

# CHEPPING WYCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

## Finance and General Purposes Committee

Report of meeting held on Thursday, 19 March 2015 commencing at 7.30pm  
in the Council Chamber, Cock Lane, Tylers Green, High Wycombe, Bucks HP10 8DS

**The meeting is open to members of the public and press**

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**Present:** Cllr. I Forbes **Chairman** Cllr D Onslow  
Cllr. J Gurney **Vice-chairman** Cllr. M Wilkes  
Cllr. C Dodds Cllr. L Willis  
Cllr. K Wood

### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Herschel (another meeting)

### 2. Declarations of members' interests in agenda items

There were none.

### 3. Staff Matters

#### 3.1 Staff Absence Report

Members were asked to receive a report on the sickness absence of staff since the beginning of the current financial year. One of the two members of staff highlighted at the previous meeting had increased their sickness absence. The option of using an Occupational Health Consultant was discussed for extended or high frequency absence.

***It was RESOLVED that;***

***the Clerk contact Bucks County Council and seek advice relating to the use of their Occupational Health service.***

### 4. Policies and Procedures

Cllr Forbes advised members that as part of the preparation for the new Council year policies and procedures would need to be reviewed as follows:

#### 4.1 Financial Regulations

A revision to the NALC Model Financial Regulations issued in October 2014 had given rise to a review of the current Financial Regulations.

Members were asked to review the revised draft Financial Regulations, with a view to recommending for adoption at the next full council meeting. The new regulations required more internal control and this would either fall upon the councillors or the deputy clerk.

***It was RESOLVED that;***

***comments on the document be forwarded to the Clerk by 30 March 2015 and the Clerk and the Chairman of this committee finalise the draft for Full Council.***

It was noted that the Grants Policy should now be a stand-alone policy whereas it used to be part of the original Financial Regulations.

#### 4.2 Standing Order/Delegated Powers

Following the last Finance & General Purposes Committee no major comments had been received on the delegated powers previously approved by Full Council in November 2002. Members were therefore asked to approve the delegated powers, as presented, for adoption at the next full council meeting.

***It was RESOLVED that;  
the delegated powers be attached as an appendix to the council's Standing Orders.***

Members were also asked to review the council's Standing Orders with a view to recommending for adoption at the next full council meeting, there were no changes proposed.

***It was RESOLVED that;  
The Standing Orders be recommended for adoption with the additional of the delegated powers.***

#### **4.3 Committees' Terms of Reference**

Members were asked to consider a suggestion to split the Works, Services & Planning Committee to create a separate Planning Committee. It was hoped that this would allow for a more cohesive approach to responding to planning applications. The suggested format could be a pre-screening of all planning applications by the Clerk and chairman of the committee prior to setting the agenda, with a suggested meeting frequency would be every three weeks.

***It was RESOLVED that;  
The Clerk further investigate the legal requirements of setting up a separate Planning Committee and to bring a draft proposal for further review to the Annual Council meeting.***

Members were asked to review the committees' terms of reference last adopted on 7 November 2013 and suggest any amendments for recommendation for adoption at the next full council meeting.

***It was RESOLVED that;  
at the present time, the only proposed change is the addition of Magpie Wood to Amenity Land.***

#### **4.4 Insurance**

Members were asked to note that insurance renewal will take place on 1 August 2015. Over the past two years quotes had been obtained to gain Best Value, members were asked to approve the continuation of the current arrangements for a further year.

***It was RESOLVED that;  
the current arrangement run for a further year.***

#### **4.5 Council's membership of other bodies**

Members were asked to consider postponing a decision on membership of other bodies as a new council would be formed in May 2015.

***It was RESOLVED that;  
a decision on membership of other bodies would be postponed until March 2016 when new members would be able to make a more informed decision.***

#### **4.6 Complaints Procedure**

Members were asked to review the Complaints Procedure, last adopted on 7 November 2013, with a view to recommending for adoption at the next full council meeting. No changes were proposed to the document.

***It was RESOLVED that;  
the Complaints Procedure be recommended for adoption at the next full council meeting.***

#### **4.7 Freedom of Information Policy and Data Protection Policy**

Members were asked to review the Freedom of Information Policy and the Data Protection Policy, last adopted in April 2014, with a view to recommending for adoption at the next full council meeting. No changes were proposed to the documents.

*It was RESOLVED that;*

*the Freedom of Information Policy and the Data Protection Policy be recommended for adoption at the next full council meeting.*

#### **4.8 Publicity Policy**

Members were asked to review the Publicity Policy, last adopted on 7 November 2013, with a view to recommending for adoption at the next full council meeting. No changes were proposed to the document.

It was noted that all press releases, if in the name of the parish council, should go through the Clerk.

*It was RESOLVED that;*

*the Publicity Policy be recommended for adoption at the next full council meeting.*

#### **4.9 Fixed Assets**

Members were asked to note the advice from the external auditor, Mazars, for the accounting of fixed assets is that they should be given as the purchase cost and their value should stay constant until disposal. Where the insurance value had been used as a proxy cost, it should not be adjusted for any subsequent inflation increases. The accounting concept of depreciation was also not applicable and asset values should not be written down until they are disposed of. Land is not included in this valuation.

