



Report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee
Monday 18th December 2023 at 7:30pm

PRESENT Cllr. J Britt Chairman presiding.
 Cllrs. D Garland, K Hammond, N Osborne, A Ratcliffe, D Turner & A Walmsley
 L Westcott (clerk)

Public Participation:

One member of the public present.

A member of the public from Lenham Meadows Trust (LMT) explained the results of the tree survey at Glebe Pond may require up to £5000 worth of works to make the trees safe. LMT will struggle to fund this work and asked if LPC can help. Cllr. J Britt advised LMT could apply for a grant but this wouldn't cover £5000. Member of public to forward final report when available for further discussion.

Chair opened the meeting at 19:50, member of public left)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received and accepted from J Bate.

2. NOMINATIONS FOR SUBSTITUTIONS

There were none.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON THE AGENDA

Cllr. N Osborne declared an interest in item 7b.

Cllrs. N Osborne and J Britt declared a non-pecuniary interest in discussions regarding the sale of land at the WPF.

4. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1990, S1, THE COUNCIL IS TO DETERMINE WHICH ITEMS, IF ANY, SHOULD BE TAKEN WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS EXCLUDED.

Cllr. J Britt proposed any discussions relating to personal information under item 10 should be discussed confidentially, all agreed.

5. MINUTES FROM F&GP COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20TH NOVEMBER 2023

The minutes of the F&GP meeting held on 20th November 2023 were agreed as being accurate. Points to follow up:

- a. L Westcott still working on final quote for car park drainage clearance.
- b. Cllr. A Ratcliffe to complete specification for the required works on the road at the cemetery.

6. FINANCIAL REPORT (by L Westcott)

- a. Review payment list for December for recommendation to full council:

Name	Frequency	Description	Date	Amount
Down to Earth	Monthly	Churchyard grass cutting	30/11/2023	605.00
DWN Property Services	Monthly	Handyman jobs - jet wash outside toilets and decorating in 1A	08/12/2023	421.99
Nathan Beale	Monthly	Waste management	30/11/2023	735.00
Parish Online	Annual	Mapping software	09/01/2024	192.00
Inivicta Arboriculture	Bi annual	Tree survey	04/12/2023	2,100.00

Ireland fencing	One off	Footpath fence contribution	31/10/2023	246.00
EDF	Monthly	Streetlights	31/10/2023	406.47
EDF	Monthly	WCs electricity	31/10/2023	15.22
			TOTAL	£ 4,721.68

All agreed to recommend payments are approved at full council.

L Westcott reported that a bill had been received for wastewater from the Public Toilets for £27,000, this is over-estimated again.

ACTION L Westcott/ J Bate to contact water company.

- b. Budget 24/25 Planning – The budget was reviewed for each line item, all agreed with each item with the exception of the planning budget line, more information is required to determine likely expenditure.

ACTION J Bate to provide actual spend figures to estimate likely underspend at year end at full council.

7. UPDATE ON THE SALE OF LAND AT THE WILLIAM PITT FIELD (WPF)

- a. Cllr. J Britt reported that the new contract is due to be sent to the office this week for signing. The agreement has gone as far as possible to secure a limit on the percentage of social housing in Phase 2 of the Countryside site.

- b. Options for Investment of the money to be received.

Cllr. N Osborne presented a report proposing LPC take over the project to build a new nursery at the allotments and invest £450k from the sale of the WPF. Once built there will be an income from the rental of the building. £165k s106 monies will be available from the Abbey Homes site and another application for strategic CIL money will be made in 2024. Construction would not commence until 75% of the funding is secured.

All agreed to recommend to full council that LPC take over the build and responsibility of the project using £450k funds received.

8. UPDATE ON SECTION 106 AND CIL MONIES DUE/ APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDS MADE

L Westcott reported that an application made for s106 funds for next phase of works on Ham Lane/ Maidstone Road footpath.

9. TO CONSIDER THE QUOTE FOR CUTTING THE HEDGE AT CHERRY DOWNS PICNIC SITE FOR £900

Cllr. N Osborne reported that Tree Pro can complete the hedge cutting for £900, in addition to this, they can complete the tree works identified in the tree survey for a further £900.

All agreed to recommend this to full council.

10. UPDATE ON KCC COMMUNITY WARDEN CONSULTATION

Cllr. J Britt reported that Harrietsham and Lenham are likely to lose our community warden in April following the KCC budget cuts and subsequent consultation. Harrietsham PC are proposing to employ the community warden directly for 2 and a half days a week to carry on with their current role and suggest LPC could employ him for the other 2 and a half days to make a full time position. Advice from SLCC is ambiguous in terms of offering the services that is felt are needed. Further discussion required.

11. PROJECTS UPDATE

No updates.

12. CORRESPONDENCE

- a. L Westcott reported that Kent Police will be attending the next market on 14th January 2024.
- b. Cllr. D Turner reported that the tree works have been completed in Cherry Close and the hedge overhanging the path has also been cut back.
- c. Cllr. A Ratcliffe reported that parishioners are asking questions about potential development adjacent to Old School Close.

13. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS TO FULL COUNCIL

- a. Authorisation of payments as detailed in item 6.
- b. Agreement to take over build and responsibility of the build project for a new nursery.
- c. Agreement of quote to hedge and tree works at picnic site.

The meeting closed at 22:10

Signed as a true record on this day 3rd January 2024.....

Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee