

HERSTMONCEUX PARISH COUNCIL

Agenda Item: Committee Reports – Finance & General Purposes Committee

MINUTES of the Meeting of the **Finance and General Purposes Committee** held on **Tuesday 03 October 2017** at the Meeting Room, Herstmonceux Village Information Centre, Gardner Street, Herstmonceux.

Present: Councillors: Mrs J. Angear, M. Bradshaw (Chairman), M. Goodsell, Mrs H. Kenward, S. Nash, and I. Stewart. Mrs C. Harrison, Parish Clerk was also in attendance.

S. Goacher, RFO, took the Minutes,

Members of the Public: None.

FIN.01.10.17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

None

FIN.02.10.17 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS INTERESTS:

Councillor Mrs. J. Angear – Herstmonceux Village Hall, Herstmonceux Bowls Club, Angears Builders.

Councillor M. Goodsell – various small contracts for Herstmonceux Parish Council.

Councillor S. Nash – Herstmonceux Village Information Centre.

Councillor I. Stewart – Herstmonceux Village Hall

FIN.03.10.17 DISPENSATION REQUESTS: None.

FIN.04.10.17 PUBLIC QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS: None.

FIN.05.10.17 PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE:

Councillor Stewart stated that there was no report.

Clerk's Appraisal: Councillor Bradshaw, referred to the Minutes of the September F&GP Committee, in particular to no documentation being completed relating to the Clerk's Annual Appraisal. The RFO reported that this was being resolved and that he had supplied the Clerk with the necessary Appraisal Form, which is to be completed retrospectively by the Clerk and the Councillors conducting the Clerk's Appraisal.

Timesheet – The Clerk: As required the Clerk had submitted her timesheet for work done during the period 01 July 2017 to 30 September 2017, showing that she had worked an additional 37.50 hours during the period. The Councillors having had a copy of the timesheet prior to the meeting **RECOMMENDS to FULL COUNCIL** authorisation of the payment of the additional hours. Proposed: Councillor Stewart; Seconded: Councillor Mrs Kenward. All Members in favour.

Timesheet – The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO): As required the RFO had submitted his timesheet for work done during the period 01 April 2017 to 30 September 2017, showing that he had worked an additional 47.50 hours during the period. The Councillors having had a copy of the timesheet prior to the meeting **RECOMMENDS to FULL COUNCIL** authorisation of the payment of the additional hours. Proposed: Councillor Stewart; Seconded: Councillor Nash. All Members in favour.

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Clerk to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee: Councillor Bradshaw, having looked at the position in relation to the Clerk to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee (CNPSC), suggested to the meeting that all hours worked to the date of termination should be paid on timesheet, as is the present case, and that payment in respect of any holiday entitlement should be paid separately after the date of termination. Councillor Bradshaw continued by stating that the last date for the ending of the notice period of the CNPSC should be the 15 March 2017. The meeting discussed the matter and it was **RECOMMENDED to FULL COUNCIL** that notice is given to the Clerk to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee to end on the latest date of either the date of the Referendum or the 15 March 2017, and that a calculation of holiday pay entitlement be made in accordance with reference to the total hours worked, and paid separately after the date of termination. Proposed: Councillor Bradshaw; Seconded: Councillor Nash; All members in favour.

The meeting further asked the RFO to draft a letter of Notice to the CNPSC, on behalf of the Parish Council, and that Councillors Nash and Stewart have a further meeting with the CNPSC on this matter.

FIN.06.10.17 CURRENT YEAR EXPENDITURE:

