

Loughton & Great Holm Parish Council

Finance & Staffing Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 30th March 2016, 7:30pm at Holmwood School, Kensington Drive, Great Holm

Present: Cllrs Sandra Boland (Chair), Peter Ballantyne (Vice-Chair), Andy Dransfield, John Howe, Peter Todd (from 7:40pm)

Also present: Brian Barton (Parish Clerk)

FS 15/16 Apologies:

Received from Cllr Peter Todd for lateness

NOTED

FS 16/16 Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interest

NOTED

FS 17/16 Minutes of the previous meeting:

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 14th January 2016, were **AGREED** and signed by the Chair as a true and correct record.

FS 18/16 Matters arising from the previous minutes not on the agenda:

FS 08/16 Business Plan for the year commencing 01/04/2016:

Page two (2) bullet point four (4) to alter to “the Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire & Rescue Service” and delete “Authority”

AGREED

FS 19/16 Questions from the public:

There were no questions from members of the public.

NOTED

FS 20/16 Update on the Business Plan for the year commencing 01/04/2016:

Page two (2) final bullet point, add “To work in partnership with All Saints Church to provide graveyard plots for residents in the Parish area, and that the Parish Councils costs are covered by the sufficient purchase of the graveyard plots”

Bullet point four (4) complete the acquisition of the freehold of the Great Holm Community Centre.

The Parish Clerk informed the meeting that the stage two (2) Community Asset Transfer (C.A.T) is being prepared, discussion then took place on the management of the centre, its finances, and condition of the building.

Members suggested meeting with the Management Committee to ascertain their plans and aspirations, and to obtain a set of the latest accounts, also to ask Milton

Keynes Council about a sinking fund, to cover any maintenance costs for the building.

A discussion also took place on the Loughton Sports Pavilion and sports ground, its management and the costs of running the pavilion and the sports ground, a meeting will be held with the Management Committee on Sunday 3rd April and Cllr Peter Todd will ask to review the finances, which can be discussed at the next Finance & Staffing Committee.

Members also wanted to know how many bookings there are and the groups using the facilities, as they were unsure if the local community benefits.

Members agreed that there needs to be an agenda item at the May Parish Council meeting, which the Management Committee needs to be invited too, and a copy of the accounts tabled, to discuss the future of the Loughton Pavilion and sports ground.

RESOLVED

- 1. To invite the Management Committee to the May Parish Council to discuss the future of the Loughton Pavilion and Sports Ground.**
- 2. To request from the Management Committee a set of the latest accounts.**
- 3. Page two (2) final bullet point to alter to “To work in partnership with All Saints Church to provide graveyard plots for residents in the Parish area, and that the Parish Councils costs are covered by the sufficient purchase of the graveyard plots”**

FS 21/16 Finance Report:

Members discussed the finance report and suggested that a line is added for total amounts for committed spend so that the real level of reserves are shown, to add at the bottom of the finance report total reserves, to replace the heading “budget” with “forecast”.

The Chair said that the report needs to be tweaked and updated.

The finance report is a work in progress, the Chair had met with the Parish Clerk to update the report, and shows monies spent so far in this financial year, figures for the jubilee graveyard and the Loughton Sports & Social Club need to be firmed up.

Discussion took place on the level of reserves, and the budgets that still have not been spent, the need to monitor risk, the amount of reserves to be considered when taking into account the running costs of the Loughton Pavilion and sports ground, and the Great Holm Community Centre, options need to be looked into, the need to monitor risks, and to avoid accumulating large amount of reserves, and raising the precept, although it was pointed out that funds are needed for the big projects being undertaken, it was acknowledged that the precept could not continually increase year on year.

The members of the committee thanked the Chair for her hard work in producing the finance report in the new format.

RESOLVED

1. To add to the finance report a line for total amounts for committed spend so that the real level of reserves are shown
2. To add at the bottom of the finance report total reserves
3. To replace the heading “budget” with “forecast”.

FS 22/16 Update on the 2016/2017 Budget:

The 2016/2017 budget which has already been agreed at the January Parish Council meeting was

NOTED

FS 23/16 To review the Protocol for the Loughton & Great Holm Neighbourhood Action Group payments:

Members discussed the protocol and the reasons for it, to ensure that the spending of public money is scrutinised and being spent wisely.

