

MINUTES of a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes (F&GP) Committee

held on Monday 23rd October 2023 at 7pm in Scholes Sports Pavilion.

PRESENT: Councillors Kinga Ragg (Chair) Stella Walsh Gillian Williamson
John Hayton
Paul Remmer

In attendance: The Clerk.

1 APOLOGIES. Cllr. P. Walsh.

2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST. None.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the Committee meetings 3/2023 and 4/2023 held on 11th September 2023 (90) and 18th September 2023 (91-93) respectively having been circulated, be approved and the Chair be authorised to sign, those who were there in favour.

4. BUDGET REVIEW

The Committee looked at the Budget Monitor which had been sent with the agenda papers ahead of the Parish Council (PC) meeting on 2nd October and looked at each item of expenditure in turn. It was agreed to increase the insurance budget to £1,800 and to allow a 5% increase in the annual subscription to the Yorkshire Local Councils Associations (YLCA). Regarding staffing costs, it was agreed to dispense with the services of the third-party payroll provider with effect from April 2024 and that the provider be given fair warning of this decision. This would save £324 a year. There was a query regarding employer's National Insurance and whether the PC would be exempt from paying the first £5,000 of this, further checks established that this was not the case. It had been established that there was a need for the .pdf editing software. The audit budget would be reduced from £800 to £600. There was a concern that Leeds City Council (LCC) had a virtual monopoly on Christmas lights as it was their street furniture and power supply which was used. Cllr. Williamson had recently attended a YLCA branch meeting which had discussed Christmas lights and confirmed that there was no alternative to LCC. It was agreed that motifs not be considered in the 2024/25 budget. It was reported that there was a Christmas lights competition being run with a possible prize of four free tickets to the Festival or Christmas lunch. The use of solar panels to power the lights without relying on an LCC supply would be considered, Cllr. Hayton agreed to look into this. The Pavilion budget would be unchanged. The defibrillator budget would be £1,000. Legal fees would be removed as there was a zero-cost last year and this year so far. The budgeted amount would be increased by 10% on the following items, Allotments, Newsletter, Scholes Water, Scholes Lodge Field and Hall Tower Motte and Bailey. The entrance gate to Scholes Lodge Field (which had been deferred from the previous year) still needed repair and could not wait another year. There was a concern that Barwick Cricket Club had still not paid their contribution towards the cost of resurfacing the Verity strip. The Clerk had not had a response to his e-mail sent on 17th October about this. Cllr. S. Walsh would speak to a member of the Cricket Club Committee about this as this person was also involved with the Community Fund. The grants budget would remain as £3,500 and a copy of the grants policy would be sent to both In Bloom groups and British Legion. The budget for the Neighborhood Review Group would also remain unchanged. The Chair agreed to do the calculations of the revised budget based on the above decisions. She would also review the earmarked reserves. The budget would be presented to the December PC meeting.

5. ACTION TRACKER

- a. Pavilion Cleaner. The Clerk had circulated a copy of the new Cleaner's contract to the Committee. There was a concern about lack of contact information for the cleaner and this would be an agenda item next time.
- b. Legionella checks. The Clerk had obtained one quotation and was asked to try to get two more. Cllr. Williamson knew someone who might be able to quote for this. It was **resolved** that in the event that three quotations had not been received by the end of the month, that the Clerk be given delegated authority to take whatever action necessary to move this forward given that this was a matter of public health. It was felt that the Financial Regulations requiring three quotations for anything over £100 needed to be reviewed This would be an agenda item next time. Meanwhile the football club would be told not to use the showers until the Legionnaires checks had been carried out.
- c. Alleged tree root damage to the garage of a property adjoining the Village Hall car park. Confirmation was awaited from the insurance loss adjuster that the damage was definitely due to the tree roots. Emails had been exchanged between the loss adjuster and the resident with the Clerk copied in including one earlier that day. The Clerk was asked to contact the loss adjuster for an update. It was agreed to accept the most recent quotation and to instruct the contractor at the appropriate time.
- d. The football goal posts were due to be delivered on Wednesday 25th. The Clerk would contact the football club to see if they were still willing to fit the goal posts and if not, a couple of quotations would be obtained (the name of a local contractor being suggested).
- e. Fire extinguishers. It was **resolved** that as the cost would be below £100, that the Clerk be instructed to place an order for CO₂ fire extinguishers. Carbon monoxide detectors would also be obtained.
- f. Pile of spoil at Scholes Sports Field. Cllr. Remmer volunteered to deal with this himself as he had access to a small digger which could be used to spread the spoil.
- g. Sponsored bench on Belle Vue Avenue. Cllr. S. Walsh had spoken to the lady who had paid for the bench and had agreed to meet her to decide what action she wished to take. It was noted that there was a need for short and long term contracts specifying work to be carried out by contractors. This item would be kept on the agenda. It was also noted that the cost of the bench and installation had so far been less then the sponsorship money received and if necessary, the overpayment would be refunded.
- h. Setting up an Allotment Association. Cllr. S. Walsh reported on the conversations about this matter at the previous week's Playing Fields Committee meeting.
- i. Room Hire. The Clerk had circulated a 2022 document comparing room hire charges at various venues in the Parish. Although there might have been inflationary increases since then the comparative prices would be similar. It was estimated that hire charges still to be invoiced came to £729. The Clerk was instructed to use Scholes Pavilion whenever possible for meetings in Scholes (as there was no hire charge) and to update the Pavilion calendar accordingly. He was instructed to book the Miner's Institute for any meetings being held in Barwick in Elmet as the hire charge was £10 per meeting.
- j. Ladders. The wooden ladders would be taken to Scouts in time for their bonfire.

