

Minutes of the meeting of **Fowlmere Parish Council Finance and General Purposes Committee**
held in the Pavilion Room, Fowlmere Village Hall, Fowlmere
Tuesday 12th February 2019 at 8:15 pm

Present:

Cllr P Burge (Chair), Cllr L Wragg, Cllr Sunderland, Cllr Mr P Collinson, and Cllr D Roberts

Also in Attendance: Ms K Byrne (Clerk)

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr C Howe, Cllr S Mulholland, and Cllr M Vinton; Cllr T Bearpark was absent.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting (20th Nov) / Matters Arising

The minutes had been agreed, and signed and are incorporated into the PC minutes of 11 December 2018. Matters Arising – none.

3. Clerk Salary and Review

The Clerk was asked to leave the meeting at this point and the PC had a brief discussion. The clerk left the room at 20:18, and returned at 20:25.

It was agreed that the Clerk's salary would increase in line with the national pay scale. Some back-pay is due for the tax-year 2018-2019 as the salary scale had been worked out on the previous year's scale. This to be added to February's salary.

ACTION – Cllr Wragg, Cllr Burge and the Clerk to conduct a development review / appraisal of the Clerk as per Contract of Employment

4. Review of Income and Expenditure

a) Review of savings accounts and current accounts

The balances in the savings accounts are as follows:

- Unity Trust Bank Instant Access Savings Account – £501.33
- Santander Business Savings Account – £20,289.71
- The Cambridge Building Society – £40,440.25
- **Total £61,231.29**

The balances in the current accounts are as follows:

- Santander Current account – £2,183.82.
- Unity Trust Current account – £21,387.30
- **Total £23,571.12**

Cllr Burge said that the PC need to take the S106 money (£10,500) out the savings account and put it into the Unity Trust current account. It could not be recalled which savings account has the S106 money in it. Cllr Burge said that one of the savings accounts could have JUST the S106 money in it and that account would then only be used for S106 projects. All concurred with this. Which account this should be depends on the interest rates and access conditions of each – clerk to find out. Also, it was recognised that the signatories for Cambridge Building Society account need to be updated.

ACTIONS – Clerk to:

- i) **Move £10,500 from the Santander Business savings account into the Santander current account. Then prepare a cheque for £10,500 to move this money into the Unity Trust current account**
- ii) **Find out the interest rates of the savings accounts and inform the PC.**
- iii) **Obtain paperwork to change signatories on the Cambridge Building Society account.**

b) Comparison of Expenditure with budget

Just before the meeting, the Clerk had circulated to the PC a spreadsheet of 2018-2019 budget against expenditure so far in this tax year. Cllr Burge said that the £10,500 for the outdoor gym equipment should be removed from the expenditure as it should come from S106 money and not the precept budget. Also, the income from the cemetery should be set against cemetery costs.

ACTION – Clerk to amend the spreadsheet with regards to S106 money and include cemetery income – recirculate to PC

[Following the meeting, once these adjustments had been done the expenditure against budget for this tax year looked in good shape with approximately £8,930 of the precept budget left in this tax year.]

c) Precept

The Clerk had received acknowledgement from SCDC of receipt of Fowlmere PC's Precept request for 2019/2020 of £38,810. The precept will give a Band D equivalent for 2019/20 of £68.69. This is an increase of £2.65 or 4.02% above the Band D equivalent charge in 2018/19. The precept requested is £2,000 higher for 2019/20 than the previous year. The tax base has increased from 557.4 to 565.0 this results in an increase to the Band D equivalent cost.

This was noted by the PC.

5. Audit for 2018-2019

a) Review internal auditor

In 2018/2019 the PC used Hardcastle Burton. The PC felt that their costs had risen recently. [Following the meeting, the Clerk found that Hardcastle Burton had charged £690 in 2018-19 and £654 in 2017-18.] It was questioned whether equivalent auditors might have cheaper rates.

ACTION - Clerk to ask Thriplow and Foxton PCs which auditors they use and what they paid last year.

b) Review FPC Standing Order / Financial Regulations

Cllr Burge said that NALC have new templates for Standing Orders and that Fowlmere PC's is out of date. Financial Regulations need to be produced as a separate document, for which NALC also have a template. These will need some editing and then the PC need to decide if they are to adopt them.

c) Review FPC Asset Register, Code of Conduct and Risk Assessment documents

The outdoor gym equipment needs to be added to the asset register. The Code of Conduct is out of date; NALC also have a template for this. The Risk Assessment is also to be reviewed.