The list was noted as being correct as at 1 April 2014 for the 2014 values and the Clerk would vary it only using the above advice.

### **5. Health & Safety**

Members were asked to note that there had been one accident since the last committee meeting in January 2015. The Warden sustained an injury to his right shoulder while installing deer enclosures in King's Wood. The incident was exacerbated by poor weather and ground conditions. No time was taken off work. No learning points or external reporting were noted.

### **6. Legal**

#### **6.1 Green Dragon**

Members were asked to note that a meeting had taken place with the Chairman and Treasurer of the Flackwell Heath Minors Football Club. The draft lease had been discussed at length and feedback was awaited from their last Committee Meeting. A further revision to the lease had been made incorporating the points discussed at the meeting and this had also been issued.

It was noted that progress was moving slowly but in the right direction.

#### **6.2 Byelaws**

Members were asked to note that the Byelaws were currently at the provisional approval stage. The draft byelaws had been submitted to the DCLG Byelaws Team at the end of February. Once provisional approval had been given the next stage would be making, sealing and advertising the byelaws.

### 6.3 Fields In Trust

Members were asked to consider further investigation into the option of applying to Fields In Trust to protect the council owned recreation grounds.

***It was RESOLVED that;***

***the Clerk further investigate the protection offered by Fields In Trust.***

### 7. Neighbourhood Action Group Feedback/MVAS Update

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

Cllr Johncock advised that the two new MVAS had been ordered and that would then mean that each ward would take responsibility for their own sign. It would also be possible to leave signs in situ for longer periods of time. Sgt M Lloyd has asked to work with Cllr Forbes on identifying speed 'hotspots', however this was felt a little premature as there was not a huge amount of data at present.

Generally crime figures for the area had declined except that burglaries had increased.

Cllr Onslow added that the 2 new MVAS were due to arrive week beginning 30 March. There would be allocated to Flackwell Heath and Loudwater, this had been decided because the larger battery was needed for the Loudwater roads and the majority of the monies for this second phase had been provided by Flackwell Heath councillors. It was also noted that the set clock fix update had been done on the existing MVAS.

### 8. Grants/Community Infrastructure Levy

Members were asked to note that the current financial year's budget for grants had been spent.

Members were asked to consider the report from PC R Howell and, if so minded, approve the request for assistance to joint fund hinged bollards at the Budgen's Car Park, Old Kiln Road, Flackwell Heath. The report highlighted anti-social behaviour taking place in the car park and a need for closing the area off at night.

It was noted that the anti-social behaviour could possibly be moved to a car park or land owned by the parish council.

***It was RESOLVED that;***

***The request was not compliant with the parish council grant policy however, due to the anti-social nature of the problem members would be minded to recommend 50% of the cost of the hinged bollards, if an alternative acceptable site for those involved could be found.***

#### **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

Members were asked to note the guidance from Wycombe District Council on how the CIL funding must be spent.

It was noted that the funding should be used to support community initiatives to offset impact of development within the parish. In the event of the pot increasing community groups could bid for funding at which point a panel could scrutinise the bids before taking to full Council

Members were asked to consider putting the current CIL monies into play area refurbishment.

***It was RESOLVED that;***

***The current CIL monies totalling £7,368.97 be shared between the three wards for play area refurbishment.***

**9. In-house Audit Report**

Members were asked to note the In-house Audit report undertaken by Cllr Wilkes and Cllr Herschel. The contents of the report were discussed and Cllr Forbes thanked both councillors for their report.

*It was RESOLVED that;  
the Clerk respond to Cllr Forbes and Cllr Gurney on the issues highlighted in the report.*

**10. Risk Register**

Following on from the last committee meeting members were asked to review risks 9 and 12 on the extract from the council's current Risk Register and the heat map.

Members were happy with the current likelihood and severity of both risks, however an amendment to 12 needs to be made under Control Action with the addition of 'Buying in Expertise' and under Review Frequency & Responsible Person add 'Clerk'.

*It was RESOLVED that;  
The agreed amendments to risk 12 be made to the risk register.*

**11. Committee Finances**

Members noted the current committee income and expenditure.

**12. Council Income and Expenditure**

Members noted the consolidated report for all the council's committees.

**13. Earmarked Reserves**

Members were asked to note the Earmarked Reserves Report.

Members were asked to note that dependent on yearend outturn funds would be transferred as planned into the Earmarked Reserves. If any projects had not been completed by the financial yearend an EMR would be created to hold the monies, any other surplus would be swept into the General Reserve.

It was noted that the Church Road (East) project would need to have an EMR as the works had been delayed until April.

**14. Questions from council members and the public**

Cllr Dodds asked that a letter be sent via the Clerk to Wycombe District Council asking questions relating to the situation relating to the parking in the Kingsmead Road Car Park.

This was agreed in principle.

**15. Accounts for Payment**

The accounts for payment were circulated for consideration by councillors.

*It was RESOLVED that;  
the accounts for payment be approved and cheques numbered 8506 to 8525 be signed and that direct debits to Certas Energy, Shell Direct, SSE and Unicom be approved for payment.*

The chairman thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 9.37pm

Signed: .....*Kathie SA Wood*..... Dated 16 April 2015

Date and Time of Next Meeting: Tuesday, 16 June 2015 at 7.30pm