

Minutes of the meeting of Belbroughton Parish Council Finance Committee held on 17th June 2013 in Belbroughton Recreation Centre

Present: Councillors J Kitson, C Hine, S MacDonald, D Roberts and C Scurrall
In attendance : Katie Limm (Clerk).

180/13 Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Bradley, Green and Shotton.

181/13 Declarations of interest

Cllr Kitson declared an Other Disclosable Interest in relation to the application for a grant by Belbroughton tennis club.

Cllr Hine declared an Other Disclosable Interest in relation to the application for a grant by Fairfield WI.

182/13 Minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes of the meeting on 20th May were approved.

183/13 Bank reconciliations

The bank reconciliations for the Council's two accounts were noted.

184/13 Income and expenditure

A report on income and expenditure for first quarter of 2013/14 was provided by the Clerk. The figures were in line with expectations at this stage of the year. The Clerk said that she would provide an analysis of spending in Belbroughton and Fairfield wards in 2012/13 for the next meeting.

185/13 Accounts for Payment

Accounts for payment in June as set out in a schedule circulated by the Clerk were approved by the Committee. It was agreed that the Council should set a limit of £50 on plants to be bought by local residents for planting at Dark Lane. If a higher amount was needed the Council should be asked for prior approval.

186/13 Grants for 2013

The Committee considered the recommendations of the grants working group for grants to parish bodies in 2013/14.

Maintenance grants

The Committee endorsed the recommendation that maintenance grants should be paid in line with the sums provided in the Council's budget. These were £600 for each of the halls' internal maintenance costs; £400 towards the Recreation Centre's additional insurance costs in relation to the skatepark; £1,800 for the Parochial Church Council for maintenance of the 2 churchyards and of the Holy Trinity church clock. This totalled £4,000 in grants in line with budget provision.

Cllrs Kitson and MacDonald noted that they did not agree with the Council's decision to phase out the external maintenance grant to Belbroughton Recreation Centre.

Cllr MacDonald suggested that the cleaning and caretaking costs at Fairfield Village Hall were out of line with the other halls' costs for these items. The Committee noted that Cllr Ince was the Council's representative on the village hall committee and could be asked to explore this.

Minor Grants

The Council had agreed that in 2013 it would offer small grants to parish bodies for expenditure that does not meet the usual criteria for a capital grant. This might be a trip or outing, a speaker for a meeting, or the hire of a venue. Grants would be available to non-profit making organisations that could demonstrate that the grant **will enhance parish life**. The total sum available was £1,000.

The grants working group had made the following recommendations.

1. Fairfield WI

Purpose of grant: Contribution towards the cost of a course at the WI College in Oxfordshire - the WI already provides a bursary of £150 in alternate years.

Cost: £250-£400 plus travel *Amount Sought:* 50%

Benefits: Opportunity for a WI member whose funds may be limited to benefit from their chosen course and the opportunity to meet other WI members from around the country

Recommendation: Parish Council to offer **£150** towards a second bursary – this would require the WI to match fund a second opportunity for one of its members.

2. The More the Merrier- Belbroughton

Purpose: Christmas lunch for approx 35 people *Cost:* £630 *Amount Sought:* Any amount

Benefits: Fellowship

Recommendation: £250

3. Fairfield Social Committee

Purpose: Funds sought for bingo club (a short letter was received without sufficient detail).

Recommendation: Set aside **£100** in principle but a completed application form is required.

4. Belbroughton Outdoor Film Society

Purpose: To use the village green in Belbroughton for free outdoor film screenings; drinks, etc could be provided by local organisations to raise funds

Cost: Between £500 and £2,000 for hire or purchase of outdoor film projection equipment and film licence.

Amount sought: 100%

Benefits: Use of the Belbroughton village green; equipment available for other parish users; new venture to provide inclusive community entertainment

Recommendation: Agree in principle to provide **£500** towards the one-off hire of equipment to test viability of the proposal provided that the organisers come back with a properly worked up plan by end of September 2013 – otherwise funds may be released for another purpose.

