



Minutes of the Meeting of Loughton & Great Holm Parish Council Finance and Staffing Committee held at 7.30pm on Monday 09 November 2020.

Location: the meeting was held remotely, via Zoom technology.

Councillors present: Altieri-Douglas (in the Chair), Bailey, Howe, Nayee, Nolan, Todd.

Staff present: Philip Compton (Parish Clerk)

Members of the public present: 0

Cllrs were reminded all the rules about code of conduct at meetings applied to virtual meetings, and as had been requested in September the meetings would be recorded.

FSC21/20 Apologies: There were no apologies for absence

FSC22/20 Declarations of interest: None were declared. During the meeting Cllr Howe declared an interest in item FSC25/20, as he was a friend of David Lock of David Lock Associates.

FSC23/20 Minutes of the previous meeting:

Action: Minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2020 were read by the Chair and approved as an accurate record of the proceedings of that meeting.

Finance Issues

FSC24/20 Pavilion Water: Councillors noted the water testing reports were still awaited.

FSC25/20 Allotments Project feasibility design costings:

Discussion: It was on the agenda to consider two quotes for feasibility and planning of new allotment site (the papers were attached). The Clerk considered the overall estimate by the MKC officer of £75k projected outlay to be high, and not based on the particulars of the site, where no fencing was proposed on account of the thick and high hedge surrounding the plot, and that a more realistic cost would be £40k plus £10k as quoted for planning and design. Cllr Todd noted at £40k this would be a one-off £16/house increase for one year, though it could be split over two years at £8/house. Cllr Nolan considered the costs could potentially be offset by splitting the field into a hybrid allotment/community urban farm scheme, which would also broaden its user-base. Councillors were concerned about the capital outlay versus benefit to residents, and agreed to vote on the matter.

Action: Cllr Nolan proposed the motion to discontinue investment in the design stage and therefore project as a whole, which was seconded by Cllr Todd:

Those in favour of the motion: 4

Those against: 2

It was resolved to recommend to Full Council not to proceed with the project, and the Clerk would inform the planning and design architects at David Lock Associates and Milton Keynes Council accordingly, and The Parks Trust, who had offered a pony paddock at no cost for the purpose of conversion to allotments.

FSC26/20 Finance Reports:

Action: Councillors considered and approved the income and expenditure reports of the year to date, up to October 2020. The Clerk informed the Committee the accounting line for the current financial year would be distorted as the cost of accounting (£432) for end of year accounts had been paid in the last financial year and the current one, and then reimbursed this financial year by Rialtas (the accounting software providers). Councillors noted the current bank balance of £119,000.

FSC27/20 budgetary initial discussion:

Action: Councillors considered forecast expenditure for the current year and preliminary budgetary requirements for forthcoming year (2021-2022). Upon request, the Clerk agreed to compile a draft budget for the 2021-2022 financial year, which would then be circulated to Committee members for comment/amendment prior to the next meeting in December. Cllr Nolan reminded the Committee there would be an unbudgeted expense proposal to the Parish Council in helping road safety at the Loughton School in construction of bollards, which had been discussed in the previous financial year. The Clerk summarised for the Committee that the largest changes to this year's accounts would likely be in landscaping, if adopted by the Parish Council, which was a part of the ongoing devolution of services away from MKC. This was on the agenda for discussion at the forthcoming Full Council meeting on 16 November.

Staffing Matters

FSC28/20 CiLCA (Certificate in Local Council Administration) completion and SCP move:

Discussion: Councillors had been requested to note Clerk's completion of the CiLCA qualification and linked move up the NJC (National Joint Council) spinal column by one point. The Clerk had been advised by BucksALC (Buckinghamshire Association of Local Councils), that this was a mandatory feature of the employment contract as provided by NALC (the National Association of Local Councils). Cllr Todd pointed out the NALC model contract had been amended for the role of the Loughton and Great Holm Parish Clerk, in particular with regard to salary where the mandatory requirement, amongst other things, had been extracted. Councillors discussed the matter at length and considered whether to follow the advice of the BucksALC advisor or seek further legal advice over the Parish Clerk's job contract.

Action: A vote was held on whether to note and agree the SCP move by one point:

For: 4

Against: 0

Abstain: 2

The Committee resolved to note the pay increase by one point effective 1st December 2020.

FSC29/20 Clerk's Annual Appraisal:

Discussion: It was on the agenda to delegate Councillors to do this. The Clerk left the meeting for this discussion.

Action: The Clerk was re-invited back to the meeting, and informed his appraisal had been delegated to Cllrs Altieri-Douglas, Bailey and Nayee.

FSC30/20 Exclusion of the public - in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted under the following agenda item, members of the public were temporarily excluded.

FSC31/20 Staff updates: Verbal report provided by Clerk/RFO

FSC32/20 Agenda items for next meeting: Councillors were reminded to inform the Clerk in writing and within the required timeframe of any items requested to be placed on the agenda.

Date and time of Next Meeting: Monday 14 December 2020, at 7:30pm