

WOOTTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the **Finance & General purposes Committee** held on Wednesday 26th October 2011 at 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall, Bedford Road, Wootton.

- Present.** Cllrs Hall, Lloyd, Price, Quirk, Wheeler and Woolfenden.
The Clerk (Sue Playford) and RFO (Sue Bolton).
- FG11/37 Apologies for absence.**
Cllrs Prescod and Wallace.
- FG11/38 Declarations of interest on any items on the agenda.**
None.
- FG11/39 Report from outside organisations.**
None.
- FG11/40 List of correspondence received (copies of correspondence can be requested from the clerk).**
None.
- Open Forum.**
None.
- FG11/41 Minutes of the meeting.**
Members of the Finance & General purposes committee confirmed that the minutes of the meeting held on the 22nd June 2011 were adopted by the required number of Finance & General purposes committee members at the full council meeting held on the 29th June 2011.
- FG11/42 Matters arising from the minutes to include issues log review.**
FG11/22 - Review of Financial Regulations - clerk to deal with RFO. To form part of CiLCA.

FG11/26 - Review of Insurance and Asset Register - clerk to deal with RFO. To form part of CiLCA.

FG11/22 - Clerk's handbook to be completed - clerk to deal. Diarised after CiLCA.
- FG11/43 To discuss the format for the village blueprint.**
Three formats were circulated ahead of this meeting - having previously been provided by Cllrs Hall and Lloyd. Cllr Hall had put together an amalgamation of his original format, and Cllr Lloyd's. Cllr Lloyd asked at what stage would ideas be taken forward and added to the format. There was a discussion on how issues could be identified and taken forward - should the council provide ideas for discussion or should the parishioners come forward with their ideas. If the council provide the ideas, there is no guarantee that the majority of parishioners would agree and subsequently use the facilities. Cllr Wheeler mentioned Olney - where they have a number of facilities available at the one site, providing football and rugby pitches alongside a cricket square. The facilities are separated temporarily, and are therefore versatile. Cllr Lloyd also mentioned that the FA are changing their regulations which will mean that the village will no longer have enough pitches.

Cllr Hall referred back to Cllr Wallace's Persimmon report - mentioning that the parishioners may wish to see part of the blueprint being incorporated within the new hub. Cllr Lloyd mentioned a café - which could provide catering facilities for all sports activities within the area, however it would be unclear if the council could provide monies for this, if it were to be handed over to a private enterprise. It was noted that the Persimmon's S106 monies would not be received in the short term (it is believed the next 3-4 years) so the parish council would have to make provisions to save towards any facility. Cllr Hall commented that if the precept remains at the current level, this would be hard to achieve. Cllr Hall suggested placing a questionnaire in the next Wootton newsletter - but similar has been done in the past with limited success. Cllr Wheeler suggested canvassing for ideas outside the schools and churches - the clerk mentioned in her experience most parents are on a tight deadline and may not have the time to provide a detailed response, unless the canvassers were there before the children came outside. Cllr Price said in his past experiences, parishioners have wanted the village to be maintained as it is, and kept clean and tidy. After much discussion it was resolved that it was not possible for the parish council to identify what parishioner's needs are - parishioners must bring their suggestions to the clerk, for delegation to the appropriate committee, at the same time ensuring that there is enough village support for that need. It was resolved that Cllr Hall's revised blueprint format be adopted for use when appropriate.

FG11/44 To discuss precept demands.

The RFO had provided copies of the outturn report ahead of the meeting, and provided extra copies on the evening. Much discussion took place regarding the report and it was resolved that the RFO would use the following codes in future: code 101 for capital assets (for example the purchase of land, updating the MUGA and changing rooms), and code 102 for capital non-assets (for example the Diamond Jubilee celebrations). All projects would have their own nominal code. The RFO will also re-categorise items where necessary so that planning would detail all appropriate areas - for example cemeteries and street lighting. The RFO also confirmed that she would show everything that was revenue (housekeeping) with two further columns - detailing projects that require immediate attention and those that can be factored in for future years.

If all projects requested to date were added together the precept would have to increase by a factor of 2-3 over the current level, which was considered unacceptable. Cllr Lloyd pointed out that the MUGA had been out of action for over a year, as had the changing rooms.

After discussion, Cllr Price recommended that the revenue for the previous year be totalled, and a percentage increase applied, with this figure being used for next year's precept - these are expenses, which have to be met. After further discussion it was resolved that the RFO would do this and bring the figures to the next meeting for further discussion and agreement.

It was agreed that not all projects could be funded using the next year's precept, and after deliberation it was agreed that the following capital projects would be given priority:

CCTV upgrade - £15,000

Christmas tree - £550

War memorial chain replacement - £750

Tree replacement - £500

Project involve (replacement of iron railings and gate at cemetery) - £1,000

Diamond jubilee - £3,000

The following projects remain undecided:

Street lighting/EDF - (to be broken down into streets) - £8,100
MUGA - vandal-proof fencing - £35,000

The RFO confirmed that money was in earmarked reserves which could be used for the MUGA or street lighting, and a question was raised as to then the parish council could expect to receive the Bellway s106 monies. It was not known, and the clerk was requested to make enquiries.

Action - clerk to enquire of BBC when the Bellway s106 monies are likely to be received.

Action - RFO to include the Bellway s106 monies as anticipated projects.

Cllr Hall stated that now the above 5 projects had been identified, the parish council should now wait for the RFO to provide her revised figures before deciding on any further projects. Cllr Lloyd asked the question - if the items earmarked above are in excess of the existing precept, would the parish council cancel a project, look at using reserves or put the precept up. Cllr Hall confirmed this would be for full council to decide.

After further discussion Cllr Quirk proposed that the above project recommendations be provided at the next full council meeting for their consideration. It would be for full council to decide whether to increase the precept if appropriate or amend the listed projects. Cllr Lloyd seconded the proposal and all were in agreement.

Action - clerk to include the full 'wish list' of projects on the next full council agenda to allow further discussion.

FG11/45 To discuss the village litter picker.

Cllr Woolfenden had been concerned over recent weeks that the litter picker had not requested further supplies, and so visited her house. The litter picker moved out at the end of September, and her house is now being rented. The clerk wrote on the 17th October to establish her intentions, in the knowledge that the letter would be redirected, but has received no reply. After discussion it was agreed that the clerk write a second letter stating that if no response is received within 7 days* her employment will be terminated, and her P45 will be generated. Further discussion then took place regarding a replacement and it was agreed to leave matters until the situation is clearer.

Action - clerk to include on the full council agenda for the 11th January.

Meeting closed at 9.20pm

* The clerk called ACAS on 27th October 2011 at 11.45am. She was informed that if the employee is absent without leave and remains so, a further letter should be sent inviting them to attend a meeting. As long as reasonable efforts are made by the parish council, and the employee continues to fail to turn up for work and fails to attend the meeting, the parish council would be entitled to terminate her employment.

Chairman.....

Date.....