

## Finance and Staffing Committee

Meeting held 7:30pm

Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2018

Catshill Village Hall, Golden Cross Lane, Catshill

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| <b>Members present</b>  | Cllrs – P Baker (Chairman), T Gillespie (Vice Chair), B McEldowney, M Shepherd and O Sweeting  |
| <b>In attendance</b>  | Clerk - Rebekah Powell, 1 Member of the public   |
| 1. <b>Apologies for Absence</b>                                 | Cllr J Bate  |
| 2. <b>Declarations of Interest</b>                              | Cllr O Sweeting declared an interest in Agenda Item 13 in relation to his role as Chairman of the Village Hall Committee. However, it was noted that Cllr Sweeting had a dispensation in place that allowed him to stay in the room, discuss and vote on any subject relating to this.   |
| 3. <b>To consider Members written requests for Dispensation</b> | None received  |
| 4. <b>Public Questions</b>                                      | <p>A Member of the public was in attendance in order to outline the provision he wished to ask for support with in relation to Computer Literacy Courses for the residents of Catshill, as per Agenda Item 12. It was his vision as a Digital Champion, a qualification he had gained via the 'Go On Worcestershire' project, to provide assistance to Job seekers, disabled and retired residents in the form of weekly classes. It was noted that a similar, more structured, course had been previously run in Catshill and had to close due to lack of uptake.</p> <p>The Member of the public left at 20:00hrs</p>  |
| 5. <b>Re-opening the meeting</b>                                | The meeting re-opened to consider the points below   |
| 6. <b>Minutes of previous meeting</b>                           | The minutes of the meeting held 12/10/17 were approved as an accurate record and signed. There were no matters arising.  |
| 7. <b>Clerks Report to include:</b>                             | <p><b>7.1 General Data Protection Regulations and Data Processing Officers</b></p> <p>More information had been received from CALC including the index page to a document that would be sent out via NALC as a guide to Parish Councils. The Clerk re-iterated that the Council had been correct not to appoint a Data Processing Officer (DPO) as NALC were looking into two methods of providing this; either using one DPO for groups of Councils, or providing a database of recommended companies to use for the same.</p> <p>It was noted that the Clerk and Cllr O Sweeting had been working on clearing all unwanted data from the office premises in preparation.</p> |

### **7.2 Co-op Savings Transfer**

Cllr Baker had assisted the Clerk, as a signatory on the account, with the closure of the Co-op account. A transfer of £21,177.12 had been made into Unity Trust Bank and the Clerk would now look at setting up the agreed savings account.

### **7.3 Local Community Advisory Service**

As a customer with Zurich Insurance, the Parish Council have access to the newly created organisation known as the Local Community Advisory Service. It offers guides and training courses, tools for assessment and a specialist health and safety advice line.

### **7.4 Lengthsman Scheme Update**

Richard Clewer, Lengthsman Scheme Manager, had informed the Clerk that the Scheme would continue next year, that there were no plans to change the value (currently £2104) and that the contracts would be sent out soon for renewal in April.

### **7.5 Internal Account Scrutiny**

Cllr Jill Bate had carried out the Account scrutiny for three of the four financial quarters. It had been noted that there was one missing Bank Reconciliation for April which the Clerk would rectify and get authorised as soon as possible. All else went well. The Clerk offered her thanks to Cllr Bate for her time and Cllr Gillespie for the offer of it

### **7.6 VAT Claim**

Members noted that a claim to the value of £1947.35 was being made for VAT.

8. **To review the following policies and documents (documents circulated)**

#### **8.1 Financial Regulations**

**It was agreed** to approve this document with no alteration

#### **8.2 Financial Controls**

It was noted that Item 1 needed to be altered as it referred to savings in the Co-op bank. This should be changed to 'the Parish Council will also hold money where necessary in a deposit account to incur a small amount of interest'.

**It was agreed** to approve this policy, subject to this alteration

#### **8.3 Complaints Procedure**

The Clerk noted that an outstanding action had been for the amendment of a policy to reflect what the Clerk should do if concerned about the actions of a Member of the Public towards the Clerk. However, after reading the Complaints procedure it was felt that the Clerk could follow the same process. It was also noted that a Lone Worker Risk Assessment document had been found that also detailed how to react in certain situations, which was also useful.