- 1. New Trees in the Recreation Ground:** Councillor Goodsell declared his interest and took no part in this item: The meeting discussed the matter of the planting of three new trees in the Recreation Ground. The meeting to seek a quotation up to a maximum of £250 for the purchase, planting and staking of these trees. The meeting **RECOMMEND to FULL COUNCIL** that three trees suitable for planting in the Recreation Ground be purchased and planted prior to Christmas, and that authorisation for the RFO to issue a Works Order on receipt of a suitable quotation up to a maximum of £250.
Proposed: Councillor Stewart; Seconded: Councillor Nash. All Members in favour
- 2. Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE):** The RFO referred to matter of the renewal of the Parish Council's membership to CPRE to the meeting because of the debate that had taken place in December 2016/January 2017 on the request of CPRE for a donation towards a 'fighting' fund on the development within the South-East Region. The Clerk made the point that information provided by CPRE was not specific to her role as Clerk, but that a Parish Council Member had recently attended a course on 'Planning' organised by CPRE. Councillor Stewart observed that the request for a donation and the renewal of membership to CPRE were two completely different issues, and stated that in his opinion that CPRE was an organisation that had an overall aim at preserving Rural England in general. Councillor Bradshaw stated that the information produced by CPRE was good general information and was very helpful to Town & Parish Councils. The meeting discussed the matter further and it is **RECOMMENDED to FULL COUNCIL** that the Parish Council retains its membership to CPRE in future. Proposed: Councillor Stewart; Seconded: Councillor Mrs Angear. All members in favour.
- 3. BT Telephone Box, Windmill Hill:** The Clerk and RFO sought the consent of the meeting to obtain quotations for the maintenance (painting and repairs needed to the door) to the BT Telephone Box at Windmill Hill, so that the defibrillator and cabinet could be installed. The meeting agreed that it was

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important that the defibrillator is installed as soon as possible, and that the maintenance of the BT Telephone Box be carried out as soon as possible. BT needed to be approached to see if it would continue to pay for and supply electricity to the Box for a future number of years, thought to be seven years in total. Councillor Bradshaw said that if BT were not able to continue the supply there is the possibility to install a transformer and link the supply to a nearby street lamp, or to seek a possible solution through other suppliers such as 'Heartsafe'. The meeting **RECOMMENDS to FULL COUNCIL** that the refurbishment/maintenance to the telephone box is expedited and would give the RFO permission to issue a Works Order for the work to be undertaken up to a maximum of £350 on receipt of suitable quotations. Proposed: Councillor Mrs Kenward; Seconded: Councillor Goodsell. All Members in favour.

The Clerk was instructed to investigate a source and cost of purpose made 'Defibrillator' signs for Ex- BT Telephone Boxes, and report back to F&GP Committee.

4. **Amenities Committee:** The RFO referred to the Minutes of the Amenities Committee held on 25th September 2017 and to various items involving financial outlay. He asked the meeting if the F&GP Committee supported the financial outlay on the following:
- a) Allotments: The purchase of a solar battery for the electric fence – cost £50.
 - b) Noticeboards: A total of £440 is required for the maintenance on the noticeboards at Herstmonceux Village Centre (Gardner Street), and Cowbeech.
 - c) Cleaning of benches at Church Road and Cowbeech Hill at £15 each plus the cleaning of four other benches at £10 each be scheduled for the spring of 2018-19.

The meeting **RECOMMENDS to FULL COUNCIL** its support of expenditure on these items. Proposed: Councillor Stewart; Seconded: Councillor Nash. All members in Favour.

Virement Request: The Amenities Committee has also asked that £325 be VIREED from 'Provision of Benches' to 'Provision of Noticeboards' within the Highways Budget. The RFO reminded the meeting that VIREMENT must be voted upon by Full Council as a separate item and clearly Minuted accordingly. The meeting discussed this further and it is **RECOMMENDED to FULL COUNCIL** that the **VIREMENT** of an amount of £325 from 'Provision of Benches' to 'Provision of Noticeboards' within the Highways budget be approved. Proposed: Councillor Stewart; Seconded: Councillor Bradshaw. All members in favour.

5. **East Sussex Pension Fund Annual Employers Pension forum:** The RFO informed the meeting that the Annual Pension forum was open to representatives from any Employer within the East Sussex Pension Fund. The meeting is scheduled for 03 November 2017, at County Hall, Lewes. The RFO stated that he had attended on behalf of his former employer Wealden District Council and other Town & Parish Council clients, over the past 20 odd years. The meeting asked the RFO to represent the Parish Council at the forthcoming meeting, any mileage expenses to be authorised.
6. **Annual Audit:** The RFO reported that he had received the signed off

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Annual Return for the year ending 31 March 2017 from the external auditors, PKF Littlejohn LLB, with no items or comments to be addressed. The RFO had displayed the required 'Conclusion of Audit' notices within the parish.

FIN.07.10.17 ANNUAL ESTIMATES – ESTIMATE WORKING SHEETS 2018-19:

The RFO had received the Estimate Worksheets from the majority of the Committees and individual Councillors.

The RFO reported that worksheets from Councillor Nash had gone missing and the Clerk & RFO apologised to Councillor Nash for any inconvenience this may have caused.

The RFO had prepared copies of all worksheets received for each Councillor and the Clerk attending.

