

Minutes of the meeting of Belbroughton Parish Council Finance Committee held on 25th June 2012 in Fairfield School

Present: Councillors J Kitson, J Bradley, K Green, C Hine, T Jones, D Roberts, and C Scurrell

In attendance : Katie Limm (Clerk). Mr R Wilkes also attended.

182/12 Apologies : Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs MacDonald and Shotton.

183/12 Declarations of interest: No interests were declared.

184/12 Minutes of the meeting on 21st May 2012

The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved and were signed by the Chairman.

185/12 Bank reconciliations: The bank reconciliations for the Council's two accounts were noted.

186/12 Accounts for Payment

Payments for June set out in a list tabled by the Clerk were approved.

187/12 Income and spending

The Committee reviewed the Council's income and expenditure against the budget for the first quarter of 2012/13. These were in line with expectations – so no issues to consider at present.

188/12 Grants for 2012/13

The Committee considered the recommendations of the grants working group for capital and maintenance grants in 2012/13. The Committee's conclusions and recommendations are set out in the schedules attached. The Committee also recommends that the Council's grants policy, including which organisations are able to apply and the purposes for which grants may be given, should be reviewed before the next financial year.

Capital grants

The following points were made:

- In relation to the application from Fairfield First School PTA, the Committee had reservations about the principle of giving a grant to a PTA, although it was noted that grants had been given to both school PTAs in the past. It was agreed that the Council should consider this.
- The Committee did not recommend giving a grant to Belbroughton Athletic Football Club since the Club did not appear to have sufficiently strong links with the village.
- The application from Belbroughton Parochial Church Council for Holy Trinity was a 'marker' since the PCC did not yet know the final cost of repairs to the spire. The recommendation was that £1,000 should be set aside for this pending final cost figures.
- Belbroughton Rec. had received a Jubilee grant for a new meeting room and their application related to additional costs to equip the room. The Committee considered that this application should be considered on its merits and recommended that the additional items should be supported with a capital grant.

Maintenance grants

The Committee endorsed the working group's recommendations for maintenance grants. The additional costs which would be incurred by Belbroughton Recreation Centre to insure the new skate ramp (if this was retained following the current trial) were discussed.

It was agreed to recommend to the Council that a reduced external maintenance grant of £400 should be offered to the Rec. as proposed, but that the Council should consider offering a contribution towards the additional insurance costs this year if these were incurred. It should however be clear that this would not be a permanent commitment.

The Committee considered a letter from Fairfield Village Hall Committee about their proposals for use of the Jubilee grant. Payment of the costs of installing a gas supply was approved. The Finance Committee also endorsed expenditure on a new gas boiler. The grant for this would be paid on receipt of a copy invoice. Approval for use of the remainder of the grant would be considered on receipt of further proposals for capital spending by the Village Hall Committee.

Correspondence from Peter Bridge about the Jubilee grants was considered. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to respond to the points made and in particular to refute the suggestion that the Council had acted improperly in giving these grants. The letter should explain that the grants were consistent with the policy set out in the Council's financial strategy in relation to the capital fund and had been offered following careful consideration of the requests put forward by Belbroughton Rec. and Fairfield Village Hall.

189/12 Portable ramp

It was agreed that the Clerk should put a note in the parish magazine to ask if any village bodies or individuals would be interested in purchasing on favourable terms the portable ramp bought for the meeting room in Hartle Lane.

190/12 Fairfield Christmas tree and lights

The Committee approved in principle the purchase of Christmas lights and an annual Christmas tree for Fairfield at an estimated cost of up to £300 for both in the first year and up to £100 for the tree in subsequent years. It was agreed that renting of the lights should also be explored.

191/12 Funding of parish projects

Cllr Kitson suggested that the Council should consider financing desirable parish projects by raising the precept. An increase in £5,000 on the precept would cost parishioners an average £5 pa more. More expensive projects could be funded by using the Council's capital reserves and then replacing these over a number of years by recouping the money from the precept. Members of the Committee had a number of reservations about this approach. Considering a funding mechanism before specific projects had been developed and other sources of funding explored raised some concerns. The current localism agenda and likely future cuts in services might also mean that the Council would have to consider raising the precept in future years in response to the need to fund important local services.

The Committee concluded that this was an interesting proposition to bear in mind but that the timing was not right to consider raising the precept in order to fund potential future projects.

192/12 Maintenance work

No new items were identified. The Clerk mentioned a couple of issues raised by residents about parish grass cutting and she asked Councillors to monitor this and to let her know of any problems.

The meeting closed at 9.50 pm.

Signed.....Chairman

BPC Capital Grants 2012/13

Applicant	Amount Sought	Cost of project	Purpose	Grant in 11/12	Finance Committee Recommendations
1. Fairfield Village Hall	£924	£1,848	Ramp for Barton Room	£2,250	£924
2. Fairfield School PTA	£423	£846	Storage shed and rack	No	Council to consider principle of grant
3. Belbroughton Recreation Centre	£450	£915.00	Additional costs re new meeting room	£1,250	£450
4. Belbroughton Church Hall	£2,125	£4,250	Redecoration + replacement windows and floors	£1,500	£1,300 Windows + floor only; redecoration not a capital item
5. Belbroughton Cricket Club	Any amount- 25% needs to be raised locally	£50,000	3 bay net area + artificial wicket	No	£1,000 Consider slightly larger grant if funds permit- this the Club's 150 th anniversary year
6. Belbroughton Holy Trinity Church	TBA	£30,000+	Repairs to spire	No	£1,000 to be set aside pending further information
7. Belbroughton Athletic FC	£300	£600	Kit and equipment	No	No grant
8. Bromsgrove CAB	Any		Grant for running costs	£200	£200 <i>This should be paid from 'Ordinary' expenditure</i>

Maintenance Grants 2012-13

	11/12 Grant £	11/12 Costs £	12/13 estimated costs £	Finance Committee recommendations for 12/13
1) Belbroughton Rec.				
a. Hall	600	1888	1500	600
b. Grounds	700*	1034	1600	400*
2) B. Church Hall	600	834		600
3) Fairfield Village Hall	600	1,616	1500	600
4) F. Churchyard	700	760	760	700
5) B. Churchyard	900	2334**	1200	900
6) B. Church clock	212	212	212	200
7) B. United Charities- strimming Jubilee Orchard	120	120	120	Grant not recommended
8) Bromsgrove CAB	200			200
Total				£4,200

1. 2012/13 budget provision for maintenance grants is £4,000. The notional amount included in the budget was £600 for halls' internal maintenance; £400 for Belbroughton Rec. external maintenance; and £1,800 for the Parochial Church Council. The Finance Committee recommended that these should be the sums offered to these parish bodies. Total grants would be in line with budget provision except for the addition of the CAB grant to this category- which could be funded by viring £200 from the Contingency budget.
2. The Finance Committee recommended that a grant should not be offered to the Belbroughton United Charities this year since their accounts indicate that they have sufficient net income to cover this cost and that in previous years the Council's grant has, in effect, simply increased their capital.

Notes

*Plus grass cutting and emptying of dog bins paid for by Parish Council

** Included one off expenditure on gravel for paths