

**GREAT CORNARD PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Meeting of the **POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

held in The Stevenson Centre at 7:55pm on Monday 28th March 2022

**PRESENT** Councillors A C Bavington **Chairman**

K Graham S M Sheridan

Mrs P White Mrs J Wilson

C G Wright

Council Manager Mrs N Tamlyn

Council Administrator Miss E Skuce

County Councillor Peter Beer

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors M D Newman, T J Keane, T Harman, T M Welsh and D Young.

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

Councillor Bavington declared a non-pecuniary interest in any item relating to Thomas Gainsborough School as he volunteers at the School and a family member is employed by the Trust.

1. **DECLARATIONS OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY**

**NONE.**

The Chairman proposed that the meeting move to Item 5b) to discuss Wells Hall Old School as County Councillor Beer wished to address the Council on the matter. **AGREED.**

1. **CORRESPONDENCE**
2. **Wells Hall Old School**

Members reviewed and **NOTED** the correspondence from the Corporate Landlord Manager at Suffolk County Council which stated that in relation to the school, it would not be practical or economically viable for them to run the site themselves. Also, as it is not a letting on commercial terms, at a market rent, there would not necessarily be any benefit in advertising the opportunity to take on the Lease.

At this point, Councillor Bavington invited County Councillor Peter Beer to provide a verbal update on Wells Hall Old School.

County Councillor Beer provided Members with the latest information in relation to a new tenant of Wells Hall Old School following the Girl Guides relinquishing the Lease.

Suffolk County Council were approached by three individuals, who expressed an interest in the Lease. Following initial discussions with each of the interested parties and based on the information provided, a new Leaseholder has been chosen.

The new Leaseholder has well established links with the School and the County Council felt that they would be the most suitable to take it over. The conditions of the Lease are that it cannot be run for any other purpose except for community use and would essentially be the same terms as the Girl Guides have.

The new Leaseholder, it was believed, would be setting up a Trust and they would also need to produce annual accounts to Suffolk County Council. They would also have the right to be able to apply for financial grant assistance on the same basis as any other organisation.

In order to ensure that the property remained a community facility, Members **AGREED** that if the new agreement fell through and no other options were available, then the Parish Council would consider expressing an interest in the tenancy/ownership. Councillor Beer confirmed that he would advise SCC’s Corporate Landlord Manager of the Council’s position on the matter.

The Chairman thanked County Councillor Beer for his update.

Councillor Mrs Wilson informed Members of a project called ‘Still Good to Eat’ which she was investigating together with Reverend Ramsey at St Andrew’s Church. The project provides fresh food discarded by shops and supermarkets as they are unable to sell them but the items are still fit for consumption. Users would not need to be referred to use the service so Councillor Wilson believes it would be a great benefit to the Village. Councillor Wilson is hoping to use Wells Hall Old School as the venue for the project. **NOTED.**

1. **ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – FOR NOTING**

Members reviewed and **NOTED** the Items Brought Forward list.

1. **CORRESPONDENCE**
2. **Zurich: Building Valuations**

Members reviewed correspondence from the Council’s insurers, Zurich Municipal, which states that as the Parish Council has buildings insured with them and depending on when those buildings were last valued, there is the potential for ‘under insurance’ which could have serious consequences. Zurich advised that a Professional Reinstatement Valuation should be carried out every 5 years to ensure that each building is insured on the correct basis and for the correct sum.

Members **AGREED** that the valuations should be carried out as soon as possible and that the Council Manager would arrange quotations and report back at a later date.

1. **TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE COST OF UPGRADING STREETLIGHT COLUMNS WITH LED LANTERNS**

Further to the Report No: E14 **(Please see Appendix A)** being reviewed by the Development and Planning Committee, the Policy and Resources Committee discussed the cost element of the project.

The Council Manager explained that she had broken down ‘Phase 1’ into sections for costing purposes and that the first page of the Phase 1 schedule amounted to £30,997.27. The Parish Council already had funds of £34,005.00 earmarked for the upgrades and depending on confirmation of additional costs, including road closures and traffic management, this first stage of Phase 1 could be instructed in the next financial year.

At a previous meeting, it had been suggested that the Parish Council consider applying for a Public Works Loan Board loan to cover the cost of upgrading all of the Council’s streetlights. However, it was felt that as funds had already been set aside to begin the upgrades, it would not be prudent to consider a loan at this time.

Members agreed to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that it instructs the first stage of Phase 1 and the Council Manager will, in the meantime, liaise with the County Council on the associated costs such as traffic management and road closures.

Funds to be allocated from Earmarked Funds.

1. **TO AGREE TO MEET WITH CORNARD UNITED IN ORDER TO CARRY OUT A RENT REVIEW**

Members suggested that Councillors Bavington, Newman, Wright and Mrs Wilson should meet with Cornard United, together with the Council Manager, at The Stevenson Centre to discuss the rent review. **AGREED.**

It was **AGREED** for the Council Manager to circulate dates and set up the meeting with Cornard United.

