



SANDGATE PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a Finance Committee Meeting held on
Tuesday 6th January 2015 at 3pm

Present: Chairman **Cllr Nina Bliss**
 Councillors **Robert Bliss, Jan Holben and Tim Prater**

Parish Clerk **A Oates**

The meeting commenced at 3pm

No members of the public attended

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Richard Grundy
2. **Declarations of Interest** – there was none.
3. **Minutes** - The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd December 2014 were submitted, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
Proposed by: Cllr R Bliss
Seconded by: Cllr J Holben
Agreed unanimously
4. **Land Assets Management Sub-committee (LAM)**
The last meeting had been held earlier the same day, prior to the Finance meeting, therefore it was agreed that all noted actions and proposals made at the meeting be recommended for approval, especially noting the writing of a letter of disappointment to Stephen Way of Collier Stevens of Hythe.
Proposed by: Cllr N Bliss
Seconded by: Cllr T Prater
Agreed unanimously.
5. **2014/15 Budget & Payments**
 - 5.1 A cheque to Chichester Memorial Hall for £3,000 was presented for two signatures – this was the grant amount previously agreed towards roof repairs.
 - 5.2 The bank reconciliation was presented and approved (*appendix 1*).
 - 5.3 The VAT claim for £11,068.30 had been sent off to HM Customs and Excise. It was requested that, in future, claims should be made quarterly.
 - 5.4 An amended petty cash schedule was presented for signing; the previous one contained an error that had now been corrected (*appendix 2*).
 - 5.5 SPC's invoices to KCC for 50% reclaim of staff, cleaning and sundry costs were presented to members. These would be now sent to KCC. Final invoices for the financial year to be raised and sent before the end of the tax year. The SPC budget spreadsheet should include notional inclusion of the 50% cost to SPC from KCC for staff holiday/sickness cover and caretaker services as these were a deduction in SPC's invoice to KCC but should still be shown in the Payments & Receipts spreadsheet.

- 5.6 The current budget was assessed and notes from the last meeting presented (*appendix 3*). Further updates included: staff costs – expect to be on budget or just over; postage & stationery - leave as an overspend; Grants & Donations - the cheque for £3,000 to Chichester Memorial Hall had now been raised; Christmas lights - all agreed that the underspend should be carried forward.
- 5.7 Community Events budget: there was an underspend of over £1,000; Cllr JH said that she would like to hold an Easter event; she was asked to produce a proposal for next month's parish council meeting.
- 5.8 The LAM maintenance and General Maintenance and Aquired Assets breakdown spreadsheet was almost completed – this would be finalised and presented at the next Finance meeting.

The finances were approved by the committee.

Proposed by: Cllr R Bliss

Seconded by: Cllr N Bliss

Agreed by all

6. 2015/16 Budget and Precept

- 6.1 Recommendations for next year's expenditure were discussed. It was proposed that all to remain the same as for this financial year, except:
- Staff costs - raise to £21,000 – this would give the Personnel Committee some flexibility when discussing salaries at its next meeting.
 - Postage & stationery – raise to £600
 - Audit & Legal – raise to £1,100
 - Hanging baskets & Memorial troughs – raise to £5,000
 - Elections - £1,000 and, as per 2014/15, put into the Election Reserve budget; the cost of this May's elections must come out of the reserve fund.
 - Grants & Donations – reduce to £4,000; there may be a request to support the HG Wells shop to stay in situ for another year; negotiations are being held with the landlord of the property.
 - Christmas lights – raise to £9,650, which includes the underspend of £3,650
 - Community Events – reduce to £3,750 as a budget of £750 for hiring portable toilets be moved to a new sub header: Toilets on the Rec
 - General Maintenance & Acquired Assets – raise to £2,000
 - Environment Improvements – to be called 'Environment Improvements & Projects – raise to £2,000
 - LAM – raise to £9,000
 - AEP – budget to be the underspend carried forward from current financial year
 - High Street Innovation Fund - delete
- 6.2 The whole budget, with above recommended changes – to be seen on separate document (*appendix 3*).
- 6.3 With the proposals in 6.2, the total basic expenditure of the Council would be £85,650. This sum includes £3,650 Christmas Lights underspend carried forward to next year, but excludes around £31,000 of AEP (enhancement) project expenditure also to be rolled forward.
- 6.4 SDC have advised that the tax base for 2015-16 for Sandgate will be 1799.05. With a 1.99% increase in precept on a Band D household per year from £35.27 to £35.97 (a rise of 70p per Band D household per year) the precept income would total £64,715.
- 6.5 SDC have further advised that they will be giving an additional grant of £4,902 for this year, a reduction on the grant given last year for the reduction that took place to the tax base. Although our financial model had not expected this income it is not guaranteed for future years and, thus, the increase in precept to slowly bring precept income and general expenditure in line remains advisable.
- 6.6 The additional SDC grant allows an increase in in-year expenditure as detailed in 6.1 but is not guaranteed year on year income. Excluding the Christmas Lights roll-forward, the increase in expenditure in the base budget from last year is approximately equal to the Shepway grant.

Proposals from Finance Committee for AGREEMENT by Full Council:

1. That this Council accepts the budget for 2015-16 as laid out in the attached draft budget for 2015-16.
2. That this Council agrees a 1.99% rise in the household precept to a precept of £64,715, representing £35.97 per Band D household per year, an increase of 70p per annum on a Band D property.
3. That any underspend in the 'Christmas Lights' budget from 2014-15 (currently £3.650) is rolled forward and added to the proposed 2015-16 'Christmas Lights' budget.
4. That any underspend in the 'AEP' budget from 2014-15 (currently around £31,000) is rolled forward and becomes the 2015-16 'AEP' budget (to fund large programme development works).
5. That all remaining balances and underspends from 2014-15 are added to the 'General Reserve'.

Proposed by: Cllr R Bliss

Seconded by: Cllr N Bliss

Agreed by all

7. BACS Payments

It was proposed that staff salaries in future be paid by direct payment into bank accounts.

Proposed by: Cllr R Bliss

Seconded by: Cllr N Bliss

Agreed by all

8. Invoice received re 2013-14 bin maintenance

The letter from David Tullett, previously circulated, was discussed. It was agreed that the clerk should respond and ask why the invoice was not sent at the time; ask him to supply details or a schedule of the work carried out; ask why the amount requested is higher than the amount on the purchase order, and ask him to supply evidence of expenditure (invoices, bills etc). Request that the information be supplied by the end of January. When these queries are answered, this information would be sent to our legal advisors.

- 9. Information** – the clerk reported that the lights on the Christmas tree had failed sometime at the end of December. The owner of Escondido Restaurant tried to contact Harmer & Sons. When she was unable to reach them due to the holiday period, she contact Cllr NB who gave the go-ahead for her to contact another electrician. That electrician could not find the fault and was unable to get the lights working again. Since then, the tree and lights had been collected by Harmer & Sons and the clerk had been informed that the lights were broken – apparently the electrical connection had been left out in the rain and that the lights were now totally unusable.

10. Date of next meeting : to be in February, exact date to be agreed later.

The meeting ended at 4.45pm.

Signed by the Chairman, Finance Committee.....Date.....