

MINUTES of a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

held on Tuesday 12th April 2022 at 7pm in Scholes Pavilion.

PRESENT: Councillor Claire Hassell (Chair)
Councillors Graham Slater Jacqueline Ward

In attendance: Cllr. Ragg and the Clerk.

1 APOLOGIES. Cllrs. Brunt, Remmer and Walsh

2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST. Cllr. Hassell as having an allotment plot and being a member of the Historical Society.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING. It was **resolved** that the minutes of the Committee meeting (11/2021) held on 15th March 2022 (54-56) having been circulated, be approved, all in favour.

4. ACTION TRACKER

4.1 Crossland Mews flagstones.

The flagstones had not been moved.

4.2 Hall Tower Hill: updates on:

a. Entrance Gate.

Cllr. Hassell reported that she was expecting a quotation the following day and would circulate when it arrived. The requirement for a spring to close the gate had been specified.

The steps up the motte were in need of maintenance and Cllr. Hassell had purchased weed killer at £38.98 (including VAT). Gravel was also required, a one tonne bag costing £60-£65 (including VAT). Cllr. Hassell offered to apply the weedkiller and a member of the Maypole Committee had offered to spread the gravel. Costs would be taken from the Environmental Fund.

b. Actions following the meeting with Heritage England.

No further progress since the last meeting.

c. Tree work.

It was noted that at its last meeting, the PC had agreed to removal of branches overhanging the field and that this work was pending.

4.3 Verity Strip.

At the Playing Fields Committee meeting the previous evening, Barwick Cricket Club had reported that they were struggling to get quotations and it was agreed that the Clerk ask Cllr. Remmer for an update to the quotation he had obtained. There was £5,000 in the budget for this.

4.4 Inventory of items stored in the garage.

At the last PC meeting, organisers of the Platinum Jubilee event in Scholes had requested permission to store some of their equipment in the garage and it was noted that the Maypole Committee might make a similar approach in the near future. A suggestion of approaching Barwick in Bloom about sharing their storage container had not been pursued. Meanwhile, the Clerk would conduct an inventory of items currently stored.

4.5 Board listing all previous Chairs

This would be addressed after the May 2022 PC meeting (as the election of Chair is an agenda item).

4.6 Meeting with Leeds Lights regarding 2022 provision

It was noted that the strings of lights in the Coronation Tree had still not been taken down. Cllr. Slater would telephone Leeds Lights to arrange a face-to-face meeting (after 10:30am) at the end of April between them, himself and Cllr. Hassell. This would discuss better provision near the Maypole and additional motifs (noting that there was a one-off cost of £400 per motif

to install the necessary equipment in the lamp post and that the PC could budget for two or three such conversions per year). Cllr. Ward would join them if available.

4.7 Closed Cemetery

It was noted that Leeds City Council (LCC) had collected the key to the padlock on 28th March 2022 and had now carried out the repairs to the collapsed wall (and still had the key).

4.8 Allotment Association

Cllr. Hassell had approached the National Allotment Association for advice on behalf of the PC. Allotment holders would be notified that the PC had suggested £200 ground rent.

5. WORK REQUESTS

5.1 Insurance renewal.

It was noted that the insurance renewal was due on 1st June. A pre renewal questionnaire from the insurance company had been circulated and it was agreed that a meeting in mid-May be convened with insurance renewal as the sole agenda item. This would consider whether the asset register was up to date and reevaluate benches. It had been established that the playground at Barwick was insured by LCC and therefore taken off the PC insurance. There would need to be an agenda item at the next PC meeting to delegate decision making about insurance renewal to the Committee. It was also noted that this would be the final year of the three year agreement with the insurance broker.

The insurance company had been notified about the multi-use games area and outdoor gym equipment and was seeking reassurances that a policy on inspections had been put in place. Exclusive use of the facilities had not yet been introduced but there had been enquiries from the local Group Scout Leader and from the main point of contact of the Tennis Club which used to use the courts, both of whom had expressed an interest in using the facilities.

5.2 Platinum Jubilee.

Scholes.

a. “Mad Hatter’s Tea Party”.

It was noted that there were plans to hold a “Mad Hatter’s Tea Party” on Scholes Lodge field on Saturday 4th June 2022 which had been agreed by the Scholes Lodge Farm subcommittee. There was discussion about whether this should be considered a PC event. The Clerk would contact the insurance broker to consider the insurance implications of this, any additional levy on the insurance premium would be taken from the Jubilee budget.

b. Request by organisers of the event on Scholes Lodge field to use the PC garage.

It was noted that the organisers of the above event had attended the last PC meeting to ask if the PC garage could be used to store equipment. It was **resolved** that such permission be granted. Difficulties with the lock were reported, LCC would be asked to make good any repairs.

c. Additional grass cutting of specific areas for croquet.

The cost of the additional grass cuts to allow croquet to be played as part of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations was £40 and it was noted that two cuts would be required. It was agreed that an allowance of £100 be made for this in the Jubilee budget.

d. Grant application for the cost of live music.

