



BOX PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 13th SEPTEMBER 2021

- 1. Present:** Councillors S. Parker (Chairman); R. Campbell; R. Case;
R. Davies; B. Walton; D. Wright
Mrs Carey (Clerk)
- 2. Apologies** Cllr Woollard - the apologies were accepted
- 3. Absence:** Nil
- 4. Public Question Time:** There was two members of the public present.
- 5. Chairman's Announcements and Declarations of Interest:** Nil
- 6. Minutes:** The Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th August 2021 were taken as read and signed as a true record
- 7. Matters Arising/Actions**
 - a. **Flood Wardens - Blocked drains;** Flood Wardens were still awaiting training.
 - b. **Replacement mowers;** It was agreed that information re the replacement mowers should be brought back to the meeting in October. It was agreed the Groundsmen would have an input into this before it comes back to the Committee.
 - c. **Items to be included on the Agenda for the Extraordinary Council meeting to be held on 23rd September 2021:**

Cllr Case reiterated that she felt that the Council was spending too much time on how the Council conducts its business. The items to be considered were discussed and it was agreed that the following items be put onto the Agenda:

 - Structure of Committees – clarity on what Committees discuss
 - Terms of Reference for Committees
 - Constitution of the Policy & Finance Committee re the non-chair member
 - Expectation of Chairs of Committee
 - Council procedures including review of Standing Orders and how the Parish Council manages co-options
 - General Powers of Competency
 - Zoom subscription

The meeting will close at 9.30 pm
- 8. Policy Matters:**
 - a. **Review of policies:** List of policies had been circulated to Committee members. The Clerk will add suggested review dates for the policies.

Grievance Procedure/Disciplinary Policy: Cllr Case is reviewing these and will bring them to the October Meeting.

Cllr Case had reviewed the Appraisal policy; Lone Working policy and Child Protection policy. It was agreed to put the Appraisal policy on the Agenda for the next Personnel Committee meeting to consider this.

Lone Working Policy: This had been reviewed by Cllr Case who recommended no changes were necessary. Clerk to circulate this to all Councillors **Action: Clerk**

Child Protection Policy: This had been reviewed by Cllr Case who recommended no changes were necessary. Clerk to circulate this to all Councillors **Action: Clerk**

Cllr Campbell agreed to review the **Health and Safety Policy** and will bring this back to the October meeting

Procurement Policy: Cllr Campbell had drawn up a Procurement Policy. The draft includes a paragraph re Climate Strategy. All Committee members had been asked to comment on this but no comments had been received.

Tree Policy: The draft policy had been circulated. This was discussed and amendments made. The revised policy will be circulated to the Policy & Finance Committee. It was **recommended** that the draft policy be sent out to all Councillors for comments.

Risk Assessment form: To be reviewed at the next meeting

Standing Orders: Following issues raised at the recent training session for new councillors, and advised received from Katie Fielding of WALC a review of the Standing Orders re the co-option procedure was discussed and it was agreed that this was something that should be discussed by the Full Council at the Extraordinary Council meeting. It had also been suggested that a Co-option Policy be drawn up.

- b. **Business Plan/Forward Plan:** The Committee was shown a copy of the Forward Plan that had been used previously. It was agreed that the document should be revised as it was felt to be an extremely useful document. This could act as a handover information document for changes of Committee Chairmen or committees. Each Chairman was asked to look at their objectives, to revise them and bring the amended draft back to the November meeting.

9. Financial Matters:

- a. **Investment of Earmarked Reserves:** Continue to monitor investments.
- b. **Monitoring of Committee budgets:** The quarterly monitoring report had been sent out to Committee members. This was discussed and the Clerk showed explanations of income and expenditure for that period.
- c. **Loss of Revenue due to Covid-19:** Letter received from Hiscox. Following the Supreme Court Judgment the claim submitted had been assessed. The period assessed was the mandatory closure between 24th March and 4th July 2021 – a total of 102 loss days. The expected revenue had been calculated at **£3050**. The running costs of the pavilion had also been taken into account (ie utility costs, cleaning costs) which had been assessed at **£1425**. This is assessed as a saving to the council during this period and is deducted from the loss of revenue giving a figure of **£1615**. In accordance with the calculations shown the total amount payable across all relevant restriction periods is lower than the interim payment made of **£2500**. Hiscox will not seek to recoup any of these funds but no further amount is payable. A copy of the letter will be circulated. **Action: Clerk**
- d. **Reconciliation of Bank balances:** Cllr Campbell has taken over the reconciliation of the bank balances.

