

REPORT OF MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE OF LONGDON
PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE W. I. HALL, LONGDON, ON MONDAY, MAY 11TH, 2009

Present: Cllr. R. C. Hemmingsley (Chairman of the Council, who chaired the meeting); Cllr. N. Stanfield (Vice-Chairman of the Council); and Cllr. A. J. Juxon

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr. J. R. Andrews; Cllr. Mrs. H. A. Meere; and Cllr. S. K. Welch.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting, held in the W. I. Hall. Longdon, on Monday, December 2nd, 2008, were, on a motion proposed by Cllr. Stanfield and seconded by Cllr. Juxon, approved and signed.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT ON THE AGENDA

(i) Cllr. Stanfield asked whether the Standing Order relating to the submission of the Parish Council's observations on planning applications should be amended to read "and their conclusions formulated by the Clerk and communicated by him to the Planning Authority AND RATIFIED AT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL".

He was concerned that, unless the comments were ratified by the full Council, their legality might, at some time, be challenged by a dissatisfied applicant.

The Chairman pointed out that "ratified" implied that any observation needed the approval of the full Council before submission, the Clerk adding that to await the Council's approval at its next monthly meeting would re-introduce the delay which the Standing Order had been devised to avoid.

However, it was agreed that the legality of this Standing Order should be established unequivocally.

4. PRESENTATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2009

The Clerk presented a financial statement for the financial year ended 31st March 2009.

It was noted that, in spite of an overall increase in expenditure, the Council's end-of-year surplus stood at £13552. 16, the equivalent of a year's precept. However, there had already been substantial payments in the present financial year, which had reduced the surplus, and the Committee expected the Council to identify future projects which would enhance the life of the community and absorb its reserves.

5. ALLOCATION OF BUDGETS FOR HIGHWAYS & FOOTPATHS AND GREENS & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEES

It was agreed that the Council should be recommended to allocate budgets as follows: Highways & Footpaths £3500. 00; Greens & Open Spaces £4500. 00.

Major items of expenditure for the former were expected to be the cost of footpath leaflets for Gentleshaw and work on the bridge over the ford at Brook End, for the latter the cost of mowing and the management of the green opposite Gentleshaw School.

It was expected that expenditure in the next financial year would be as follows:

General Administration £5000. 00; Greens and Open Spaces £5000. 00; Highways and Footpaths £3500. 00; Community Halls £3000. 00; Churchyards £3000. 00; Payments under Section 137 (Community Support Grants) £3500. 00.

6. RENEWAL OF INSURANCE POLICY

The Chairman pointed out that this year's premium showed an eight-per-cent increase on the previous year's, though the Clerk also reminded the Committee that the new glass-fronted notice-board had been added to the list of properties during the year.

The Committee felt that the current level of insurance under the Fidelity Guarantee was adequate, but the Clerk was instructed to establish whether it already covered Councillors as well as the Clerk.

It was agreed that the Committee should recommend payment of the increased premium.

7. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

(a) Disqualification of Councillor

It was agreed that the Committee should recommend the Council to instruct the Clerk to write to former Councillor Mark Parsons, informing him that, in view of the fact that he had not attended any meeting of the Parish Council over the last six months, he was now automatically disqualified.

(b) Management of Grassed Area opposite Gentleshaw School

It was agreed that the Committee should recommend the Council to enter into an agreement with Lichfield District Council to manage the grassed area opposite Gentleshaw School, subject to the five conditions proposed by Cllr. Hemmingsley, namely, that Lichfield District Council should be kept informed of proposals for the site; that no buildings should be erected on the site; that all statutory requirements should be complied with; that Lichfield District Council should be indemnified against any claims relating to the use of the site; and that this agreement may be terminated by giving twelve months' notice in writing by either party to the other.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be agreed.