



## Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance Committee Held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2015 at 8.00pm In the Community Office

---

**Present:**

**Councillors:**

Tim Horton - Chairman  
Roddy Orr – Vice-Chairman  
Ian Hill  
Tony Williamson  
Robin Wilson

**Officer:**

Kristina Tynan

13/15 Apologies for absence  
There were none.

14/15 Chairman's Remarks  
There were none.

15/15 To approve the Minutes from the Meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> January 2015 which were received by Council on 13/1/2015  
**Resolved:** That these minutes were a correct record of this meeting and that they be signed by the Chairman.

16/15 Matters Arising  
**Pavilion Investment Fund** (Minute 6/15a refers) – We have now formally done this and £1000 have been put into a Pavilion Reserve.

**Youth Club** (Minute 8/15c refers) – The grant has been paid to the Youth Club, the amount being £1289 after the Pavilion Rent had been taken off the £3000 allocation.

**Bus Service –Saturday and Sundays** (Minute 8/15e refers) – Council resolved that it will be paid on a monthly basis starting in April 2015.

**Police Office** (Minute 9/15a refers) – We have had a communication from TVP that they are looking into this and the lease has now run out. We have heard nothing further.

**Financial Regulations** (Minute 8/15b refers) – These were adopted at the March Full Council meeting. It was noted that we now have got to implement a procedure for BACS transactions. IH will draft a procedure for the next meeting.

**Budget 2015/2016 and Precept** (Minute 6/15b refers) – TH reported that a note on this has been put into the Watlington Times and on our website. Discussion took place on putting the budget figures on the website.

**Resolved:** That we put the budget figures on our website for 2015/2016 and actual figures for 2014/2015 when completed. IH and KT to do this.

17/15 Declarations of Interest

There were no declaration of interest notified.

18/15 Budget and Reserves and Financial Issues for discussion

**1. Broadband –Discussion of funding** - TH said that he has sent a note on this to Peter Richardson stating that it would make more sense for this issue to come to the Finance Committee when we have actual costings as we will need to have this if we are to look for money from other sources to fund Broadband. TH stated that he has read the Plunkett Report to find out what other rural communities have done. The Chiltern Conservation Board have been awarded £2.5M to spend between 2015-2019 and the Connect 8 as a community group (Watlington, Swyncombe and Pishill with Stonor) could apply to them for some funds as it would tick a lot of boxes such as helping the business community, crossing parish boundaries etc.

IH reported that he listened to the broadcast on Radio Oxford which Peter Richardson and the wine producer spoke on and a good argument was given as to why they need broadband.

**2. Budget Update** –The Clerk is currently working on these figures for the end of March year end. Provisional Figures will be available for the Annual Parish Meeting. When these are ready they will be sent to the Finance Committee members and TH said that if necessary a meeting will be scheduled to go through the figures.

**3. Car Park Drainage Costs** – TH reported that the work on Watcombe Road has been completed but did not include a bollard on the corner. All works were paid for by the Co-op. A cost has been received for installing a slit drain in the car park which is in the region of £13,000 for a 30m trench which would then drain into the existing system. He said that today he has met with Hammond Construction and has got a cost to revive the 2 failing drains and to connect them to the now effective Watcombe Road system which will cost in the region of £3,000 and this should be a simple connection. This would be a far lesser sum to find and Council has already resolved to spend up to £3,000 on this issue from the Car Park Reserves. TH suggested that a letter be sent to John Backley at SODC on this issue and explain the circumstances and ask for some funding towards this as it was originally SODC who cut off the drainage system by putting in the ramp which caused the drains not to work properly. TH will draft this letter when a new scheme was devised and costed.

Regarding the bollard on the corner of Watcombe Road and Hill Road the Contractors who did the Watcombe Road work for the Co-op have got a bollard from Wycombe which they think would be suitable and TH has asked them how much they would charge to install this for us.

TH reminded the committee that the technical decisions were primarily for the Operations Committee.

**4. Election Costs** – TH stated that we have received a communication from OALC saying that there is a continuing dialogue between them and SODC on the issue of the costs to Parish Councils. There is talk about deferment of payment of these until 2016/2017. TH said that the costs would be greatly in excess of our budget reserve for this item.