5. Bromsgrove and District Citizens Advice Bureau

Purpose: support for the CAB's work.

Recommendation: A grant of **£200** but that this grant should not come from the £1,000 set aside for small grants to parish bodies but should be paid by viring money from contingency provision.

Total grants recommended totalled £1,000 plus £200 for the CAB.

The Committee approved these recommendations. Cllr MacDonald recorded his objection to the proposed grant to the WI (item 1) because he considered that this grant would benefit only one individual.

Capital Grants

Applications for capital grants far exceeded the funds available. The Committee endorsed the recommendations of the working group for the following grants to be offered.

Applicant	Amount Sought	Cost of project	Purpose	Grant in 12/13	Recommendation from sub-group
1. Fairfield Village Hall	£1,952	£2,904 for chairs +£1,000 for ladies toilets	100 new chairs + toilet refurbishment	£924 Plus Jubilee grant (£1,900 still to be paid)	£1,500 towards new chairs
2. Belbroughton Recreation Centre	£1,785	£2,850 for distribution board + £720 for cycle racks	10 way distribution board + 2 cycle racks	£450 Plus Jubilee grant	£1,000 towards distribution board
3. Belbroughton Church Hall	£2,200	£4,400	Replace floor boards and seal under floor	£1,300	£1,500
4. Belbroughton Tennis Club	£800	£1,600	Tennis Ball machine	No	£500
5. Belbroughton Cricket Club	£3,250	£3,250	Restoration of rear of pavilion and verandah	£1,000 offered for new nets but not yet claimed	£500 (pus £1,000 from last year's grant offer)
6. Belbroughton Scarecrow Committee	£2,000	£4,000	Purchase of marquee	No	Not appropriate for a grant at the moment but idea should be given further consideration

Funds available: £5,000 Total amount sought : £11,987 Grants recommended: £5,000

Cllr Macdonald registered his disagreement with the approach of offering each of the organisations less than they wanted. The Committee noted that in recommending grants it was bound to work within the budget set by the Council, but the Committee agreed to register the view that if any additional income became available during the current year the Council should consider making it available for additional grants.

187/13 Savings and investments

The Committee discussed whether there were any suitable investment options for the funds (£25,000) invested in the Natwest one year high interest account maturing in July. No options were identified so the Committee agreed to keep this under review. Cllr Kitson pointed out that the Council's decision not to invest more than £50,000 in total with Cambridge and Counties Bank meant that the funds could not be placed in the 30 day notice account on maturity.

188/13 Maintenance work

- The hedge at Fairfield Recreation Ground at the rear of the houses on the Stourbridge Road needed to be cut. The Clerk was asked to discuss with Fairfield Councillors whether a friendly face to face request could be made to householders. If not the Clerk would provide a standard letter asking them to cut their hedges.
- 29/31 Holy Cross Lane- a hedge needed to be cut back. Cllrs Kitson and Roberts agreed to approach the owner(s).
- Maintenance of Badgers Copse- a new contractor was needed. The Clerk was asked to approach Keith Basketfield in the first instance.
- A resident had reported that glass was emerging from the soil at Sylvesters Corner. The Committee agreed that no action was needed at the moment – plans to get the wall repaired were being progressed and in the meantime no one should be walking or climbing on the bank.

189/13 Letting the Parish Council meeting room

The Council resolved to exclude the public and the press for this item because of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

Progress was reported re the preparation of the lease. The aim was to sign this in early July. The Clerk reported that she had arranged for a specialist company to collect and dispose of any confidential papers from the meeting room that the Council did not need to retain. The cost would depend on how many bags were needed but likely to be about £35.

190/13 Any other Finance business

Natwest had agreed to pay the Council £100 in compensation for their failure to pay gross interest on the Council's investment that matured in February.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

Signed.....Chairman