



Report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

Wednesday 21st July 2021 at 7:30pm

PRESENT Cllr. J Britt Chairman presiding.
Cllrs. M Cockett, D Garland, M Lowe, N Osborne & A Walmsley.
J Bate (RFO) L Westcott (Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr. K Hammond and Cllr. A Ratcliffe

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON THE AGENDA

No disclosures or confidential items on the agenda.

3. MINUTES FROM F&GP 16th JUNE 2021

Cllr. N Osborne proposed, Cllr. D Garland seconded and it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on **Wednesday 16th June 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 - still not allowing us access to our funds so a full understanding of the money available to the parish is not possible.
ACTION – Cllrs Mike Cockett and Nick Osborne will visit Natwest.
- b. Welcome Back Grant – Christine Dyer has sent the Service Level Agreement (SLA).
ACTION J Bate and L Westcott to look at requirements of SLA.
- c. Unity Bank Reporting - process being developed to link reports from accounting system to make budgeting review easier. Budget holders need to be identified and provide reports to F&GP.
ACTION J Bate to draft procedural notes so everyone can fulfil their role and that everyone's role is understood.
- d. Audit – PKF Littlejohn have been given all the information that they need to fully complete their External Audit review however a few emails have been received asking for additional information which was actioned immediately by RFO.
- e. Expenditures L Westcott reported that the payments for Knights (providing legal assistance regarding Land West of Loder Close) have gone above the agreed budget and have been paid. This is partly due to the change of bank and payment procedures.
ACTION J Bate to update payment procedures (linked to action in "c").
ACTION The over budget payment will be raised in full council for retrospective approval.

5. ASSET REGISTER

A template maybe available via KALC. It will not be a quick task and will take time and the assistance of all Cllrs within LPC.

ACTION J Bate and L Westcott to start work on creating an asset register, contact KALC for a template.

6. OUTCOME FROM SPECIAL MEETING TO DISCUSS MBCLP

Cllr. J Britt reported that there are two key points with the MBC Local Plan – the response to the Reg 19 consultation and the public examination. LPC plan to gather information for a response and send to a legal

advisor to check it is sound. Legal advice can be sought in line with Section 222 of the Local Government Act 1972, which states:

222 Power of local authorities to prosecute or defend legal proceedings.

(1) Where a local authority considers it expedient for the promotion or protection of the interests of the inhabitants of their area—

(a) they may prosecute or defend or appear in any legal proceedings and, in the case of civil proceedings, may institute them in their own name, and

(b) they may, in their own name, make representations in the interests of the inhabitants at any public inquiry held by or on behalf of any Minister or public body under any enactment

It is recommended that a resolution be passed at the September council meeting to add an item to the 21/22 budget to provide resource for LPC response to MBC local plan consultation and public enquiry.

ACTION Cllr. J Britt to draft a proposed resolution.

ACTION J Bate to provide a summary of LPC money and what is allocated to a budget.

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.

7. DEVICE AND DOCUMENT SHARING OPTIONS

Discussions were held about electronic document sharing options. A cloud option is likely to be the best solution.

ACTION L Westcott to make enquiries about electronic document sharing.

8. UPDATE ON SECTION 106 & CIL MONIES

Cllr. D Garland reported that there is approximately £9000 CIL money to claim for the Grove.

ACTION J Bate and L Westcott to liaise.

9. PROJECTS UPDATE

a. 1A High Street

The lock and camera on the office door is now installed and working. It was discussed what we should display in the windows, it was agreed that posters should display information on village events, meetings, Lenham market and charities (such as the Lenham Meadows Trust).

It was decided to name the meeting room "the Nigel Godfrey room" after a previous chairman, J Britt has agreement from his widow.

ACTION Cllr. N Osborne to get a sign for meeting room.

b. Upgrading WCs

Cllr. J Britt reported that Halletts have received £1000 payment and we are waiting to hear from them.

c. Village signs

Cllr. D Garland reported that the bases will be finished within two weeks.

d. The Cross

Cllr. J Britt reported that the drawings of the gates have been sent to the farmer and he is waiting for a reply. **ACTION** L Westcott to contact Steven Waring to discuss when the Cross will be cleaned.

e. Lenham School Swimming Pool

Cllrs. J Britt, D Garland and M Lowe met with the swimming pool committee. An article will be included in the Lenham Focus, a survey is to be prepared to gain local opinion and the next meeting will be in September.

f. Cemetery – L Westcott has received a quote from a stonemason for completing a risk assessment on the memorials – some are leaning due to burrowing rabbits and the natural soft ground. Cllr. N Osborne stated that he knew someone that would be happy to complete work at the cemetery, they could potentially help with straightening memorials, filling in holes and keeping it tidy in between visits from the main contractor.

ACTION N Osborne to discuss works required with contact.

10. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- a. William Pitt Field – L Westcott sought the football club’s opinion regarding the enquiries received for the WPF.
They were not keen on use of the field for a wedding venue – LPC inclined to agree due to potential damage to the field.
ACTION L Westcott to respond to enquirer.
They would support the proposed food van in the car park, LPC still have concerns especially regarding space in the car park, along with waste issues.
ACTION L Westcott to respond to applicant.
- b. Rural Services Network – offered free membership until March 2022, all agreed this could be a good opportunity.
ACTION L Westcott to respond.
- c. Ward Cluster Meeting – Could raise the concerns regarding the Pilgrims Way. J Britt to attend meeting.
- d. Pleasant Farm (Forestry England) meeting – invitation via Tom and Janetta Sams, J Britt to attend.
- e. Village Zoom Account – account requires renewal in September, if not renewed it will divert to a free account with meetings restricted to 40 minutes. Re- evaluate in autumn if this requires renewal for longer Zoom meetings.

The meeting closed at 22:10