1. **FINANCIAL MATTERS**
2. **Quickbooks Desktop: Discontinuation of Support**

Members reviewed correspondence from Quickbooks which stated that from the 2nd February 2023, Quickbooks Desktop support will end and that the service will be moving online. The Council Manager said that the Council’s accountants, Lambert Chapman, were available to support the transition where possible and ensure the correct figures were transferred but Members should note that this could potentially incur additional professional fees. **NOTED.**

1. **To approve the latest list of payments**

Members reviewed and **NOTED** the latest list of payment. **See Appendix B.**

**Meeting closed at 8:41pm**

**APPENDIX A**

**Report No. E14**

**Upgrade of Great Cornard Parish Council’s ageing Street Lamps with new LED lanterns**

Please see attached letter from SCC regarding the Street Lighting Maintenance and Energy Contract. (See Appendix A)

In response to the two main issues, please see the information below:

1) **Upgrade to LED lanterns**

The Parish Council has already taken up SCC’s offer for advice on implementing a programme to gradually replace the MBFU and Sodium lamps which are no longer available with LED lamps.

SCC have now submitted a Streetlighting Lantern Upgrade schedule for Phase 1 which is for 114 of the 204 columns owned by the Council at a cost of £111,338.55. The order of works has been prioritised using parameters such as G39 conflict/obsolete lamp types (MBFU)/working at height and insecure columns. (See Appendix B)

There will be additional costs for Traffic Management works at £708.50 per day and £1,579.50 for road closures of which there is only one. Further clarification on the number of columns which can be upgraded in one day will need to be sought so the total cost of any instructed works can be kept to a minimum.

The Parish Council currently has Earmarked Funds of £14,512.83 of which £507.83 has already been allocated to upgrade column no. 430 with a LED lantern. A further £20k was allocated in the FY22/23 Budget which means available Earmarked Funds from 1st April 2022 will be £34,005.00.

As an example of cost based on a phased approach, works on page one of the Schedule amount to £30,997.67. These works could be instructed in the next Financial Year depending on the additional cost of Traffic Management, leaving a buffer of £3k to cover the cost of lights which fail prior to the Council assembling further funds to instruct the remaining phase 1 works.

**2) Rising cost of Electricity and materials**

The invoice for this Financial Year has already been authorised for payment and was £1,331.00 less than the previous year and £38.83 over budget; however, as detailed in SCC’s attached correspondence, the cost of electricity Is expected to significantly rise in the next annual period.

As the market is so volatile at the moment, SCC have stated that they are currently unable to confirm the extent of these increases. However, I have summarised a comparison below based on this FY energy costs for three of the now obsolete lantern types compared to the energy cost of one of the few LED lanterns the Parish Council currently has installed.

Lantern Type:

MBFU 125 Average hours of Operation 4231

Maintenance Cost £20.34

Electricity Cost £106.34

MBFU 80 Average hours of operation 4231

Maintenance Cost £20.34

Electricity Cost £70.39

SON50 Average hours of operation 4231

Maintenance cost £20.34

Electricity Cost £50.69

LED Average hours of Operation 4151

Maintenance cost £19.04

Electricity cost £15.42

As you can see the LED savings are significant and represent an average saving of approximately £48 per lantern (based on the total FY21-22 electricity cost) which equates to an annual saving of approximately £9,500. I would stress that this is only a very rough estimate and due to the current volatility of both the energy and materials market it would be difficult to guarantee these savings at the present time.

As detailed in SCC’s letter there are other measures which can be taken to mitigate these increases such as the dimming and/or part night lighting, which could also be considered by the Council in order to save costs.

At the Policy and Resources meeting on Monday 28th February 2022, it was highlighted that some Councils were taking out loans to replace ageing lanterns with new LED lanterns to save on long term energy costs and it was **AGREED** to add the matter to a future agenda for Members to discuss.

**APPENDIX B**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **INCOME UPTO** |  |  |  |
| **01.03.2022** | **Source** | **Amount** | **Details** |
|  | Allotments | £55.00 | Rent |
|  | Interest | £7.19 |  |
|  | Cemetery | £26.00 |  |
|  | Babergh District Council | £493.18 | Recycling |
|  | **TOTAL** | **£581.37** |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **EXPENDITURE** | |  |  |
| **Direct Debits** | **Company** | **Amount** | **Details** |
| **15.3.2022** | Intuit | £20.40 | Internet Package |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | **Company** |  | **Details** |
| **BACS** | Unity Schools Partnership | £2,500.00 | Swimming Pool Support Grant |
|  | Auto Innovations (Sudbury) Ltd | £172.80 | QPJ Celebration - Banners |
|  | E-Timber Products Ltd | £175.00 | Picnic Bench - C Park |
|  | LTK Scott Ltd | £255.00 | Accessible Picnic Bench - C Park |
|  | Miss S K Kent | £5.85 | Expenses |
|  | Mrs E Skuce | £26.98 | Expenses |
|  | Mrs N Tamlyn | £80.27 | Expenses |
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|  | **TOTAL** | **£3,236.30** |  |
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