

Bretton Parish Council

Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on the 6th September 2016 at 7.30 p.m. at the Parish Offices, Unit 2, Pyramid Shopping Centre,

Present: Councillors, M Clements, J Hayes, C Tilling and S Warren.

Others: B Champness (Clerk)

Not present:

Open Forum

There being no members of the public present no open forum was held and the meeting was formally opened at 19.30

1. To appoint a Chair

1.1 It was **resolved** that Cllr Clements be appointed Chair for the forthcoming year being the only nomination.

2. To Appoint a Vice Chair

2.1 It was **resolved** that Cllr Lee be appointed Vice Chair for the forthcoming year being the only nomination.

3. Apologies for absence

3.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Lee (personal) Cllr Richards (ill health)

3.2 **Resolved:** That the apologies be accepted

4. Declaration of Interest – To receive Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests, as set out in Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011 and the nature of those interests relating to any Agenda item

4.1 Cllr Warren declared an interest in Item 17 as he was an energy consultant and a Licensee for the company. He would not be paid by Bretton Parish Council for his services but payment would come from the energy provider.

5. To Approve Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 3rd May 2016 (Fin 15-05)

5.1 **Resolved:** The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

6. Matters to report – *restricted to items not listed elsewhere in the agenda*

6.1 Cllr Clements asked if all the Commemorative Coins had been given out to the school children who helped with the litter pick in March. It was confirmed that all children had been presented with the coins.

- 6.2 The Clerk was asked if any of the other tenants in the Pyramid Shopping Centre had made a contribution towards having anti climb paint placed around the entire centre. Although some had made a promise to pay none had.
- 6.3 The Clerk was asked if there was any further news regarding the Rates. He explained that a letter had been sent and acknowledged but nothing further. He was asked to chase this up.

7. Items deferred from previous meeting

- 7.1 There was nothing deferred from the previous meeting.

8. Items deferred from Full Council :

- 8.1 There was nothing deferred from Full Council

9. To approve and or amend the Terms of Reference of the Finance Committee and to approve and or amend the Financial Regulations.

- 9.1 The Financial Regulations had been amended in November 2014 and it was considered and **resolved** that they did not need amending and that they were formally approved. Although a copy was not available it was noted that they were on the website so members could check in their own time if they thought that they needed amending. The Clerk did point out that all was working well we were now dealing with all matters in the way that we should. The regulations say that the code to access internet banking and all the necessary passwords should be written down and placed into a sealed envelope which only the Chair could open. Sadly this had not been undertaken. Cllr Lee was aware of this and was going to call into the office to ensure that not only was this carried out but also all the passwords which were needed to access the computer, laptop the rooms and building should be recorded and filed in a safe place.

- 9.2 The Terms of Reference did not need amending and it was **resolved** that they be approved. Again a copy was not available but the Clerk would send copies to the committee members.

10. To receive an update on the Pyramid Centre.

- 10.1** The Clerk explained that there was no further news in that we had not moved forward with the Centre. However he did write an e-mail to Cate Harding making it clear the comments were that of the Clerk and not the Parish Council and asked what inducement there was for purchasing the centre. Would they buy it back if we discovered it was not viable, as who would buy it in the event it was not viable if there was a clause in the conveyance that the building has to be used as a community centre. Cate had replied saying she was going on holiday that day but she had copied in two colleagues from the department who would be able to respond to the questions. However Cate was due to return from holiday on the 5th September so a reminder was sent to her and advising that her work colleagues had not been in touch. This prompted a reply from Caroline Rowan saying that she and Jane McDaid had been on holiday as well during the last fortnight. She explained that both she and Jane could attend the next meeting to give an update. The Clerk replied advising that the next meeting was the 27th September and they were welcome to attend but he felt sure the Councillors would prefer an update in writing as this would be in black and white and could be used if necessary at a later date. Caroline accepted this and said that a written report would be sent and she had put the date of the meeting in her diary.
- 10.2** The Clerk explained that an application had been submitted to Awards for All to employ a youth worker to set up events for young people. This person was known by Peterborough City Council and was held in high regard by them as he had been involved in these projects elsewhere in Peterborough. This application had been approved by Cllr Lee and had been sent off. Even if we did not have the keys to the community centre the grant included the cost of hiring the centre for the events. The Clerk also explained that there was a possibility that another grant application could be sent off to run a Job Club from the centre. This was discussed but the clerk advised that it was only speculation at this moment in time.
- 11. To receive an update on the Service Charges, the level of service we receive, and an update on how we are progressing with regard to taking over the contract.**
- 11.1** The Clerk explained that nothing further had been heard from Peterborough City Council regarding the outstanding invoices that we had not paid. We had not as yet received the invoice for last year's charges. Sadly we were in a similar situation with trying to get members from Supported Employment to make a decision and prepare a contract for us to approve and thus start the project we wanted to. As a result an e-mail was sent to a Julie Bennett who had been on holiday when the e-mail was sent. She did reply on her return to say she was going to investigate the complaint and wanted to know if we had a specific time we wanted a reply. She was told of this meeting tonight and the meeting on the 27th September. Julie said that she could not deal with this in time for this meeting but would definitely get a reply before the Council meeting later in the month.
- 12. To consider whether we have any item we want to place in the Gazette.**