Allotments:

Item	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Ground Sheeting (Weed Suppressant)	400	100	100
Fencing Repairs	150	150	150
Fence Battery Replacement		100	
Rodent Control		100	

Amenities – Highways:

Item	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Bus Shelter Maintenance (100201)	3220	3220	520
Parish Noticeboards (100207)	250	100	100
Wooden Bollards – Victoria Road	600		
Bollards (4) – Quicken Trust	500		
Speed Camera – Community Speed-Watch	250		
Crossover – Lime Cross verge	1000		
Pedestrian Crossing – Hailsham Road	500		
Revised Estimate Provisions	2017-18		
Hailsham Road Bank – Phase 2	1000		
Telephone Boxes – Windmill Hill/Stunts Grn	500		
Parish Noticeboards (100207)	500		

The RFO made reference to Councillor Mrs Alder's recent correspondence regarding the placing of 'Village Gateways' for Cowbeech, Herstmonceux Village, and Windmill Hill, which was a recommendation within the Neighbourhood Plan policies. Councillor Stewart disputed that it was a requirement within the N/Plan Policies and suggested that before any provisions were made in estimates that the associated costs of purchase, installation and maintenance of 'Village Gateways' should be investigated with other parishes such as Polegate Town Council, and Laughton Parish Council, both of which have these installed. The meeting agreed.

Amenities – Street Lighting:

Item	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
New Lamp in Hailsham Road	2100		
Install baffles on lights	600	600	900

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Item	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Replace lamps as required by ESCC	3000	8000	3000
Additional Lamp at top end of Church Road	1500		
Repair and Replace upon inspection – General	7000	8000	10000

In clarification, Councillor Bradshaw stated that the new lamp in Hailsham Road, Light baffles, Luminaire Replacements and the Additional lamp in Church Road was in addition to the existing provision of the £18,150 Capital Project. That the Repair and replace upon inspection – General replaces the existing Capital Project provision of £18,150.

Communications Committee:

Item	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
IT Support	600	650	650
Newsletter Production	100	100	110
Posters / Notices	100	100	100
Revised Estimate Provisions	2017-18		
New Website	500		
IT Support	500		
Newsletter Production	40		
Posters / Notices	100		

It was agreed with the RFO that the provision for IT Support should be moved out of 'Administration – The Parish Office' and form part of the Communications Budget.

The meeting would **RECOMMEND to FULL COUNCIL** that discussion takes place as to whether to resurrect the 'Parish Brochure', which Councillor Mrs Alder has already done a lot of work towards and has quotations for its production, which will need to be included in the Communications Committee budget if agreed to proceed.

Finance & General Purposes - Administration

Item	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Move Parish Office to Former PC site		2500	3000
PC Rates (Former PC)		2500	2500
PC Rates (Former PC) – Repairs		2500	2500
New Staff Member		12000	12000
Old Surgery – Incidentals			200
The Parish Office – Maintenance & Repairs	500		
Office Equipment – Laminator	50		

Councillor Bradshaw suggested to the meeting that if the purchase and development of the former public convenience site took place that it may be advisable to move the Parish Office to one of the proposed units, thus providing greater space to enable the Parish Council to employ a further member of staff. Councillor Bradshaw continued by saying that the new office costs would be offset by the savings in the rental of the existing office at the premises of the Rural Community Support Society. It was stated that the current office was too small for a further member of staff to work in and would not comply with existing

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laws regarding working areas.

Councillor Bradshaw also queried the costs of the existing photocopying machine and suggested that it may be time to investigate a replacement, not necessarily with the existing provider.

Individual Councillors Estimate Provisions:

Councillor Bradshaw:

Item	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Move Stunts Green BT Box to Village Hall	1400	250	250
Maintenance - Annual Contract	2800	4000	4500
Defibrillator Provision		1600	1660
Defibrillator Training	250	250	250

Councillor Bradshaw proposed that the BT Telephone Box at Stunts Green should be moved to the car park at the Village Hall and be made into a feature. The meeting thought that the Village Hall Committee should be consulted and a situation agreed with the Village Hall Committee before such a project could be proceeded with. Councillor Stewart, declared an interest, but commented that the Box could be made a feature and could be used to hold various pamphlets and information, which was currently available at the Hall, but only when the Hall was accessible.

