



## Report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021 at 7:30pm

**PRESENT** Cllr. J Britt Chairman presiding.  
Cllrs. M Cockett, D Garland, N Osborne, K Hammond, A Ratcliffe & A Walmsley.  
J Bate (RFO)

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

L Westcott (Clerk) Cllr M Lowe

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON THE AGENDA

No disclosures or confidential items on the agenda.

### 3. MINUTES FROM F&GP 21<sup>ST</sup> JULY 2021

Cllr. A Walmsley proposed, Cllr. D Garland seconded and it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on **Wednesday 21<sup>ST</sup> July 2021** are a true record and were approved, adopted and signed by the Chairman of the F&GP Committee.

### 4. FINANCIAL REPORT (Report by J Bate, RFO)

- a. Natwest Bank – J Bate had managed to obtain the balance in the Nat West reserve account enabling him to transfer the sum electronically into the Parish Unity bank account thus closing the Nat west account.  
He stated that he had now received the final statement from Nat West and would prepare a reconciliation for Council. **ACTION** J Bate to provide bank reconciliation for full council 1 September 2021
- b. Welcome Back Grant – to comply with the Service Level Agreement (SLA) it is necessary to advertise the source and logo – this would be done by adding an addendum to the document on the web site.  
**ACTION** Cllr. J Britt to prepare the addendum and liaise with the Clerk.
- c. The procedure notes used by J Bate need updating especially with the change to the Unity Bank.  
**ACTION** J Bate to update the procedural notes.
- d. Cllr. Britt requested that the £1,000 pound invoice for Hallets be paid swiftly.  
This relates to the transfer of the freehold of the land and toilet building from MBC to LPC.  
He noted that in future LPC would have to pay Local Council tax on the property as the single “free” allowance would be transferred from the toilets to 1a High Street.  
**ACTION** J Bate to initiate update payment

### PREPARING FOR RESPONSE TO MBC LP

Cllr. Hammond highlighted the frustrations of SOHL in respect of the urgent need of funding required to defend against the garden Village proposal at both the forthcoming LP regulation 19 consultation and the subsequent examination by government Inspector.

It was recognized in the light of the separate Parish meeting that a recommendation from the F&GP to the next Council meeting was required.

Both Cllrs Hammond and Britt were confident that LPC could provide funding and additionally accept donations from other sources for this specific project.

Cllr. Britt proposed that a sum of £10k be taken from the reserves to fund activity leading to and during the regulation 19 consultation. Depending on the outcome of the Consultation further sums would probably be

required in the 2022/ 2023 budget which could well require an increase in the precept for 2022. It was noted that such a proposal would need to be agreed by the LPC and incorporated in the minutes. On the question of donations to the Parish fighting fund the following were proposed:

- a) Crowd funding
- b) Approaching other Parishes contributions and help – though this would involve detailing common problems
- c) Approaching Local businesses e.g. Lenham Storage and Marley re the effects of extra A20 traffic

**ACTION** J Britt to draft motion to present at the next Parish Council meeting in respect the proposal to allocate £10k from the reserves as described above and to draft a parallel motion for an uplift in the parish precept both to be put to full council on 1 September 2021

**ACTION** J Britt to organize a September meeting with the neighbouring Parishes to elicit their support in objecting to the Garden Village.

**ACTION** J Bate to provide a summary of LPC finance and what is allocated to a budget both for projects (capital) and ongoing revenue expenditure.

Cllr. N Osborne stated that he has concerns about spending over the budget, LPC has an agreement that one year's precept will always be kept in the bank account. Cllr Walmsley pointed out that 1a High street represented a significant saleable asset and that he considered it unnecessary to maintain a cash amount in the bank equal to 1 year's precept in addition to the property asset.

## 5. ASSET REGISTER

J Bate reported that an on line template was available at a cost of £120 per month. It included a free 30 day trial. It was thought that Hugo Fox, the existing Parish web site provider, should be asked to provide costs and options before any final decision was taken.

**ACTION** J Bate and Cllr. J Britt.

## 6. DEVICE AND DOCUMENT SHARING OPTIONS

Cllr. J Britt stated that he was aware that most of the document back-up and recoverability relied on members own laptops and computers and this was unsatisfactory given that individuals moved on. One option would be to provide all Councillors with Parish laptops but it was pointed out that as computers became obsolete this did not guarantee recoverability. What was required was a back up to the cloud in a structured form rather than the current email back up. All members were asked to consider how best this could be achieved. **ACTION** Parish Clerk to discuss cloud access with M Sherwood

## 7. UPDATE ON SECTION 106 & CIL MONIES

Cllr. D Garland reported the detail of the CIL and 106 monies paid and outstanding as received from MBC. J Bate stated that this did not completely tie up with his figures Cllr. D Garland and J Bates were asked to resolve any differences. It was pointed out that the 106 monies were targeted at Green Spaces – only the CIL therefore being available for projects not involving Green Space. Cllr. A Walmsley suggested that this being the case consideration should be given to purchasing the “green strips” e.g. the Green area at 88 High Street and other land e.g. the entrance to the Allotments / Nursery, currently in the hands of the Crown due to developer bankruptcy. This project would be funded from the 106 monies.

**ACTION** J Bate and Cllr. D Garland to liaise.

**ACTION** Cllr. A Ratcliffe to ascertain likely costs of purchasing from the Crown from his Business contacts.

## 8. PROJECTS UPDATE

### a. Nursery

It was agreed that with the completion of the bat survey that the Planning application should be resubmitted.

**ACTION** Cllr. A Ratcliffe to resubmit the application.

### b. Village signs/ Planters

Cllr. D Garland reported that the planter project was completed and he was progressing with the refurbishment of the Village signs. He stated that Contractor helping with the planters had died and asked that his contribution be acknowledged on the Web site.

**ACTION** Cllr D Garland to contact the family requesting agreement.

### c. The Cross

Cllr. J Britt reported that the owner of the field who would have to agree drawings of the gates and he has been unable to make contact. He will keep trying.

**ACTION** L Westcott to contact Steven Waring to discuss when the work to clean the Cross and refurbish the enclosure will commence.

**ACTION** Cllr. A Walmsley to contact Sylvia re the interpretation boards requesting that she proceed as per the last correspondence and giving her permission to use the Parish Council Logo.

**d. 1a High street CCTV**

It was agreed that the stand alone system as reported at the last meeting should go ahead.

This would give the opportunity eventually to link the cameras in the Square to the Parish Office.

It was thought though that there should be a camera on both front and back doors and that the monitor should be on the first floor to enable the front door to be unlocked from there.

**ACTION** Cllr. N Osborne to contact the supplier and re-discuss

## **9. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**

- a. KALC defibrillators – in addition to the possible site at RS McColl on Honeywood Road it was suggested that perhaps defibrillators could be sited at the Halls in Platts Heath and Lenham Heath.

**ACTION** Cllrs. K Hammond and J Britt to enquire if these venues would be happy.

The meeting closed at 22:15