12.1 This was on the agenda but it was too late to put something in this month as this edition has been printed and was with the distributor. However if they were important items that we needed to consult on with the residents then we had the budget to put another edition out before the precept discussion to gauge the views of the residents on what we intended to do. The following were suggested:

1 Continuation of the free bulky waste collection and if possible to give details of the amount of rubbish collected

2. The possibility of us talking over the contract for cleaning the Pyramid Centre and the spine path in North Bretton

The committee were asked to let the Clerk know if they had any other suggestions as it would help in the article to go into the Gazette but also with trying to set a budget. (**see Item 16**)

13. To consider whether we wish to have carried out a Health & Safety Assessment and Fire Risk Assessment.

13.1 The Clerk explained that Nat West had been in touch who were able to offer us a service as we banked with them. One of the issues was a Health & Safety Assessment which would cost £134.00 plus VAT in year one and then £39.00 plus VAT for the following 2 years. They could also carry out a Fire Risk Assessment but this would cost £413.00 plus VA. With regard to the latter the Clerk explained that the fire alarm was tested every week, the fire extinguishers were serviced every year and tests were undertaken every year on the equipment such as the fire alarms and the exit lights. It was felt that as we did all that was necessary, we did not need to sign up for that extra cost. The Clerk did point out that we needed to put other things in place to ensure we were safe in the building. He gave an example of advising that the two back doors were locked that evening and the shutters were down in Unit 3. If there was a fire there was only one exit and that was through the front door in Unit 2. It was agreed that we needed to put in place a number of procedures that we had to undertake whenever the building was in use either by us or anyone that hired the premises from us.

As for the Health & Safety assessment it was felt that we needed to compare the cost with other companies that provided the same service as the bank. Cllr Warren said that he knew of a couple of companies that might be able to help and he would email their details to the Clerk.

14. To consider the reinvestment of the recently matured funds and where the money should be invested and for how long.

14.1 The Clerk asked if there was any point in having this item on the agenda as it was felt that we were unlikely at this time to get a better rate of interest that what we received at the moment which was very low. It was agreed that we would take this item off the agenda until such time the financial markets improved.

15. To consider the proposal that we use Can Do Communities to help with the funding bid for a MUGA and to pay their charges

15.1 The Clerk explained that he had approached Can Do Communities to help with finding a funding source for us to apply for a grant for the MUGA.. They recommended we apply to WREN as we qualified and the amount required was below the limit. They had indicated that they could complete the application for us but this would take up to three days to complete and they would charge £750.00. One problem was that the deadline for submitting the application was the 28th September. The Clerk had tried to download a copy of the application so this could be shared with the committee and for a decision to be made if it was feasible for the form to be completed by us. He also made it clear that he was not prepared to complete the form by himself and required help. Unfortunately the form could not be downloaded so we could not consider if we required help. The initial view was that the charges were rather high and we should try and complete the form ourselves. The Clerk would try and obtain a copy and send this to the committee for them to decide if it was reasonable for us to complete without help. The Clerk was to check with Peterborough City Council if they had anyone who was prepared to help as they had done in the past.

