

## Minutes for Langham Parish Council (PC)

### Finance Committee meeting 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021 7pm via Zoom

Present: Cllr Ellis, Cllr Bottwood, Cllr Thorpe, Cllr Dawson  
Clerk for minutes Carol Harbach  
2 members of the public

#### **20/32 Welcome and explanation of how the remote meeting will run.**

Cllr Ellis welcomed everyone to the remote meeting of the Parish Council (PC) and went on to explain the rules of the meeting. No Apologies.

#### **20/33 Declaration of Members Interests**

Any declarations of interest will be brought up and declared as they arise on the agenda. No arose.

#### **20/34 Agree Minutes from the last Finance meeting held 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020**

The minutes were proposed by Cllr Bottwood and seconded by Cllr Thorpe  
Agreed by all.

#### **20/35 Matters arising from these meetings.**

- Clerk to contact Chair re Tennis Club's quotes for works.  
This was completed by the Clerk. The Chair stated that the Tennis Club had informed him they used the same contractor that had completed the original construction of the tennis courts.  
The Recreation Ground committee has been requested to add the obtaining of three quotes for any further works, to be part of the new Terms and conditions that are being compiled at the moment. Completed and discharged.
- The change to budgetary control for months when the council do not meet in Aug/Dec will be deferred to point 20/39.
- The Auditors questions were replied to and sent to the Auditor. These have now been agreed and signed off. Completed and discharged.
- Expenditure sheets – These had been distributed to councillors by the clerk prior to this meeting.

#### **20/36 Public Open Forum (maximum 10 minutes)**

Questions to be recorded and answered at the next meeting.

A resident stated that she and another resident had met for an informal chat with Cllr Emms and Cllr Dawson regarding the Elsan system for the recreation field. The residents had been informed that this project was suspended due to Covid. The Langham Community Centre (LCC) would like this project to go ahead due to H&S issues regarding the current drainage system being used. The resident believed that the expenditure had been voted on and agreed earlier on in the year. The Parish Council (PC) replied that this had still not been formally agreed as an amount in the budget.

The resident had also looked at the finances for last year, and would like clarification of how the Tennis Club account is used, how things are paid for and what it is used for. The PC explained that the Tennis Club account which is known as the "sinking fund" and is a fund which both both parties pay into. The Tennis Club pays in £1,000 and the PC pays in £650 a year. The "sinking fund" pays for maintenance and upkeep of the tennis courts There is no current agreement at the moment and this is currently being compiled which will include the request for three quotes for any future works needed. This fund paid for the cleaning works that took place recently at the Tennis Courts.

The resident also stated in last years accounts there was a lot of money from the Solar farm - £18,000 and asked if there would be anymore payments. Cllr Bottwood explained that this grant

had now finished and last year figures showed the last two payments due, which were made at the same time. This grant has now finished and the PC will not be getting anymore payments.

Cllr Dawson was invited to comment on the Elsan project – This is on the Recreation Ground Agenda for the meeting on 14th January. The Recreation Ground Committee will make a final decision on this then, currently there are a lot of pros and cons for this project. It was in the original budget for this year however, due to the Covid situation and the impact on income the committee could not produce a business case to justify this project. It is being looked at again this year and is in the proposed draft budget for 21/22. If, following the meeting on 14th January, this is included in the budget submission it will then go to the Finance Committee for review before any decision is taken by the main council.

Another resident stated that he had sent some finance questions by email into the council and some of the information requested has already been put on website and he thanked the council for this. Regarding one of the questions the resident had raised in the email, Cllr Bottwood explained that the external Auditor had sent back the report to the PC on the last day of November. This then went into December when the PC do not meet. The Clerk was on annual leave at the time and the PC wanted to discuss this with the Clerk before it was put on the website. When there had been an opportunity to discuss this with the Clerk the report had been put on the website.

#### **20/37 Approve Expenditure and Income for recommendation**

Income

EALC Grant for Hampers	£ 525.00
Push Energy Boxted Grant for Pre-School Flooring	7,143.58
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Total	£ 7,668.58

Expenditure;

Contractor Invoice 12	234.00
Mrs. C. Harbach – Clerk Salary	785.60
HMRC Employers – NI contributions	13.49
Troggy’s Grass Maintenance – annual grass cutting round village	1,180.00
Topline Pest Control – pest control agreement	85.00
Mr. P. Dawson reimbursement for Pre-school flooring sign	88.78
Pinnacle Group – Adhoc Grass cutting of field	216.00
James Todd & Co - payroll costs	72.00
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Total	£ 2,674.87
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When approved by the Council, these payments will be authorised by Cllr Ellis and Cllr Bottwood  
Proposed Cllr Bottwood seconded Cllr Ellis all agreed

Cllr Bottwood stated that when the annual invoice for cutting the grass (for multiple cuts) and other invoices come in from the contractors annually, it is difficulty for the Finance committee to see whether this work was completed and to the required standard. It would be beneficial from an audit perspective if the invoices were sent to the Recreation Ground committee to clarify and agree. The Clerk can then forward these to the finance committee to review. The Finance committee supported this. **Action Clerk and Chair of Recreation Ground committee.**

#### **20/38 Discussion on the 2021/2022 budget and precept.**

The draft budget is currently being looked at and should be finalised after the next Recreation Ground Meeting. This will then go forward to the Finance committee to recommend the precept

submission to the main council. The precept needs to be submitted to Colchester Borough Council (CBC) by 25th January 2021. This will not take place in time for tomorrow's main council meeting so an extraordinary meeting of the main council will need to be called for this. It was suggested that the date for the extraordinary meeting of the full council to be the 21st January 2021 so the precept can be agreed before the 25th January.

There will also need to be an extraordinary meeting of the finance committee to compile the precept submission to the main council. The date agreed for this is Tuesday 19th January 7pm. These dates will go onto the website and will be posted around the village. The precept at the moment is likely to be an increase of 1.1% if an RPI increase is adopted. The RPI increase suggested by CBC is based on the September RPI figure. This is still to be finalised and agreed once the budget has been looked at.

**20/39 To change the Finance Regulations regarding payments in August and December when the council do not meet.**

It was suggested to amend the process for payments in the financial regulations of the PC that are due for the months that the Council do not usually meet i.e. August and December.

The Finance Regulation controlling this – Finance Regulations budgetary control 4.1 3<sup>rd</sup> section - was read out and it was suggested that this wording be changed to read under “emergency payments” to increase the amount to £1,000 in total, these payments are to be agreed between the Chair and the Clerk/RFO.

At the moment the amount is for £500 and it has been this amount for a long time. Anything over the £1,000 amount will need to be an extraordinary meeting to be called to approve the payments. This agreement would just be for the payments in the months of August and December. Any payments agreed and made are to be distributed to all councillor for their information and reported at the next meeting.

It was agreed to take this proposal to the full council for approval.

It was also suggested that the Clerk contact NALC/EALC to check this does not convene any other regulations before this is actioned.. **Action Clerk/RFO.**

**20/40 Tennis Club contract – update**

This agreement is still currently under consideration with the Recreation Ground Committee.

When any updates are available the committee will be informed. Cllr Dawson and Cllr Emms are currently working on this and will be presenting it to the Tennis Club to formalise the agreement.

**20/41 Items for the next Agenda**

Any items are to be sent to the clerk for the next agenda.

**20/42 Time and date of next meeting**

Finance Extraordinary meeting 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021 7pm via Zoom for precept and budget review.

Next Finance meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 7pm

The next extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council will be 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021 7:30pm

Dates will be posted on the website

Meeting finished at 7:45 pm

Signed .....

Cllr Ellis

Date .....