**5. Car Park Contributions** – The total to date received is £9550. The agreement with the Co-op is for £8,000 pa which can be uplifted by RPI after 2014. This can then happen for 2015/2016 and TH will make the calculation for this.

**6. Anticipation of other future 'larger cost' items**

**Recreation Ground Car Park** - TH stated that at the meeting of the Operations Committee tomorrow morning they will be giving consideration to the issue of upgrading and remarking of the

car park in the recreation ground but there is no allowance for this in the budget and therefore they will need to be informed that any work could not take place in the 2015/2016 Financial Year unless the work can be funded from other sources.

IH stated that if this car park was properly marked out maybe people would be more encouraged to park here rather than in the Hill Road car park.

**Graffiti on the wall of the Pavilion** – This graffiti is about 10ft x 10ft large and will need to be removed by a professional company. This will then be subject to an insurance claim of which our excess will be £100 and it was agreed that this needs to be removed ASAP. It was also noted that a building can be graffiti proofed with some type of product and the Clerk will ask for a price for doing this and a decision to then be made as whether the cost would save money in the long term.

#### 19/15 Staff Issues

1. **Annual review of staff** – These will take place over the next few weeks. TH and IH will review the Clerk and Assistant Clerk. BW, IH and KT to review Bob Thomas. Rachel Gill to be reviewed by IH and NH.

2. **Staff Review**– A group has been set up (DT, IH, TH, BW, and TW) to look into future staff issues etc (Strategy Meeting January 2015). TH stated that that this issue should be with the Finance Committee and not the Strategy Committee. TH will send out some possible dates for the meeting.

3. **Routine recording and negotiating of staff matters** (holidays, sickness etc). It was noted that a record is kept for holiday leave for all staff. The Clerk to have this available for members. A note to be kept of sick leave also. The Clerk informed the committee that no staff members has had sick leave this year to date. IH/KT will write a simple procedure of how the recording is done.

#### 4. **Office space and access**

**Resolved:** That the group who are looking into the Staff Review to be also asked to look at this issue.

#### 20/15 Other Financial Issues

1. **Development of funding for depreciation of Assets/Reserves** - It was agreed that this item is kept on the agenda but no practical work has been done on this issue. RO said that we need to understand what costs we will be having in the future, for example when a new boiler may be needed. The committee could look at where the surprise spends have been in past years and have a look at these items in the first instance.

It was noted that the Pavilion and the Allotments now have earmarked reserves.

TH said that there are always funding opportunities for projects and he will prepare a note for the next meeting which will be an agenda item.

2. **To note that Berinsfield are keeping their prices at the 2014 level.** - This was noted.

3. **Treatment of CIL monies** – TH stated that he thought this will start sooner rather than later and we could possibly receive money from this in the 2015/2016 financial year. If we start receiving large sums of money from CIL we should hold this money in a separate bank account. We need to be ready to deal with this issue and there could be an Advisory Committee set up to deal with any potential project/spend of these monies which would be subject to a set of rules. We need to look at the Statute for spending CIL money.

#### 21/15 General Issues

a) **Police office in Community Office** - A letter has been sent to Thames Valley Police but no reply has been received to date. Discussed in 16/15 above.

b) **Review of Cuxham Field** – It was noted that this issue will be dealt with at the Strategy

Committee meeting (RB and NG will prepare a paper for the meeting). However RB, NG and KT have met with the current tenant. TH said that the new fence which has been installed raises several issues.

TH stated that at a recent seminar at SODC on leases etc by Roger Brockington (Solicitor based in Swindon) that Ian Hill and he attended, Roger Brockington has offered to come and discuss/advise on some issues. This might be an opportunity to see if his company would be useful to use.

**Resolved:** That a meeting with Roger Brockington be set up.

22/15 Correspondence

There was no correspondence to discuss.

23/15 Items for Next Meeting.

24/15 Any Other Business

**Ecotec Goodwill Money** – It was noted that the Contractors moved out last Friday (the 61<sup>st</sup> day of being in Watlington). There are still some small issues that need to be resolved. A letter will be sent on the Goodwill money by the Clerk. A group will need to be set up to start looking at how the money should be distributed. However no distribution can be made until after the Elections on the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

**THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.50PM**