

CHEPPING WYCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Finance and General Purposes Committee

Report of the meeting
held on Thursday 24 October 2013 commencing at 7.30pm
in the Council Chamber, Cock Lane, Tylers Green, High Wycombe, Bucks HP10 8DS

Present:

Cllr. I Forbes Chairman	Cllr D Onslow
Cllr. J Gurney Vice-chairman	Cllr. M Wilkes
Cllr. C Dodds	Cllr. L Willis
Cllr. S Herron	Cllr. J Herschel

Also present: Cllr C Jordan, Cllr D Johncock and Cllr J Johnson

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Wood.

2. Declarations of members' interests in agenda items

There were none from any committee members. However, Cllr Johnson declared a personal interest in agenda item 7.3, being a resident on the road concerned.

3. Staff Matters

Members were asked to note that a modernisation of staff terms and conditions is required. It was noted that this will initially involve consultation with staff members and members of the Staff Panel, with a view to changes being brought back to committee. It is anticipated that there will be no changes to existing salaries, pensions or leave entitlement.

4. Committee Terms of Reference

Members were asked to consider the draft committee terms of reference. Amendments were suggested and the document will be adjusted.

It was resolved that;

The amended committee terms of reference be taken to the next full council meeting for adoption.

5. Policies & Procedures

Members were asked to note that before uploading the council's policies and procedures to the new website, it was important that the documentation be reviewed and updated as necessary. Policies will be brought before this committee to consider for recommendation to full council for approval. This is all in line with the Publication Schedule

5.1 Financial Regulations

Members were asked to review the draft Financial Regulations with a view to recommending for adoption at the next full council meeting. A few amendments were suggested and agreed.

It was resolved that;

The amended Financial Regulations would be taken to the next full council meeting for adoption.

5.2 Complaints Procedure

Members were asked to consider the draft Complaints Procedure for adoption at the next full council meeting.

It was resolved that;

The Complaints Procedure would be taken to the next full council meeting for adoption.

5.3 Publicity Policy

Members were asked to review the revised Publicity Policy. A couple of typographic errors were noted and the document was approved.

It was resolved that;

The Publicity Policy be taken to the next full council meeting for adoption.

5.4 Standing Orders

Members were asked to note that the new NALC Model Standing Orders had only just been produced and therefore this item would be deferred to the next Finance & General Purposes meeting, when a draft document could be reviewed.

6. Health & Safety

Members were asked to recommend that the council's Health & Safety Policy Statement be signed by the Chairman of the Council at the next full council meeting.

It was resolved that;

The Health & Safety Policy Statement be signed by the Chairman at the next full council meeting.

Members were asked to note that the Health & Safety Policy was in need of updating and would be deferred to the next Finance & General Purposes Committee for consideration. There was also a need to ensure that H&S practices were being documented and followed

Members were also asked to note that since the last entry in the Accident Book in March 2013 there had been no accidents.

7. Legal

7.1 Menlo House

Members were asked to consider the Deed of Grant giving a right of access to the above mentioned property. It was noted that a prescriptive right of access already exists for this property.

Cllr Herschel advised that the plan from Land Registry was confusing as to the extent of access over the track and verge and this would need clarification. The Clerk was asked to seek advice from our solicitor on this point.

It was resolved that;

Subject to clarification this Deed of Grant be recommended for approval to the next full council meeting.

7.2 Green Dragon Lane Sports Club

Members were asked to receive a report from the Clerk on the issues relating to the lease between the council and the Flackwell Heath Sports Club. Cllr Wilkes advised of his concerns relating to the club.

It was resolved that;

A letter be sent, prior to the next full council meeting, from the parish council to the Sports Club laying out the breaches of the lease to date.

7.3 Court Lawns

Members were asked to note that the property at Court Lawns is subject to a restrictive covenant. This covenant, although dated March 1961 is enforceable and restricts the number of houses built on the land.

A letter had been sent from the Clerk to the owner of the property advising that permission from this council is required to build on the land, failure to do so would lead to a possible injunction to stop any building work. The Clerk was given instruction to act as appropriate.

The Clerk will wait for communication from the owner and report back.

7.4 Land Registration

Members were asked to note that our solicitor was still going forward with registration however some searches were still outstanding and movement was extremely slow. An update would be given at the next committee meeting.

7.5 Byelaws

Members were asked to note that updating of the council byelaws was required. The update would need to include an allowance for cycling in Kingswood (and riding along permissive tracks). A revision or variation to the byelaws would be required if another solution could not be found.

8. Neighbourhood Action Group Feedback

Members were asked to receive a short update from one of the committee's NAG representatives on issues affecting the council.

Cllr Onslow advised that he had stood down as Chairman in December, but was now supporting the new Chairman, Alex Slater, in his new role as Vice Chairman.

The NAG priorities;

- anti-social behaviour,
- criminal damage,
- road safety/speeding.

There had been a 26% drop in reported crime for the same period last year. The MVAS project was now well underway and the 2nd phase funding for a second MVAS was now in the bank. A Safety Week was planned to involve local schools with a poster competition. Sgt Mat Lloyd was hoping to start up a junior NAG to encourage youth involvement in community issues.

Cllr Onslow was thanked for the report. The Clerk was asked to send out the NAG minutes to members.

9. Calendar of Meeting Dates 2014/15

Members were asked to note the schedule of dates. It was noted that the election date in 2015 was not yet known so the calendar ended in January 2015 for the moment, a revised calendar for February to May will be sent out when dates are known.

10. Grants and Donations

Members were asked to note that to date no grant applications had been received for financial year. Members were also advised that a new procedure for CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) was needed as there was some funding being allocated by Wycombe District Council. This would need to be accounted for separately and had a spend limit of within five years of receipt.

11. Permits

Members were asked to consider reviewing these charges to create a sliding scale with £52.50 being the bottom of the scale for non-commercial events. The Clerk to charge, after consulting the chair of F&GP, commercial events the standard administration fee and a sum based upon the extent and duration of the event.

12. Internal/External Audit – Risk Assessment

Members were asked to note that during the internal and external audit at the end of the last financial year it had been brought to our attention that the risk register had not been reviewed and updated.

The Risk Register will now form part of the agenda and be reviewed on a regular basis.

13. Council Income & Expenditure (Period 6)

Members were asked to note the half yearly figures of income and expenditure for the committee and council as a whole. The unplanned income for Menlo House and some likely identified underspend means that it may be possible to bring forward some items from 2014/15 although there are no such F&GP projects in the pipeline.

14. Accounts 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 Chairman thank members for their attendance and the meeting closed at 9.25pm