

MALVERN WELLS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the **Finance & General Purposes Committee** duly convened and held in **The Committee Room, Malvern Wells Village Hall, Wells Road** on **Thursday 19th January, 2012 commencing at 7.30pm.**

Attendance: Councillor N Johnson (Chairman)

Cllrs Cllrs K Wagstaff, Mrs A Bradshaw,
B Knibb, Mrs H Burrage,
M Victory and A Hull

In Attendance: Mr D M Taverner (Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer)

Apologies noted: Cllr A Hull

1 Declarations of Interest for a) the Meeting and b) Any Changes to be notified to the Registers of Interests and Gifts & Hospitality: There were none.

2 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20th October, 2011, having been previously circulated, were accepted and signed by the Chairman as an accurate record.

3 Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Clerk advised that he had been in further discussions with the District Council regarding the section 106 deposit of £23,297.76 that they were holding as a recreational open space contribution in relation to a section 106 agreement for a development at 18 Peachfield Road. A meeting of the Play and open spaces group would now be called to identify suitable recreational schemes for progression within the Parish.

4 To Consider & Accept

a) *The Quarterly financial Report:*

The Clerk presented the previously circulated quarterly report showing actual income and expenditure for the period ending 31st December, 2011.

Members noted that the financial projections for the remainder of the financial year suggested that a net surplus of approximately £17.6K against the 2011/12 original budget was now likely to arise. This was mainly due to savings arising from the elections budget (£1.4K), Gas Lamps maintenance and running costs (£5.6K), Section 137 expenditure (£1k), Insurances (£0.5k), grass cutting contract (£0.9K), additional income from Cemetery fees (£0.9K) and other administrative savings (£7.3k).

The Clerk advised that no invoices for Gas consumption in respect of the gas lamps had so far been received but that the District Council had now agreed that the 50% grant reduction would be applied to bills due for payment until the end of the gas lamps refurbishment project. It was agreed to recommend to Council that an amount of £5K should be transferred from general reserves to the Council's earmarked reserves as a provision for any increased gas bills that may arise following the agreement of a new gas supply contract.

The following additions would also be made to the Council's Earmarked reserves, at year end, to provide for future years commitments in respect of:-

Future Cemetery Land purchase	£3k
Assarts Road playing Field	£0.5k
St Peters Closed Churchyard	£0.5k
Staff Pension Gratuity	£0.7k

Contributions from Earmarked Reserves had already been released during the year to fund:-

Cemetery Railings Painting	£1k
Section 106 – St Wulstans Grass Cutting	£1k

The Council's level of earmarked reserves at 31st March, 2012 was now estimated to outturn at some £48.8k and the general reserve was likely to increase to some £35.8K by year-end. This would mean that the Council's total reserves at the end of the 2011/12 would have risen to an estimated £84.6K from the opening balance of £67.4k at the beginning of the year.

The quarterly report was accepted for recommendation to Council.

b) The Bank Reconciliation to 31st December, 2011: The clerk presented the figures contained in the previously circulated bank reconciliation which showed that total cash funds at 31st December were represented by:

	£
Current Account	100.00
Business Reserve Account	68,113.35
Treasury Deposit Account	760,000.00
(less) unrepresented cheques	(3,017.17)
Total Cash held at 31 December	<u>135,196.18</u>

The Clerk advised that, after consulting with the Chairman of the Committee and the Chairman of the Council, a new bank account with HSBC PLC was being opened and a sum would be transferred to that account so that the balances at both of the Council's banks would be maintained below a level of £85k and would therefore be protected by the Bank of England's deposit guarantee scheme.

5. Cemetery Fees 2012/13

Cllr Burrage presented the report of the Cemetery working group which had met to set and review the cemetery fees and charges for 2012/13. The group had recommended that the existing fees should be increased by 5% across the board, rounded to the nearest £10.

The Clerk circulated a schedule of the new fees for members' information.

It was noted that revised costings were awaited for the garden of remembrance brass plaques and the respective charges would be revised prior to the Council meeting on 25th January .

Members agreed that the revised schedule of fees for 2012/13 should be **recommended to Council** for acceptance.

6. Parish Council precept 2012/13

The Clerk presented details of the draft 2012/13 budget projections for Members consideration.

Following a detailed review of each the budget heading, and after absorbing the impact of anticipated inflation, it has been possible to produce budgetary savings that would see gross estimated expenditure is fall to a projected £101.7k in 2012/13. This would be a reduction of £29.5k when compared to the 2011/12 gross expenditure budget of £131.2K.

Miscellaneous income is estimated to fall from a level of £134.8k in 2011/12 to £104.1K in 2012/13 due mainly to the changes in the incidence of the timing of grant repayments in respect of the Gas lamps refurbishment project.

A suggested increase of 1.79% or £1.3K in the level of the Council's Precept for 2012/13 would see a band D Council tax payer paying only an estimated £0.94 pence more for the year 2012/13 than had been demanded for 2011/12.

Following detailed discussion of the draft budget figures that had been presented members agreed **to recommend to Council** that the 2012/13 parish precept should be set at £73,720 an increase of 1.79% over the figure demanded for 2011/12.

7. Extension to play facilities within the Parish

The Clerk reported that he, the Chairman and Cllr O' Donnell had recently met informally with representatives from a playground equipment supplier who had agreed to draw up indicative plans for the refurbishment and development of the Assarts Road play area.

They would also be advising on draft suggested schemes for other play facilities within the Parish and the company would be providing indicative costings for the supply of new equipment and further investigations would now be undertaken to identify areas of land within the Parish where such facilities might be extended and developed.

Further discussions were due to be held with the District Council regarding the release of section 106 funds which could be used to finance suitable schemes within the Parish once they had been identified.

A meeting of the play and open spaces working group would be called early in the New Year to formulate plans for future play developments and update reports would be made to future meetings of the Committee before any recommendations were made to the Council on related expenditure.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.45pm

Chairman

--Nick Johnson-----

25th April, 2012