lewis; Mrs Robinson; Mrs Howells; Gouge; and Ryan

In

attendance: Caroline Higgins, Clerk; Mr D Preston, Chairman, Community Led Plan Steering Group

FC 102.17 **APOLOGIES** – Cllr Mrs Whittall – prior commitment; Cllr Hudson –prior commitment

FC 103.17 **DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST** – Cllr Clarke declared his personal interest as the Council's representative to the Bowling Club and his pecuniary interest as his wife is employed as key holder to the Council;

FC 104.17 **PUBLIC SPEAKING/QUESTIONS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS** – Mr Preston gave an update on the Community Led Plan. He reported on the outcomes from the recent Business Breakfast which evidenced the desire for improved business to business networking opportunities within the parish. One local businessman has offered to take a lead on organising some networking events. Other priorities included storage facilities and meeting facilities and the promotion of the village as a business destination. The CLP Steering Group is looking to do some further work on this area.

He reported on progress towards the development of the main questionnaire and stated the Steering Group had sought estimates from suitably experienced organisations. The brief included guidance on question setting; input and analysis of results. Five organisations were approached but three declined to bid for various reasons. Of the two bids submitted the group favour the slightly more expensive bid as it appears to offer better value overall and appears to be affordable within the original budget (having regard to the percentage of online responses as compared to paper returns). An estimate of 8.5 consultancy days is estimated to be required.

It was noted that paper responses will incur greater costs due to the cost of the Freepost service and the need to enter the data manually. For this reason the number of narrative responses will be kept to a minimum but all of those narrative responses will be individually considered by the Steering Group.

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The next step is to provide a time line for the consultants and this will be discussed at the next Steering Group meeting at 7:30pm on Wednesday 13 December 2017 at Christchurch Hall. All members of the Council were warmly invited to attend.

The Chairman thanked Mr Preston for his report and Mr Preston left the meeting at 7:30pm

FC 105.17 **MINUTES** – The Council **resolved unanimously** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2017 as a true record.

The Council then **resolved unanimously** to adopt the following committee minutes:

- **Amenities Committee** meeting held on 2 October 2017;
- **Planning Committee** meeting held 23 October 2017

FC106.17 **CLERK'S BUDGET REPORT** – The Clerk tabled her report on budget matters and the assumptions used to prepare a provisional budget forecast, which was distributed at the meeting to members. The Clerk then drew attention to a number of highlighted boxes which she felt the Council should be particularly aware of when considering the budget at the next meeting.

In the absence of any members of the public the Clerk briefly referred to the Confidential Salaries Report (FC113.17).

FC 107.17 **VISIONING EVENT** – It was noted that a parish walk-around will be arranged for Saturday 13 January to which all Council members are invited (time to be confirmed). The earlier date proposed at the Visioning event (2 December) was inconvenient for many but Councillor Clarke offered to arrange a personal tour for any member wishing to inspect the parish facilities sooner rather than later.

FC 108.17 **BUDGET FORECAST – Income** – The Clerk reported that the income to the end of November was close to the total target income for the year and forecast an income surplus at the year end. Receipts from the **Orange Mast (Code79)** are usually received in March and are therefore difficult to spend within the financial year of receipt.

Code 119 Highways Grant – Cllr Clarke reported that Shropshire Council had recently reached an agreement that the maximum Environmental Maintenance Grant for each parish would be £1,500 per annum. It was **resolved** to reduce the 2018/19 income for code 119 to £1,500 (-£1,000).

Earmarked Account – Asset Renewals

Code 81 Hedge cutters – Reserve target increased from £300 to £600 (2 hedge cutters) with annual allocation of £150

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Code 87 Goal Post Sets – Reserve target increased from £700 to £3,000 to better reflect the replacement cost of 4 sets of steel posts and 1 set of 5-a-side goals on the astro turf.

Code 90 Lamp Post Renewal - The Council expressed its support for the continuation of street light conversions to LED lanterns. The Clerk proposed Code 90 be split to allow separate allocations for lamp post renewals and LED lanterns and to allocate £6,000 for LED conversions in 2018/19.

