

LANCING PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee
held on Wednesday 22 November 2017 at 7.00pm

Cllrs Present:- Geoff Patmore (Chair); Carol Albury, Douglas Bradley, Lee Cowen (from Minute 37), Gina Scotting and Jean Turner.

Ex-officio:- Cllr Gloria Eveleigh

Officer:- Helen Plant, Clerk

Public:- Four

33. Apologies

Apologies were received, and with the reason outlined, were accepted from Cllr Clive Burghard.

34. Declaration of Substitute Members

None.

35. Declarations of Interest

None.

36. Public Forum/Questions

None.

37. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 20 September 2017

Resolved – That the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2017 be approved.

38. Accounts for payment

38.1 September's Expenditure (attached)

Committee **RESOLVED** that amounts in the sum of:-

- i. September's Current A/C expenditure in the sum of £30,679.53.
- ii. September's Clerks Payment A/C expenditure in the sum of £12,510.14.

38.2 October's Expenditure (attached)

Committee **RESOLVED** that amounts in the sum of:-

- i. October's Current A/C expenditure in the sum of £30,765.56.
- ii. October's Clerks Payment A/C expenditure in the sum of £12,544.86.

39. Approval of Cash Balances & Investments (attached)

It was **RESOLVED** that the cash balances and investments of the Council totalling **£381,936.19** as at the 31 October 2017 was a true record.

40. Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading

Resolved – That the information included in the report be noted.

41. Clerk's Report

41.5 Heritage Corner

It was confirmed that the display cabinets had been purchased and were now in situ. Members were asked to discuss and agree a date for a formal opening of the 'Heritage Corner', in conjunction with Lancing and Sompting Pastfinders, who were present at the meeting, and the provision of artefacts etc. It was also agreed to name the Parish Hall corridor with all the historic photographs as 'Lancing Heritage Avenue'.

In respect of the loan of artefacts, a draft Loan Agreement form was also attached for approval.

Cllr Patmore thanked Pastfinders, Lancing History Facebook contributors and other members of the public who had supported this project and to those who had already gifted items of memorabilia.

Resolved – (a) That Saturday, 27 January 2018 at 11am be the agreed date and time of the 'Heritage Corner' formal opening.

(b) That the artefact Loan Agreement form, as submitted, be approved.

41.1 Review of Council Policies and Procedures

Members were reminded that a review was currently being carried out on the Council's Policies and Procedures as a matter of course, to be brought in line with current legislation or had been newly created. Four documents were submitted for consideration.

Resolved – That the Code of Conduct, Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing) Policy, Recording of Public Meetings Policy and Employee Expenses Policy, as submitted, be approved.

41.2 Payment of Councillor Allowances

It was confirmed that Councillor allowances could be paid by bank transfer, as well as by cheque. The remuneration form would therefore be amended to reflect this option, which would be available from the 2018/19 financial year.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

NOTE – At this point Cllr Patmore advised of his abstention in respect of item 41.3 and would not take part in the discussion or vote due to being a member of Adur District Council's Planning Committee and Cllr Eveleigh took the chair for that item.

41.3 Planning Application - Sussex County Football Association Culver Road ([AWDM/1661/17](#))

Pursuant to Council minute 57ii/Nov/17, and as it incorporated an area of land owned by this Council, the Committee was asked to consider the following planning application:-

Installation of 4no. 50 sitting/standing sheltered stands to East side of pitch. Levelling of adjacent area to south of proposed stands for storage of goals when not in use.

Resolved – No objection.

41.4 Internal Audit – Half-yearly Review

Members were advised that the Council's Internal Auditor, Mulberry & Co, had carried out the half-yearly internal audit on 20 November 2017. The subsequent report that followed such a review had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting.

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The Auditor had made a number of recommendations, including that the requirements of the 2015 Transparency Code were not being complied with, confirmation of the bank reconciliation signing off not being minuted, internet banking arrangements needed tightening up, the Council's Fidelity Guarantee cover needed reviewing, and that the Council's General Reserves should be increased to a minimum of at least 4-6 months net cover (£60-90k).