Cllr Peter Ballantyne was against the protocol and felt that it would stop the Loughton & Great Holm Neighbourhood Action Group, being able to undertake projects in a timely manner.

The following amendments were made to the protocol:

- To delete “The current contribution from the L&GH PC to the L&GH NAG fund is £1000 pa.”
- To delete “it is agreed” throughout the protocol.
- To delete “Cllr Sandra Boland”
- To delete “Finance & Staffing Committee” and replace with “a meeting of the Parish Council will approve payments”
- To delete “This draft protocol is to be presented to the parish council (initially to the Parish Council Finance Committee Chaired by Cllr Sandra Boland) for adjustment if necessary and acceptance thereof.”
- To add “Best Value option” and delete “lowest or no cost option to any spend need.”
- To add “Maximum spend without prior approval by the Parish Council but with supporting receipts is to be £100. Only one, (or several individual claims totalling no more than £100) to be made at one time.”
- To delete “three (3) months” on the last page.

The Chair will make the amendments to the protocol and circulate to members of the Finance & Staffing Committee, and the protocol is to be put on the agenda for the next meeting of the Parish Council for adoption.

RESOLVED

That the Chair to make the amendments to the protocol and circulate to members of the Finance & Staffing Committee, and the protocol is to be put on the agenda for the next meeting of the Parish Council for adoption.

FS 24/16 To receive an update on the 2014/2015 External Audit:

The Chair said that she will meet with the Parish Clerk, to progress the actions required from the Internal Auditors report.

Discussion took place on the Parish Clerks salary scales, he was unaware of the increment rises as normally, there are announced and circulated to Parish and Town Clerks through the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), and the Parish Council are not members of either organisation.

The Parish Clerk was asked to find out the cost of membership for the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

The Parish Clerk was told that he is responsible for informing the Parish Council of any increment rises.

RESOLVED

- 1. That the Chair to meet with the Parish Clerk, to progress the actions required from the Internal Auditors report.**
- 2. That the Parish Clerk to find out the cost of membership for the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).**

FS 25/16 To agree the following constitutional document:

(a) Risk Assessment Strategy

Members felt that the Risk Assessment Strategy document that had been tabled was too comprehensive, and should be condensed to one (1) or two (2) pages; Members said that it was good practise to have a strategy.

The Parish Clerk was asked to seek other examples of a Risk Assessment Strategy document from other Parish Councils.

RESOLVED

That the Parish Clerk to seek other examples of a Risk Assessment Strategy document from other Parish Councils

FS 26/16 Update on the hosting of the Parish Council website:

Members looked at the two (2) quotes provided, and felt that the quote from Cloudabove at £50 plus VAT a year to host the Parish Council's present website was acceptable, and should be presented to the next Parish Council meeting for agreement.

The maintenance for the Parish Council website can be tendered for the hourly rate separately.

Cllr Andy Dransfield knows of a contractor and will approach them for a quote.

RESOLVED

- 1. That the quote from Cloudabove at £50 plus VAT a year to host the Parish Council's present website was acceptable, and to present the quote to the next Parish Council meeting for agreement.**
- 2. That the Parish Clerk to seek tenders for the hourly rate for the maintenance of the Parish Council website.**

FS 27/16 To discuss any staffing related matters regarding the Parish Youth Programme Development Officer:

The Chair said that it is important to think about the way to measure the strengths and weaknesses set in conjunction with the objectives.

The Parish Clerk was asked to meet with the Parish Youth Programme Development Officer on a monthly basis to agree and review set goals, and to provide reports back to Members.

The Parish Clerk when meeting with the Parish Youth Programme Development Officer should ask her what she would like to achieve in her role, and to see if they dovetail with the Parish Councils objectives

Members would like to see activities for older people and social events for younger people as well as sporting activities.

RESOLVED

- 1. That the Parish Clerk to meet with the Parish Youth Programme Development Officer on a monthly basis to agree and review set goals, and to provide reports back to Members.**
- 2. That the Parish Clerk when meeting with the Parish Youth Programme Development Officer to ask her what she would like to achieve in her role, and to see if they dovetail with the Parish Councils objectives.**

Date of next meeting:

Wednesday 8th June 2016, 7:30pm at Holmwood School, Kensington Drive, Great Holm

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 9:33PM

Signed _____ Chair Date _____