A grant application of £400 had been received from the organisers of the above event to pay for the cost of live music. It was agreed that the Clerk contact the band to seek clarification of the cost and to request that the invoice be submitted directly to the PC.

e. Shuttlebus update.

Timings of the parade on 2nd June were still awaited. It was agreed that provision be made for up to eight hours of driver time with provision in the minibus for one wheelchair. There would be three pick up/drop off points, Rakehill Road, the former council offices and the lay-by on Main Street near the garage. Pre-booking would not be necessary. There would be no shuttlebus provision after 10pm.

Barwick.

f. Request from the Maypole Committee to use Hall Tower field for the Maypole/ Platinum Jubilee event.

It was **resolved** that permission be given for the Maypole Committee to use Hall Tower field on Thursday 2nd June for the Maypole/Platinum Jubilee event. Extra grass cutting would be carried out, paid for by the Maypole Committee.

g. Request from the Maypole Committee to use Jack Heaps field for car parking.

It was **resolved** that permission be given for the Maypole Committee to use Jack Heaps field on Thursday 2nd June for car parking for the Maypole/Platinum Jubilee event.

Both Villages.

h. Bunting and gifts for the children.

The Platinum Jubilee working party had met and considered an appropriate gift for the children of the Parish and recommended the purchase of water bottles. These were likely to be used (as children's hydration was an important issue in the school environment). Four quotations had been considered (not all for the same bottle design). There was a concern that children all using identical water bottles might lead to confusion about ownership, they would be encouraged to use a permanent marker pen to avoid this. The water bottle would have a screw top with wording printed in Jubilee purple. The working party were recommending the purchase of nine-hundred water bottles for schools and nurseries at a cost of £2.66 per bottle.

Regarding bunting, Cllrs. Hassell and Ward had both spoken to members of the Maypole Committee and were recommending the purchase of four-hundred metres of bunting for Barwick. This would consist of triangular fabric flags in red, white and blue mounted on a hefty tape. The estimated cost of four-hundred metres was £450 (based on three-hundred metres of bunting being £342 plus VAT). The bunting is supplied in twenty-five metre lengths.

It was noted that the cost of the water bottles was within the £2,500 + VAT budget agreed at the PC meeting (by £100) but the cost of the bunting was more than the agreed £300. Timescales did not allow this to be further considered at the PC meeting of 9th May 2022 and it was agreed therefore that the Clerk circulate an email giving councillors to the end of the bank holiday weekend to indicate whether they supported this course of action or not.

Cllr. Hassell was happy that her address be used as the delivery address. Cllr. Slater confirmed that Scholes (Elmet) Primary School had no specific plans for the Platinum Jubilee.

i. Overhanging branches on Hall Tower field.

The PC decision to spend £250 on cutting overhanging branches was noted.

j. Platinum Jubilee working party

The Clerk was asked to book the Miner's Welfare for Wednesday 20th April 7pm-9pm for a meeting of organisations planning events over the bank holiday weekend. Cllr. Slater would publicise this event on the website and through social media and would use the organisational chart on the website to produce a .csv file which he would then use to generate emails to the named contacts. Cllr. Ward would send him the details required for the invitation.

5.3 Drainage for Scholes Football field.

Consideration of two quotations for drainage for Scholes Football field had been referred to the Committee having been considered by the PC. Cllr. Remmer's expertise had been drawn upon in issuing the specifications. It was **resolved** to accept the cheaper quotation (£19,700), all in favour. Work would be carried out in November subject to the weather.

5.4 Benches consultation.

There was discussion about possible locations. Jubilee gardens was considered following a bequest to the Historical Society but residents of properties adjoining the graveyard might not want this.

A benches policy from a parish in Scotland had been circulated as a suggested template. It was felt that the person sponsoring the bench should have a say in the type of bench purchased with a suggestion that they be given three options to choose from. It was also felt that the type of bench used should be in keeping with the character of the village, wooden benches would align better with existing provision in Barwick (for example the Cricket Club had wooden benches) and recycled plastic benches would not be out of character in Scholes where the sponsor could choose. Sponsorship had been obtained for benches in five out of the seven locations identified in Scholes. Maintenance was also a consideration, recycled plastic benches have a twenty-year warranty, the terms and conditions of sponsorship would agree maintenance responsibilities. Historically, maintenance of benches in Barwick had been carried out by Barwick in Bloom members. Groups buying fish and chips in Barwick took it in turns to sit on the nearby bench whilst eating and there was discussion about whether a second bench at this location was appropriate. It was noted that Cllr. Brunt had already undertaken a survey of potential locations in Barwick. All benches would be considered Parish Council (PC) assets and therefore covered by insurance. Feedback from residents was that benches should have arms. Recycled plastic benches cost in region of £500 and wooden benches about £430. It was **resolved** that sponsorship of a bench would be £500, that sponsors be offered a limited choice of bench and that they provide the wording for the plaque which would then be done by the PC, all in **favour**.