ACTION – Cllrs Burge and Wragg and the Clerk to have a meeting to produce new drafts of the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct, Risk Assessment and circulate to the PC to review in advance of the AGM

6. Trees, Grass, Hedges and General Purposes

a) Repairs to cemetery gate

Dave Salmons had quoted £100 to repair the gate. All agreed that this is acceptable. Clerk to inform Dave Salmons to go ahead with the work.

b) Repairs to St Marys churchyard wall

The parochial church council (PCC) had expressed a wish to meet to discuss ownership and maintenance responsibilities of St Marys churchyard wall. Cllr Burge said that he had looked at the past minutes and old records and had found that the wall belongs to the church, but the maintenance liability is the Parish Council's. SCDC have confirmed that the wall to the church is considered to be curtilage listed.. Fowlmere PC did not transfer liability to SCDC so the PC need to decide what to do. Advice received from SCDC was for the PC to get the wall surveyed before any work begins.

ACTION – Clerk to get quotes from 3 local specialist surveyors and to let the PCC know that the PC are having the wall surveyed

c) Contract renewals

Cllr Burge said that this was discussed briefly at the BB meeting; the PC need clarity around the existing schedules. The maintenance 'contracts' the PC are with: Hardy Landscapes Ltd, Agriplant Ltd (their work on the protected verges is well defined), and SW Gardens & Landscapes (they carry out gardening in Savile Way).

Cllrs Burge and Mulholland will ask Martin Hardy when they meet him in March at the cemetery about the scope of the maintenance work he carries out for the PC.

There is to be a PC village walk on 2 March at 2pm where any further tree and grass work will be identified.

d) Minor repair to Butts Fence

Before the meeting, Cllr Mulholland had sent notification that there had been some damage to the Butts fence which required repair. Cllr Burge said that as this will be a small job the PC should ask Dave Salmons to repair it – all concurred.

ACTION – Clerk to ask Dave Salmons to repair this and check the rest of the fence, and then give the PC a quote for any other repair work required

7. Future Projects

a) Opening the existing cemetery grounds into the new burial ground

Cllr Burge and Cllr Mulholland have set up a meeting with Martin Hardy on 5 March to get an initial quote for this work.

b) Repairing safety flooring at the Village Hall

The Clerk had found the paperwork for this and identified that the warranty for the equipment was 12 months, which has now run out. Cllr Burge said to go back to Hags and ask for a quote to repair the area.

ACTION – Clerk to ask Hags to inspect the matting and provide a quote

8. Other Matters

a) Beehives on Clunch Pit – contract with Chris Parsons

The Clerk found a contract drawn up for Mr Parsons dated April 2017 and realised that the April 2018 contract had not been issued and the £1 rent had not been paid. The PC

decided that the contract should be sent now to Mr Parsons, and to ask him to sign and pay the rent retrospectively.

ACTION – Clerk to send contract to Mr Parsons and to ask him to sign and pay the rent retrospectively.

b) SLCC Training Day – End of Year Finance Training

SLCC are running a training course on End of Year Finance on 8 March 2019. It will cost £10 for non-members. The PC decided that it would be useful if the Clerk attended.

ACTION – Clerk to sign up for and attend the SLCC course

c) ICCM Membership

The Clerk has received an Invoice for £90. The ICCM said that the PC can join as soon as we have paid the invoice and it will be no extra for the remainder of 2019.

ACTION – Clerk to arrange payment

d) Cemetery fencing on the Mill Road

Cllr Mulholland had emailed before the meeting to say that the fencing had been “peeled back” and looked like it had been cut. This was noted by the PC and will be discussed further at the next PC meeting.

e) Clunch Pits

Cllr Roberts said that the PC own 2 clunch pits – one near the Village Hall on Chrishall Road and one on Long Lane, at the bottom of Moor Lane. The bungalow nearby is likely to be sold in the near future and the PC need to get a clear understanding of the access to this area. The PC also need to double check that the clunch pits are registered on the Land Registry. Cllr Roberts said that the PC could include this area on the village walk-about. All concurred. This to be discussed further at the next PC meeting.

ACTION – Cllr Wragg to circulate the list of PC documents held by Hewitsons.

9. Date of Next Meeting

16th April 2019.

The meeting closed at 21:30.