**It was agreed** to approve the document with no alteration

#### **8.4 Standing Orders**

**It was agreed** to approve this with no alterations

#### **8.5 Freedom of Information – Publication Scheme**

**It was agreed** to approve the document with no alteration

#### **8.6 Employee Appraisal Policy**

Following the use of this document, the policy had been amended and circulated for approval. However, it was now suggested that an additional box

be provided to allow further comments from the appraisee and a summary by the appraiser.

**It was agreed** to approve the policy following this alteration

**Items carried forward:** Research regarding Corporate Strategy: Community Engagement document; Document Retention Policy

9. **To note the finalised Precept amount in relation to Band D households**

Members had received a copy of the document that had been prepared by the Clerk which reflected, with the inclusion of the Council Tax Base Figure provided by BDC at £2363. 90, a Band D increase of £1.46 from 2017/18 to 2018/19 with the requested £46266.00 precept being collected on behalf of the Parish.
10. **To agree the expenditure for this year's Events to include Bonfire, Catshill in Bloom, Christmas Events and WW1 commemoration**

Members discussed each event in turn.

Members noted the document circulated by the Clerk which reflected the expenditure on Events this year to date. This included the Bonfire and the 50% donation of gate takings to the Scouts Association.

**It was agreed** that the Clerk, Chair of Finance and Staffing Committee and Chair of the Council would be given delegated powers to agree the expenditure for the firework display this year, as the Clerk had not yet received the quote as hoped.

**It was agreed**, that due to commitments and work already planned for 2018 including the installation of a lockup facility, the new GDPR regulations and the Neighbourhood Plan grants, that Catshill in Bloom would not take place this year. It was noted that this would need to be a local resident initiative if it was to work.

**It was agreed** to run the Summer Gardens Competition again this year.

**It was agreed** to put the sum of £500 aside for the concept of Catshill in Bloom.

**It was agreed** to delegate the organisation of this to the Environment and Highways Committee, with the hope that it would take place next year.

**It was agreed** to budget £1000 for the Christmas Meal Event this year, following the success of the previous year.

**It was agreed** to remain committed to the purchase of 4 more Christmas Street Light Decorations and their installation costs for the coming season.

It was noted that the WW1 commemorations were to include a re-enactment on the Meadow in the Summer months and would be fairly low key. Cllr Baker may approach the Council for a small sum to assist with this.
11. **To review the Lengthsman Contract ahead of review in April**

It was noted that the Clerk had reported that there would be no change to the grant therefore this may have implications if the Lengthsman hourly rate changed.

**It was agreed** to offer the same salary as this year to the Lengthsman

**It was agreed** to accept the contract without alteration

12. **To consider the possibility of paying for the hire of the Village Hall Committee Room for a Parish Led Initiative to assist residents in computer and internet literacy**

Following the presentation by the Member of the Public, **it was agreed** to add the idea as an Agenda Item at the Full Parish Council for consideration. **It was agreed** that it be recommended to the Council that an offer of assistance be made to the gentleman on a trial basis.

13. **To consider the donation of £1500 to the Village Hall Committee to provide a storage facility onsite, with lighting, for the Parish Council (as per the Local Government Act 1972, s.133)**

Cllr O Sweeting outlined the plans for the front of the Village Hall to Members, including the thoughts around the need for additional storage. He had provided three quotes, which were shown to Members., for the work. It was recommended by Cllr Sweeting that the quote from Knight Building & Roofing be accepted as their work was good and the quote was cheapest. The value of £3560 had been attributed to the purchase of a unit from this contractor, which included guttering.

It was noted that £4200 had been set aside as Capital expenditure for this project.

It was noted that this would be of substantial benefit to the Parish Council.

**It was agreed** that the expenditure of £3560 be allocated to the Purchase of the lock up facility. This would be recommended to the Full Parish Council

**This meeting ended at 21:16 pm**

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Chairman, Finance Committee  
Catshill and North Marlbrook Parish Council