The Clerk advised that most of the recommendations would be addressed prior to the next Committee meeting and an update would be provided. However, the recommendation in respect of the Council's General Reserves would be discussed further at item 41.6 – Draft Budget 2018/19 and setting the precept.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

41.5 Heritage Corner

Discussed earlier.

41.6 Draft Budget 2018/19 and setting the precept

Submitted – A report setting out the draft 2018/19 budget and subsequent recommendations for the setting of the precept for onward recommendation to full Council. It was noted that the precept request made to Adur District Council had to be submitted by 31 January 2018. Therefore, if the Committee was unable to agree the budget and level of precept for 2018/19 at this meeting, it would need to meet again during December for resolution by Full Council on 10 January 2018.

It was noted that projects and items of equipment as identified by the Amenities and Environment Committee and this Committee had been included in the proposed budget, and also the Community Cinema Working Group's recent request to have the Jubilee Hall hire fee waived during 2018/19.

It was also noted that as the services and amenities tender would not be agreed until the next Committee meeting on 24 January 2018, the existing License Agreement amounts had been used for the purpose of the draft budget. The same was said for the Car Park License Agreement.

The Council's Internal Auditor's recommendation for General Reserves to be increased to a minimum of at least 4-6 months net cover (£60-90k) was acknowledged. It was agreed that £60k would be recommended to full Council.

The detailed list of income and expenditure by budgetary heading showing 2016/17 actual figures, 2017/18 budgets and estimated end of year figures and the 2018/19 proposed budget were discussed in detail and explanations for specific changes were given.

An error on the effect the precept had on a Band D property that had come to light from previous years was highlighted. It was confirmed that the effect of the precept remaining at £302,200 in 2018/19 would be £49.00 per annum or 94p per week.

Whilst the proposed 2018/19 budget allowed for all the suggested projects and items of equipment to be accomplished with the precept remaining the same, Members considered that a further increase of £20k, which would only increase a Band D property by 6p per week to £1.00, specifically for the Monks Recreation Ground Improvement Project to boost its ability to apply for larger grants that might require more match funding.

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Resolved – That the following recommendations in respect of the 2018/19 budget and setting of the precept be submitted to full Council:-

- (a) That the Jubilee Hall hire fee be waived during 2018/19 to the Community Cinema Working Group;
- (b) That £4000 of the 2017/18 Elections budget be transferred to Earmarked Reserves, and the same in the following years in anticipation of the next elections in 2020;
- (c) That all fees and charges remain the same in 2018/19;
- (d) That the budget, as presented and summarised in the table below, be approved:-

Detail	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Estimates	2018/19 Proposed
Balances brought forward	£111,474	£115,340	£102,783
All income including precept (£322,200)	£493,209	£594,150	£506,703
All expenditure including agreed projects	£489,343	£557,582	£442,967
Balance carried forward	£115,340	£151,908	£166,519
Less Earmarked Reserves	£ 25,125	£ 49,125	£ 84,125
= General Reserves	£ 90,215	£102,783	£ 82,394

- (e) That approval be given to the level of precept being increased to £322,200 with the increase being specifically earmarked for the Monks Rec Improvement Project; and
- (f) That the level of General Reserves be increased to £60,000.

41.7 Bank Reconciliations

It was confirmed that, in accordance with Financial Regulation 2.2, the Chairman of this Committee, Cllr Patmore, had verified the bank reconciliations to the end of October 2017.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

42. Exclusion of the Press and Public

That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

43. Consideration of an Independent Financial Review

Submitted - Pursuant to Committee minute 32/Sept/17, a report to consider the outcome of one of the requested internal checks, i.e. the 2014 car park resurfacing tender. It was noted that from the information on file, there was no evidence to suggest that the tender had been carried out in anyway improper.

Resolved – That the information be noted, and no further action be taken.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

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