Code 93 BMX/Skate park/Youth - It was noted that this code appears to duplicate provision elsewhere in the Project Reserves budget (Codes 94 BMX Extension- Future projects; 138 Skate Park – Future projects and 139 Youth Projects). It was **resolved** to investigate the requirement for this code under **asset renewals** and bring proposals to the next meeting.

No new allocations were recommended for the existing **Project Reserves** and it was recommended that the reserve targets be reviewed and compared to current aspirations before allocating any additional funding to these reserves.

New reserves will be created to protect the unspent portion of the 2017/18 Precept collected for **Bayston Hill library (£3,040)** and **Lyth Hill contributions (£4,328)**

Capital Reserve Funds (Buildings) – No allocations recommended

Precept (General) Reserve – It was recommended that the Council confirms its investment decision for this reserve in February after development of a General Reserve Strategy by the Finance Committee in January 2018.

Revenue Cost Centres:

Administration – The Clerk recommended that the balance of **the Publicity / Communications budget Code 71 (£860)** be allocated to enable the Council to work towards compliance with the **General Data Protection Regulations** during the current financial year.

(Post meeting note; the costs of compliance with this legislation are uncertain but require as a minimum the appointment of a Data Protection Officer and an audit of the personal data we currently hold. The costs are likely to be ongoing in 2018/19 and beyond, requiring a suitable budget allocation).

Lythwood Sports Complex – Floodlight repair budget increased to £1,000 due to costs of providing access and £100 bulb on each occasion a bulb blows. (Budget will be overspent in 17/18 due to two visits being required).

It was proposed by Cllr Clarke that a budget be allocated to provide for a **regular skip** to remove waste from the pavilion area. Caution will be needed to protect the skip from fly tipping. **(Action Clerk)**

Community Open Spaces – It was proposed that the budget for **Woodland Maintenance Code 26** be increased to enable the Council to undertake

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improvement works at the Community Woodlands being considered for transfer in 2018/19. It was agreed to increase the 2018/19 budget to **£5,000**.

Rents, Rates & Utilities – It was noted that a number of direct debit deductions delayed from 2016/17 would be collected in the current financial year, taking the expenditure above the budgeted spend by £1,000.

FC 109.17 **PROJECTS EXPENDITURE** – The Council considered the following projects for inclusion in the budget for 2018/19;

1. **LIBRARY DONATION** – It was **resolved** to allocate £21,960 in addition to the £3,040 earmarked reserve for a voluntary contribution to Shropshire Council for support of Bayston Hill Library (*Power LGA 1972, S137*) – total contribution **£25,000**
2. **LYTH HILL CONTRIBUTION** – It was **resolved** to allocate £2,164 in addition to the £4,328 earmarked reserve for a voluntary donation to Shropshire Council for the support of Lyth Hill Country Park (*Power Public Health Act 1875, s164*)
3. **COMMUNITY LED PLAN** – The Council noted and approved the expenditure of the cash reserve standing at £6,308.58 in accordance with the approved budget under the direction of the CLP Steering Group in the production, distribution, analysis and printing of the main questionnaire over the current and next financial year.
4. **TRANSFER OF COMMUNITY WOODLANDS/ BROOKFIELD** – It was noted that transfer of this land would not take place in April 2018 but transfer was to be anticipated later in the 2018/19 financial year. Allocation of increased revenue expenditure had been agreed against Code 26 – Woodland Maintenance to enable initial maintenance works to be undertaken within the first year.
5. **PARCEL OF WOODLAND, HANLEY LANE** – The Council noted the opportunity to purchase this parcel of land but considered the asking price was unrealistic. It considered that development of the site was unlikely due to its steep topography and therefore did not merit special protection although some efforts had been made in the past to designate the site for scientific interest. It was confirmed that the Council continued to aspire to the acquisition of woodland around Lythwood Hall but it was **resolved not** to submit an expression of interest in this parcel of land.
6. **FITNESS TRAIL/ GYM EQUIPMENT** – The Council confirmed that it supported the provision of outdoor gym equipment and **resolved to make an application for grant funding of up to £10,000**. It was **further resolved to support the project with an allocation of £5,000 of Parish Council funds in 2018/19**. The type and location of the gym equipment will be the subject of further discussion and investigation by a working group. The concerns raised about co-location with children’s play equipment will be taken into account when positioning the equipment.
7. **SPORTS TRAINING / COACHING** – The Council supported the provision of appropriate sports coaching for a wide range of age groups and demographics to encourage better use of existing sporting facilities. It was **resolved that this item become an annual budget of provisionally £5,000** to ensure coaching provision is both consistent and predictable from year to year.