6. WORK REQUESTS

a. Asset register

LCC had sent the PC a list of street furniture which they considered as being PC assets. Cllr. Hayton had compared the list sent by LCC with the PC asset register. Several items on the list did not exist (the bus shelters were not PC assets). Cllr. Hayton would arrange a meeting with the Clerk to go through the list. This would be an agenda item next time.

b. Risk assessments - To note any work which needs doing.

Cllr. Hayton had carried out an inspection of PC assets in Barwick in Elmet and found a bin (which was confirmed as belonging to the PC) which was not in a good state of repair, in

particular the outer bit. It was agreed that as this did not affect the structural integrity of the bin that no further action be taken.

c. Village Gateway sign – Leeds Road, Scholes.

The Clerk had circulated photographs showing damage to the “Scholes” village gateway sign on Leeds Road. Although damaged, the sign was not dangerous and Cllr. S. Walsh agreed to speak to the Chair of Scholes in Bloom about this.

d. Request by Mount Saint Mary’s (MSM) football club that they receive some of the rent the new football club are paying as they have used the pitch at Barwick.

MSM football club had sent three emails regarding the fact that the new Barwick and Scholes football team had been using the pitch at Barwick on a Sunday morning for their home games due to delays in getting the pitch at Scholes ready. MSM highlighted their running costs and were seeking financial remuneration from the PC. It was agreed that the Clerk draft a reply declining this request and that they be reminded that they had not replied to a request in August 2022 for evidence of Legionella checks and other risk assessments and that the Chair and Vice Chair of the PC agree the response prior to it being sent. Legal advice had established that the agreement with MSM only gave them exclusive rights on a Saturday.

e. Adoption of a checklist of things for the Clerk to consider before instructing contractors to carry out works for the PC.

See also 5h (above). Cllr. Hayton proposed having a checklist of things to consider prior to instructing contractors and suggested forward planning of asset maintenance.

f. Christmas Lights – to consider alternative providers and value for money.

This agenda item had already been discussed, see item 4 above.

g. Salary costs review as per Financial Regulations item 4.4.

This agenda item had already been discussed, see item 4 above. A review of the Clerk’s heating and lighting allowance had been considered at the September PC meeting.

7. PAVILION MATTERS

It was agreed to obtain quotations from an electrician to check the lights.

8. DRAFT MINUTES OF SUBCOMMITTEES WHO REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE

a. Scholes Lodge Field subcommittee.

No meeting since the last Committee meeting.

b. Hall Tower Motte and Bailey subcommittee.

The Clerk had circulated photographs showing a couple of fallen branches. These had come from trees overhanging Hall Tower Field which were growing on land adjacent to it. Cllrs. Ragg and Williamson agreed to meet up to take a look at it. It was felt that the fallen branch should be moved if necessary and then left to rot down as it provided a natural habitat and encouraged biodiversity. Future subcommittee meetings would be held in the Miner’s Institute.

c. Peace Flame subcommittee.

This subcommittee had met on 30th June and the draft minutes had been circulated. There had been an event on 17th September 2023 to mark World Peace day. The next project would be to design a flag. Children from both primary schools in the Parish and from the Scouts had participated in a competition to design this, there had been some 300 entries so far.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

13th November 2023 at 7pm in the Pavilion. Cllr. Ragg was unavailable and therefore Cllr. Hayton would chair the meeting.

The meeting closed at 8:55pm.

Signed

Chair