

FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL

**Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee
Held on Wednesday 26th October 2016, commencing at 7.30pm
At the Unit 32, Lymington Barns, Medstead**

Members Present: Cllr Janet Foster (Chair), Cllrs John Davis, Simon Thomas and Anne Tomlinson
Attending: S Goudie (Clerk)
Apologies: None.

16.27 FGP OPEN SESSION

Brief reference was made to the ongoing situation with the second boundary breach at Charles Church that day and the District Councillors intervention. The Clerk also advised that unauthorised work had been carried out on the protected Oak Tree, which was to be investigated. Legal advice was now being sought on the Parish Council's position, with the events of today accelerating his process.

The Open Session concluded at 7.35pm, Standing Orders were applied.

16.28 FGP APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

16.29 FGP MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

- The minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 27th July 2016 were proposed as accurate by Cllr Tomlinson, seconded by Cllr Davis, and were duly signed by the Chairman.
- Matters arising:
 - Bank Accounts. The Clerk confirmed that investigations were being made to move the deposit account to a different account, and the Clerk had an appointment to change the current account to one that could carry out internet banking.
 - Cemetery regulations. Changes proposed may not be in the best interests for the Cemetery and confirmed that the reference to the Winchester Diocese, proposed for adoption, should be removed and changes made to reflect recent issues should be discussed at a later date, but that we were currently covered by Regulation 5 (b), in that the Parish Council have the right refuse any unsuitable application without having to state a reason for its decision.
 - Cllr Davis raised two anomalies in the Financial Regulations and the words and/or should be added to 4.6, and 'the lower of' figure/% in 4.8. Clerk agreed to change the wording for clarity.

16.30 FGP CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The draft amendments to Four Marks Parish Council's Child Protection policy had been circulated prior to the meeting for discussion. The addition of 'vulnerable adult' was agreed, where appropriate and to ensure that other clubs using Parish Council facilities are also protected as appropriate. The draft to be circulated for adoption at the next Full Council meeting.

16.31 FGP BUDGET PREPARATION

- It was agreed to raise the Burial fees in line with Medstead Parish Council's, from 1st April 2017.
- Salaries and PAYE, no change as last year's budget is enough to encompass any salary increases if appropriate

- Increase pension contributions budget to allow for increases proposed by the LGPS re-evaluation.
- Mileage costs, slight increase proposed.
- Slight increase in administration costs to allow for any increases on general costs
- Village Hall Hire, increased as no longer using the Benians Pavilion due to licensing and clashing issues.
- No increase in budget for subscriptions, training & publications, telephone & broadband, rates, office rent, or capital expenditure
- Increase in audit fees to allow for provider increases
- Insurance increase due to additional equipment
- Addition of £2,000 for election provision.
- Increase in legal and professional fees, due to potential of land transfers, and preparation of leases.
- New budget amount for sundry expenses, not accountable to administration
- Increase in utilities to allow for market increases.
- Increase in bins to allow for additional bins and lifts
- Reduction in general labour, services and materials as last year's budget provision higher than required.
- Increase in Open Spaces to take account of additional areas and increased maintenance requirement,
- Grants and donations, Section 137 provision and other, increase proposed. [*Minute note, it is not necessary to budget for Section 137 expenditure, as this is more a 'power to spend' than an actual amount of expenditure to budget for and would like to suggest having one budget figure of £4,500 rather than two (£2,500 and £2,000), we would still need a Section 137 nominal code though*].
- Budget provision added for Neighbourhood Plan Steering committee, as still operational.

Additional budget discussion notes

- It was agreed to purchase a new laptop and projector within this financial year as this had been budgeted for and should not be carried over.
- It was agreed to add a new nominal code for the accounting for the receipt and expenditure of developers' contributions to give clearer indication that these are separate from budgeted expenditure.
- It was suggested that a labourer should be employed directly just to do footpath strimming, Cllr Tomlinson agreed to speak to a potential operative.
- It was agreed that an article should be published in the March 2017 edition of the Four Marks News to detail pre-empt queries on the proposed precept increase and a 'where your money goes' detailed report.

The total sum of the proposed next year's expenditure for all budget headings was £111,570, and taking into consideration the projected income, it was agreed to propose to Full Council a precept request of £105,000 for approval.

Benians Pavilion

The costs of running the pavilion were discussed in detail following Cllr Davis' full analysis (and subsequently circulated pie chart analysis) and ways to improve the cost effectiveness of running this facility. As the costs currently exceed £6,000 per annum, not including buildings insurance costs and grounds maintenance, it was agreed that a different stance now needs to be taken. Fees taken are unlikely to exceed £2,500 in this current financial year. If clubs are reluctant to have their fees increased, they may be interested in taking on a lease and paying the Parish Council an annual fee. It was agreed that professional advice needs to be sought on taking this forward.

Action agreed was that initially a meeting should be held with the advisor and Finance Committee, and proposals agreed within that meeting to then be put forward to the Benians Committee, in a meeting with the Finance Committee and representatives of the Benians Committee as appropriate, including the Council's Benians Committee representative. Then the advisor brought back in to finalise. The F&GP Committee are also still extremely concerned over the bar finances and lack of accountability and are keen to ensure that any new agreement provides for a suitable accounting system.

It was also agreed that all correspondence between the Parish Council and Benians Committee must be copied to their Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary, as well as the Council's Benians Committee representative to ensure that there are no further misunderstandings with information circulated by email.

16.32 FGP NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 11th January 2017, 7.30pm at the Parish Office.

16.33 FGP The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.40pm.

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Chairman