Councillor Bradshaw proposed that the Parish Council enter into a contract with a local person to undertake the majority of the maintenance work that was required by the Parish Council within the area. The idea was to save time in getting general maintenance undertaken and to have to obtain authorisation through rules laid down in Standing Orders, which can be fairly onerous, and detrimental to getting the job done. The contract would agree an hourly rate for the jobs to be undertaken, and would permit the RFO to issue appropriate Works Orders or repetitive maintenance work to be undertaken as required.

Councillor Bradshaw stated that he was very much in favour of the Parish Council providing more defibrillators within the parish, and requested for one each year for 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21. The meeting discussed the matter and suggested that the Parish Council may wish to provide one more during that period, but that provision was made and offered by the Parish Council to parishioners, adequate training to be able to use the defibrillators. This may be done in co-operation with other organisations such as the doctor's surgery, or individually. The provisions to the estimates were amended accordingly.

The meeting would **RECOMMEND to FULL COUNCIL** all the provisions requested by Committees and Councillors as detailed above, to be included in the Annual Estimates.

Proposed: Councillor Bradshaw; Seconded: Councillor Nash. All members in favour.

The RFO will present the first draft of the Revised Estimates 2017-18, and Original Estimates 2018-19 to the next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee in November 2017.

FIN.08.10.17 **CONTRCT REVIEW:**

1. **Variation to Urban Verge-cutting contract:** The RFO had taken up the

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matter of a small parcel of verge at Buckwell Rise which was not specified on the ESCC maps or being cut by the Parish Council's contractors. The ESCC has informed the Parish Council that the area under discussion is a "section of verge (that) falls outside of our highways boundary and we are therefore not responsible for its maintenance, this would explain why it isn't included on the maps" The RFO stated that he would officially inform the contractor and amend any documentation that is required under the tender process.

2. The RFO produced a list of current contracts that were due to end on 31 March 2019, and thus need to go through a tender process as from September 2018. The RFO sought the support of the Committee to delegate the review of all the maintenance contracts to the Amenities Committee, instructing them to review, amend by addition, deletion, or recommend new contracts to cover the general maintenance work required throughout the parish. The RFO reminded the meeting that the introduction of a General Maintenance Contract as suggested under the Estimates discussion, could impact on the specifications of the existing contracts.

Councillor Nash accepted on behalf of the Amenities Committee the list of existing contracts from the RFO.

FIN.09.10.17 FORMER PUBLIC CONVENIENCE SITE:

There were no further update reports.

FIN.10.10.17 INSURANCE PROVISION:

The RFO reported that he had received correspondence from AON, the Parish Council's current insurance providers, to say that Aon has decided to cease its involvement in the Local Councils market in line with changes to its UK strategy, and regretted that it will not be offering renewal terms to the Parish Council.

Arrangements had been made with BHIB Ltd, another insurance broker, to offer renewal terms in future. NALC had also informed the Parish Council that it had agreed a new partnership with insurance brokers BHIB Ltd to provide tailor made support to local councils. BHIB Ltd is a preferred partner of Aviva, who has confirmed their ongoing support and involvement with NALC and has endorsed and confirmed their confidence in BHIB Ltd.

The meeting discussed the matter and agreed to **RECOMMEND to FULL COUNCIL** that a general review of its insurance provision, to include BHIB Ltd, be undertaken prior to its renewal date of 01 June 2018.

Proposed: Councillor Stewart; Seconded: Councillor Bradshaw. All members in favour.

FIN.11.10.17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting of the F&GP Committee is scheduled for Tuesday 07 November 2017, commencing at 7.30pm.

FIN.12.10.17 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING: The RFO records that the following items will appear on the agenda for the next meeting:

ANNUAL ESTIMATES - 1st Draft:

1. To receive copies of the Revised Estimates 2016/17, and Original Estimates 2017/18, together with provisions for the two further years 2018/19, and 2019/20.

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2. To discuss the levels of Reserves, Dedication of Reserves, and general levels of expenditure required as it affects the level of Precept for the ensuing year.

DATA PROTECTION REVIEW:

1. To discuss the impact of the changes on the Parish Council of the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) provisions.
2. To discuss the introduction of any Data Protection Assurances, Data Sharing, Direct Marketing, and Information Security records that need to be kept.
3. The review and update to Data Protection Policies and impact on any other Policies of the Parish Council.

FIN.13.10.17 CLOSE OF MEETING:

There being no other business, the Chairman, Councillor Bradshaw thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 21.43 pm