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8. **YOUTH PROVISION / INVOLVEMENT** – The Council supported the funding of a professional youth worker to enable a regular youth club to be started in the village with any unused amount being allocated to organise a Teen Day. It was resolved to allocate **£5,000 from Code 94 Youth Projects** (current balance £9,100).
9. **CHANGING ROOM IMPROVEMENTS** – It was resolved to increase the allocation to £10,000 to use as match funding in the event of a successful grant application. The Clerk suggested this be allocated from **Code 137 Future Projects (Buildings)** currently holding a balance of £45,200.
10. **FUTHER CONVERSIONS TO LED STREET LIGHTING** – The Council expressed its support for conversion of all its lights to LEDs. A new Project Reserve for this project will be created from Code 90 (Lamp Post Renewals) with a target of replacing 20 lanterns per year for 10 years. (2017/18 allocation £4,000; 2018/19 allocation £6,000)
11. **WASTE BIN IMPROVEMENTS / LITTER PICKERS FOR COMMUNITY USE** – The Council noted that the Amenities Committee had recently allocated £5,000 from the earmarked reserve **Code 92 Parish Seats / Bins / Bus shelters & Street Furniture** for replacement of 8 bins with any unspent allocation to be kept in a reserve for further bins after a review of the success of the first eight bins. *(Reserve 92 currently stands at £13,200).*
12. **THE COMMON** – The Council allocated £2,000 for the purchase, delivery and positioning of boulders/rocks to protect grass verges from damage by parked vehicles at its Amenities Committee meeting on 20 November 2017. *(This sum to be allocated from the Common reserve account currently holding a balance of £3,000.09).* It was confirmed that a contingency budget of £500 had been allocated to the revenue account to deal with any running repairs on the Common roadway.
13. **ADDITIONAL STREET FUNITURE** – The Council approved a budget of up to £3,000 to provide additional street furniture to be allocated from **Code 92 Parish Seats / bins / bus shelters and street furniture** following consultation with the community as to where there is unmet need. *(Reserve 92 balance would be reduced to a minimum balance of £5,200 following completion of projects 11 and 13).*
14. **OTHER PROJECTS** – it was agreed to review this item after the Parish Walk-around planned for January 2018.

FC 110.17 **RESERVES STRATEGY AND ALLOCATIONS –**

1. **Asset Renewals** – It was resolved that the levels for each reserve be reviewed annually and adjusted accordingly.
2. **Earmarked Project Reserves** – It was resolved that these reserves be reviewed and compared to their original objectives with a view to resetting them at an appropriate level or target.
3. **LJC Funds** – It was proposed that these funds be transferred into a separate bank account to ensure transparency and reassure the auditor that they are separate from the Council's own reserves.
4. **CIL Funds** – It was proposed that the Neighbourhood Fund collected to date (amounting to £9,308) be held as matched funding towards potential improvements to the junction of the A49 with Lyth Hill Road as this had emerged as the highest priority in parish consultations. It was noted that CIL funds could only be held for a maximum of 5 years

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before they were refunded to Shropshire Council. It was therefore important to ensure any CIL funded project is deliverable within the time frame.

FC 111.17 **APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS** - It was **resolved unanimously** to authorise the payments list tabled by the Clerk on the proviso that the sheet be annotated to make it clear that AVCs are deducted at source from employees' salaries rather than paid by the Council at an additional cost.

FC112.17 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC** – It was **resolved unanimously to exclude the press and public to discuss confidential matters.**

FC113.17 **CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS** – Salaries and Pension Breakdown – The Clerk made reference to her confidential report, which was noted by the Council.

It was noted that the Real Living Wage, as calculated by the Living Wage Foundation had increased with effect from 6 November 2017, which had been reflected in the budget forecast. It was noted that the Parish Council has applied for accreditation as a Living Wage Employer.

It was resolved to refer a discussion on working hours to the next Management and Personnel Committee for consideration.

The meeting closed at 8:50pm

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