



Local Government for Langton Green, Speldhurst, Ashurst and Old Groombridge

Minutes of a Finance Committee Meeting held in the Ellis Room, Langton Green Village Hall on Monday 22nd October 2012 at 7.30pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr Mrs Jeffreys (Chairman), Cllrs Mrs Podbury, Mrs Soyke, Hemming, Milner, Owen, Parker and Pendleton

OFFICERS PRESENT: C May – Clerk

1. **Apologies for Absence:** There were none
2. **Declarations of Pecuniary or Other Significant Interests:** There were none
3. **Declarations of Lobbying:** There were none.
4. **Minutes** of the meeting dated 17th **September 2012**, copies having previously been forwarded to Members, were approved with the following amendment to 9. Annual review of Standing Orders Financial Regulations – Cllr Mrs Jeffreys pointed out that the wording “an amendment to the people who have authority to spend up to £500” was incorrect and she asked that this be amended to “an amendment to the people who can authorise expenditure up to £500”. She would sign the amended version in due course.
5. **Public Open Session:** There were two members of the public present – Mr Wheeler and Mr Humphries both from Ashurst & Blackham Sports Association (A&BSA) who were in attendance in support of their grant application and to answer any questions that Cllrs might have. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys invited them to give a background to the application. They said that the next phase of the development was beginning and there was a priority for disabled access, an emergency exit and the need to make the building safe. There was the prospect of a nursery using the building and a fence was essential for safety but new decking would have to be provided in the next phase. In total over £20,000 needs to be spent to bring the pavilion up to Ofsted levels and at this stage they had just under £10,000 in funds but could not use it all on this project. They had submitted a comprehensive folder of estimates for the work and were looking for a grant to kick-start the development of £10,000 which would bring the building up to an acceptable standard
It was agreed that item 10 on the Agenda be brought forward
10. **Consideration of a grant request from Ashurst and Blackham Sports Association** – for improvements to the sports pavilion. At this stage Cllr Mrs Soyke declared a personal interest and took no part in the debate.

Cllr Mrs Jeffreys said that there was an amount of £8,000 available in the budget that had been set aside for such a request and a small amount had been considered for next year to add to it.

There was much discussion on the request and further answers were sought. Cllrs recognised the work that A&BSA was doing and that certain safety requirements were paramount. They found the dossier confusing because it did not specify what works were essential and what amount was needed. Mr Wheeler said they did not want to suggest an amount but wanted Cllrs to decide how much they could contribute. Cllrs said that A&BSA should apply for other grants including lottery funding, sports bodies and grants for disabled facilities. Mr Humphries said they would but were hoping for initial Parish Council support because other bodies looked more favourably on requests when some funding had been established.

Cllr Owen suggested that £8,000 be recommended to Full Council as a grant in this financial year subject to satisfactory documentation which the Clerk said that A&BSA were duty bound to provide. It was unanimously **AGREED** to recommend £8,000 to Full Council at the November meeting

6. **Matters Arising and Correspondence:** There were no matters arising and two pieces of correspondence: Hospice in The Weald had written asking for a grant – this had arrived too late for the Finance Meeting and would be on the Agenda for the November meeting of Full Council; an update from Speldhurst Recreation Ground Committee regarding the playground project.
7. **Financial Position as at September 2012** - The Clerk had previously circulated the Financial Position and this was duly noted by the Committee.
8. **2012-13 review of budget vs expenditure** – there were no questions on the figures.
9. **To review the maturity of funds on one year deposit** – after some discussion it was **AGREED** to invest £75,000 for 15 months at the Co-op Bank at 2.59375%. £50,000 would be transferred from NatWest by CHAPS at a cost of £23 the remainder would be paid from the Unity Trust Bank Account.

11. Amenities

- i. It was **AGREED** to accept the recommendation of the Amenities Committee to purchase a Stihl Kombi Brushcutter tool with various attachments that could be used for multi-purposes. The total cost was £956.82 and an amount up to £1,000 was **AGREED**
- ii. It was **AGREED** to accept the recommendation of the Amenities Committee to spend up to £500 on a new bench for the LGRG
- iii. It was **AGREED** to accept the recommendation of the Amenities Committee to repair the ball stop netting. It was recognised that the work was quite specialised but the Clerk was requested to request another quote from Tate Fencing to see if they would be able to repair it cheaper. If not then the quote from Jackson Fencing was **AGREED** at £1,057.90.
- iv. It was **AGREED** to accept the recommendation of the Amenities Committee to proceed with the tree work required in Roopers. The TWBC Tree Officer had reviewed the survey and made small changes to the times required for action. **The Clerk to action at appropriate times.**

12. Banking Arrangements

- i. The Clerk reported that the account was functioning well and the electronic payment system had been used successfully.
- ii. The Clerk had closed the Barclays Accounts. Barclays Bank had sent a cheque for the balance and there was a delay in paying this in to the new account. Barclays had offered £100 in compensation and this had been accepted.

13. **The Precept 2013-2014** – The budget had been prepared and circulated to Councillors by the Clerk. He reported there was some money that was not carried forward to next year's projects

which totalled nearly £8,000. With this money and using a precept guide of £125,000 (a 2.5% increase) there was still a net expenditure over income of about £7,000. Cllrs reviewed the figures and decided the budget for next year for Highways of £2,500 should be cut and the money to the repair and renewal of £7,500 should be reduced by £5,000. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys said that the budget did not include repairs to the footpath in the LGRG nor the rubber matted car park which might be in need of refurbishment and suggested that if the precept were increased to £130,000 then repairs could be undertaken hopefully without decreasing the amount accrued in the repair and renewal account. There was much discussion and it was **AGREED** to leave the decision to the November meeting of Full Council whether the precept should be £125,000 or £130,000.

14. Other matters arising from the minutes of 17th September 2012

There was nothing outstanding

15. Items for information – There were none.

The meeting closed at 9.28pm

CHAIRMAN