5.5 Complaints policy

The need for a revised complaints policy was noted and the revised policy would be informed by policies adopted by other parish councils. Some years previously, the PC had agreed to adopt the code of conduct of the principal authority (LCC). It was suggested that adoption of this policy be subject to regular review, meanwhile the Clerk would obtain a copy of the latest version of the LCC code of conduct and circulate accordingly.

5.6 Pavilion and Multi-Use Games Area

a. Purchase of extra key fobs for access to the Multi-Use Games area and tennis courts.

A decision of the Clerk under delegated authority to agree the purchase of extra key fobs for access to the Multi-Use Games area and tennis courts was noted. Ten fobs had been supplied originally and a further forty has been bought. When the online application form went live there were forty-six requests in the first twelve hours and the total requirement had since risen to a hundred and two. The Clerk had therefore used his delegated authority to agree to the purchase of a further fifty fobs. Although the payment method was strictly digital, one resident had only been able to pay cash, Cllr. Slater had therefore accepted the cash payment and done a bank transfer in lieu.

b. Flagstones.

The contractor awarded the work to do the flagstones had not responded to any emails or telephone calls resulting in one of the other contractors who provided a quotation being asked to carry out the work. This contractor had lifted one flagstone, broke it and decided that the job was not what he quoted for. He came back with revised quotation of £1,500 but offered to do the work for £1,000. Meanwhile the contractor originally awarded the job had replied via the Mybuilder.com website, this contact would be followed up.

c. Grant application from the personal trainer.

A grant application had been received from the personal trainer who uses the pavilion. Cllr. Slater explained the background to this application. At its February meeting, the PC had resolved that the charge for exclusive use of the tennis courts would be £15 per hour. The personal trainer was wanting to offer residents tuition on the use of the

outdoor equipment but felt that £15 an hour was prohibitive. She was therefore seeking a £500 grant so that she could offer this tuition for a year. She was already offering free tuition once a month and was getting booked up one to two weeks in advance and would charge £7.50 an hour at other times. It was felt that providing grant funding for a years' worth of tuition would not take into account holiday periods, cancellations due to inclement weather or diminishing support after a period of initial enthusiasm. Therefore, it was **resolved** that a grant of £250 be given in the first instance and additional grant funding would be considered if the level of support for tuition continued to demonstrate the need for this, all in favour. It was also agreed that the award of the grant be published.

d. Painting of lines and laying of non-slip surface

It was noted that due to inclement weather, the painting of the lines and laying of the non-slip surface had been delayed. There had been a request for lines to be painted to allow netball to be played at an additional cost of £200, there was sufficient money left from the grant funding to cover this cost and there were no objections to this.

5.7 Newsletter

a. Printing Costs

It was noted that the price charged for the February newsletter was the same as that charged for previous newsletters even though there were fewer printed and the February newsletter was eight pages compared to recent newsletters which had been twelve pages. The Clerk would contact the printer and seek a quotation for a twelve-page newsletter. Cllr. Walsh was continuing to produce the newsletter and the Jubilee edition would be ready in the near future.

b. Options to save on postage costs

It was suggested that the postage-paid envelopes could be sent to those who receive a postal copy of the newsletter so that they could send a reply indicating whether they would be happy to receive a digital newsletter going forwards. Meanwhile the Clerk would investigate options for using a franking machine.

5.8 Outstanding water charges for Scholes Sports Association

It was noted that Scholes Sports Association had now paid £194.04 of the historic unpaid rent and water charges and that £142.51 remained outstanding, It was **resolved** to make a recommendation to the PC that this be written off.

5.9 Internal Controls Officer.

a. It was **resolved** that Cllr. Ragg be granted "view-only" access to the account in order to carry out her role as Internal Controls Officer.

b. Cllr. Ragg had visited the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) in carrying out her role as Internal Controls Officer and suggested that documents such as Financial Regulations and the Financial Risk Assessment could be reworded in places to better reflect actual processes followed, for example, references to cheque payments (when most transactions were now carried out by bank transfer) and the reference to a £100 cash float. Although it was recognised that the £100 cash float no longer operated, it was felt that retaining reference to this in financial documents gave the PC an option to reintroduce it if necessary, without the need for further review.

c. Cllr. Ward's card reader allowed her to access the PC Lloyds account to dual authorise transactions. The same card reader also gave her access to another Lloyds bank account which was no longer required. In cancelling access to this other account, the bank had failed to appreciate that she needed her card reader for the PC account. A replacement card reader would be sent in the post put this left Cllr. Slater as the only person currently able to authorise transactions from the Lloyds account. It was therefore agreed that payment of the Clerk's credit card be made from the Barclays account (which only required one authoriser) to avoid incurring charges.

6. Draft Minutes of Subcommittees

The draft minutes of the Scholes Lodge Farm subcommittee meeting of 11th April 2022 has been circulated on the contents noted.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 17th May 2022 at 7pm in the Pavilion.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10:15pm.

Signed

Chair
17 May 2022