

CHEPPING WYCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Finance and General Purposes Committee

Report of the meeting held on Thursday 10 January 2013 at 7.30pm in the Council Chamber, Cock Lane, Tylers Green, High Wycombe, Bucks HP10 8DS

Present:

Cllr I Forbes **Chairman** (TG)

Cllr M Wilkes (FH)

Cllr S Herron (TG)

Cllr J Herschel (FH)

Cllr J Gurney **Vice-Chairman** (L)

Cllr L Willis (L)

Cllr K Wood (TG)

Cllr C Dodds (L)

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr D Johncock

2 Declarations of members' interests in agenda items

Cllr Forbes declared a personal interest in item 10 – payment of travel expenses cheque number 7744. Cllr Herschel declared a personal interest in item 10 – payment of expenses cheque number 7758.

3 Grants, Subscriptions and donations

Application for grants: Penn Seven & Super Fun Run

Members were asked to consider the request for a grant towards the cost of demountable posts of £500.00 for the Common in Tylers Green. In order to assist in the smooth start and finish of the above races entrances and exits to the Common need to be made wider for the runners. The grant was proposed by Cllr Herschel and seconded by Cllr Wood and a recommendation will be made to the Council meeting on 24 January 2012.

Members were asked to note that to date £1,450 has been spent on grants leaving an amount of £1,050, a breakdown of expenditure was supplied by the clerk.

4 Investment of general and ear-marked reserves

Members were asked to note that the council is actively investing having now transferred a total of £200,000 into the Guaranteed Investment Account at the Co-operative Bank. The first tranche of £100,000 was invested in April 2012 and the second tranche in December 2012. At the time of the meeting the current interest rate for a 12 month period was 2.03%. The chairman expressed his thanks to Cllr Herschel for undertaking this as it was a significant increase on the .380% being paid on our Barclays account.

5 Audits: In-house and internal

Members were asked to note that the council's own in-house audit team of Les Willis and Katrina Wood have now been asked to undertake an audit initially interrogating the bank statements, reporting back to the next Finance and General Purposes Committee on 26 March 2013.

Also, the clerk will be in contact shortly with Don Timms, our internal auditor, to arrange for him to undertake the required internal audit.

6 Land Registration Update

Members received a short presentation from Cllr Herschel on the progress that has been made to date on our behalf by our solicitor Amanda Benham. Four years ago the process was discussed to register the council's land and Amanda Benham was approached and gave a fixed fee of £8k for the work. The final date for registration is 2013 after which time penalties will be payable and the fees will increase.

After some errors by the Land Registry, omitting Totteridge Common, Kingswood has now been completed and the registration documents and maps have been received. Encroachment issues can now be challenged.

Amanda has some small areas in progress at the moment. Tylers Green Common has not yet been started. It was agreed that Amanda should be approached for a fee to complete the land registration. Costs for completion of the land registration from Amanda Benham to be brought back to the next Finance and General Purposes Committee on 26 March 2013.

7 Draft Committee Budget 2013/14

Members considered and endorsed the draft committee budget for 2013/14. Cllr Forbes described the committee budget as steady with areas trimmed where there had been limited spend in the year. It was noted that there would be no provision made for seasonal staff.

8 Precept setting

Members received a short presentation from the Chairman of the committee on the main movements in the committee budgets and also the potential effect of the localisation of council tax. It was noted that a new grant (transitional funding) from Wycombe District Council fully mitigated the impact this year but that the grant was likely to reduce in future. The actual Precept value in 2013/14 would be about 5% less than the current value.

The committee reviewed the draft budgets for the three service committees. Some small amendments to the budgets were agreed to take into account planned projects and any changes to costs before they are re-presented at the next meeting of the committee on Tuesday 26 March 2013.

The following was noted;

- Leisure Facilities £2,400 could be deleted if the grounds team could maintain the pitches at Derehams Lane
- The ear-marked reserve for Derehams should be increased
- Community Orchard – reduce the budget to £2k and move the balance to the ear-marked reserve for play equipment
- Any significant underspending in the year would be transferred to an ear-marked reserve for the area provided that there was a plan in place. An example might be at the Railway Lane as a management plan is being created
- The ear-marked reserve for Kingswood to be reduced to £1,500 with the surplus to be added to the ear-marked reserve for play equipment
- The change in accounting treatment for tractor costs and contractors costs that cover work that might have been funded through the salaries area meant that there were significant net movements in some committee budgets and this would be looked at again

After further discussion it was agreed that a review of the ear-marked reserves would be brought back to the next Finance and General Purposes Committee in March as further work was needed on the balances.

It was agreed that the clerk should start to prepare the precept request letter and the recommendation, proposed by Cllr Herschel and seconded by Cllr Forbes, was that the demand should show a 0% change in the amount paid to the parish by individual residents, this to go the council on 24 January 2013 for approval.

9 Report on committee finances

Members were advised that, as at month 9, the committee was tracking below budget. No queries were raised.

10 Account for payment

The accounts for payment were circulated at the meeting and approved by members for payment – a list will be attached to the report.

The clerk left the meeting at 8.50pm prior to the confidential item.

Confidential items – exclusion of public and press

Members considered a confidential review and proposals for staff salaries from April 2013 presented at the meeting by the chairman for consideration and endorsement at the council meeting on 24 January 2013.

Salaries 2013

Discussion led by the chairman of the committee prior to consideration by the Council on Thursday 24 January 2013. This followed a meeting of the Staff Committee (Chairman, Vice Chairman and Committee Chairman and Clerk (part time).

It was agreed the recommend the attached to council for approval.

The chairman thanked members for their attendance at the meeting which ended at 9.10pm

Date of next meeting Tuesday, 26 March 2013.

Signed Dated