16. To consider any budget items we need to include when deciding the Precept for 2017/18

16.1 The following were considered for possible inclusion in the budget:

1. In the survey people complained about the shrubbery and how it was not being cut back or looked after. This might be a possible service we could ask to take over.
2. Providing outdoor gym equipment in South Bretton.
3. A playground on the large piece of grass on the west side of Bretton Way in South Bretton
4. Benches along the spine path on the west side of Bretton Way
5. Making good the cricket square and taking over responsibility for it

These items could also be included in the Gazette as discussed **under Item 12**

17. To consider whether or not we change electricity provider.

17.1 This item was back on the agenda as Cllr Warren who was an energy consultant and who might be able to help with seeing if we could get out of the existing contract with BES and also see if the electricity costs could be reduced. He had made enquires and said that BES had a bad reputation and would do all that they could to ensure they obtained whatever money was due to them. There was a concern about whether we were tied into a five year contract but he could not help until such time we were aware if we could end the contract. Cllr Tilling said that he would look at the contract that the Clerk had received and would make investigations about BES and what their reputation was like. It seemed from a quick glance at the paperwork if we wanted to terminate the contract BES would charge us 6 months electricity charges as a penalty for bringing the contract to an end early. The matter would be left until Cllr Tilling was able to report his findings.

18. To check that the Standing Order payments and payments made by Direct Debit claimed since April have been made.

18.1 Cllr Clements called into the office on a regular basis to check that all payments had been made and that all was correct and in order. He had done this to bring the paperwork up to date until July 2016.

19. Matters of Finance –

19.1 To note current state of finances – the clerk had prepared an up to date income and expenditure spreadsheet which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. He had prior to the meeting put forward a question on how the spreadsheet should be produced and showing what payments were made or received. His concern was that the spreadsheet which had been circulated showed all payments that had been approved but some were not paid until the following month. They were not outstanding as they had not been paid as almost all payments were now made by BACS. However this made the bank reconciliation look incorrect as it was calculated up to the end of the previous month whereas the spreadsheet showed all payments that had been made and were to be made. It was agreed that in future two spreadsheets should be produced at the end of each month. One showing the payments made up to and including that month and the other including the approved payments to be made the following month. This would ensure that Councillors were given an accurate picture of the payments made up to the end of each month.

Once the question was clarified and dealt with a few questions were asked about the Bank Reconciliation and it was then approved and signed by the Chair.

19.2 To approve expenditure–

[£1536.00 – Soundstage One (stage for festival)]

[£531.00 - Outdoor education Co Ltd (balance of climbing wall fee for festival)]

[£100.00 – Robin Brisley (fee to perform at festival)]

[£193.20 – Old Court Electrical (PAT testing)]

[£283.80 – Europress Litho Printers Ltd (print bulky waste collection flyer)]

[£205.50 – PCK Marketing (distribute flyer in North Bretton)]

£1988.29 – B M Champness (salary)

£1020.90 – Cambridgeshire County Council (pension contributions)

£100.00 – Zoe Champness (cleaning Units 2 & 3)

£2.98 – B M Champness (cleaning materials)

[*denotes those payments paid between meetings, which have been approved by the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Parish Council or at a previous meeting but not listed*

Payments made by Debit Card - £9.95 – Live Drive Live Drive fee)

Payments made by Direct Debit – £28.80 – BT (mobile charges)

£101.76 – BES (Electricity charges)

£1800.00 – Peterborough City Council (rent 3rd Qtr)

£86.40 – BT (telephone charges)

19.3 . Resolved: That the above payments be made.

20. Correspondence

20.1 A letter from BT giving notice that we had met the requirements of the contract in that we had spent almost £350 in the first year of the contract. As a result we will continue to get free calls up to an hour and for no extra cost there is a 200 inclusive minutes a month for each line for calls to UK landlines. On top of that we have a saving of £36 a year on business broadband, detailed call reporting and free access to billing analysis. The contract comes to an end on the 27th August 2017. When it ends the contract benefits will carry on but without the inclusive minutes unless we sign a new contract.

20.2 A letter from Nat West Bank advising that on the Business reserve account they would give us interest of 0.01%

21. **Any Other Business** – Reminder by Law – information exchange only no decisions can be made

21.1 There being no other business the meeting was formally closed at 21.25

22. **The date of the next meeting** – to be held on **Tuesday 1st November 2016 at 7.30 p.m.** at the Parish Offices, Unit 2, Pyramid Shopping Centre, Bretton

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