10. Legal Matters:

- a. **Lodge:** Notification received that the tenant will not be renewing the Lease. The property had been put back on the market and viewings are being arranged.
- b. **Licences:** Licences renewed from April
- c. **Data Protection:** On going

- d. **Community Governance Review** Letter received from Wiltshire Council stating that this had been delayed until June/July this year
- e. **Rustic Cottage, Box Hill:** The letter received from the solicitors acting for the owner in the sale of Rustic Cottage. They refer to a Deed made in 1982 between the Parish Council and the previous owner granting right of access over the path beside the property. They have raised enquiries re the arrangements for the repair and maintenance of the access and whether any future works are proposed. This was discussed further and it was **recommended** that the Deed be removed from the property. This proposal was carried with five votes in favour and one abstention.

11. Correspondence:

- a. **Work Experience Student:** Letter received stating that as his course now requires him to do work experience relating to agricultural engineering and mechanics he will no longer be working with the Parish Council. He thanked the Council for the opportunity to have a wonderful experience and that he had really enjoyed working with the Groundsmen and will miss being part of the team. A formal thank you will be sent to him and also to the Groundsmen for their help.
- b. **Annual Governance Statement 2020/21:** Notification from PKF Littlejohn that the external audit had been completed with no matters of concern.
- c. **Renewal of Insurance Policy;** Notification that the Insurance Policy renewal will be £4998.68. This is an increase of £167.49 from last year. The schedule to the policy had been updated. It is **recommended** that the policy be renewed
- d. **Christmas Tree Lights:** The unmetered connection agreement for the Christmas Tree Lights is due for renewal. It is **recommended** that this be renewed from 1st December to mid January. It was agreed to approach Tim Barton re the Christmas tree.
- e. **Road junction at Kingsdown Golf Course and Monkton Farleigh:** letter received from the Monkton Farleigh Parish Council asking for the Parish Council to look at this junction as it is felt to be dangerous because of the speed of cars coming up from Bathford and the lack of visibility. It was suggested that signage approaching the junction could be a solution. It was agreed to ask Cllr Brian Mathew to liaise with their Unitary Councillor Johnny Kidney.
- f. **Cotswold Wardens;** letter of thanks received from the Cotswold Wardens re the grant made to them. They had purchased a new brushcutter and a new hedge trimmer
- g. **Graffiti on green utility boxes Bargates:** This had been raised with Gigaclear; BT Openreach and SE
- h. **Consultation on draft 'Climate Strategy' and 'Our Natural Environment Plan':** Posters received from Wiltshire council which will be put on the website and notice boards

12. Accounts; The following accounts were submitted and approved for payment

<u>Cheques</u>			
Came & Co	-	Insurance renewal	4952.16
 <u>BACS</u>			
Salaries	-		5670.68
HM Revenue & Customs	-	PAYE	1627.91
Avon Sportsground Main Co	-	BG contract	744.52
J.H. Jones & Son	-	Cemetery Contract (inc VAT)	1036.80
PKF Littlejohn LLP	-	Audit fee	720.00
Water2business	-	Pavilion and Bowling Green	707.34
Westcare Supply Zone	-	Printer cartridge	85.80
Link	-	grant to Box Assist	130.00
 <u>Direct debits</u>			
Initial Washroom	-	Fem Hygiene	28.38
NEST	-	Pension contribution	167.04
Hills Waste	-	Refuse collection	197.96
Fuel Card Services	-	Petrol	100.92
Plusnet	-	Telephone Pavilion	
Plusnet	-	Office	38.24
Wiltshire council	-	NDR Pavilion/PFs	304.00
		Car Park	91.00

Hitachi	-	Mule Leasehire	344.73
<u>Standing Order</u> T.H. White	-	Mule service contract	63.60
<u>Debit card</u> Zoom	-	Subscription	14.39

13. Highway Issues:

- Leafy Lane: It was reported that Cllr Derek Walters is pursuing the possibility of a 30 mph speed limit. He was seeking to get the roads redefined as a local access road and not a through road. The Metro Council had shown cars doing 30 mph so it gives a good reason to reduce this from 40 mph. It was agreed that Cllr Davies would act as the PC liaison with Cllr Walters. Cllr Walters to be asked to bring any options back to the Parish Council before they are taken to CATG in case there are any cost implications.
- B3109 Bradford Road: This had been put as a priority for the next CATG meeting in September. Cllr Davies raised the issue of money that had been received from Bellway re Highways improvements and asked why the Parish Council had no input in this. The Clerk explained the history relating to this planning application. Cllr Walton felt that the Parish Council needs to look forward with this and not backwards. Cllr Davies requested that the Parish Council liaises with Corsham Town Council re the reduction in the speed limit. Clerk to arrange a meeting for Cllrs Davies and Wright to attend to discuss action on this.
- Highways Improvement Request form: Wiltshire Council had been asked for an assessment of the costs involved following the request received for a walkway to be created from the bus shelter at Hedgesparrow Lane.
- Warning sign for horses at Prospect: Data to be submitted
- A4 opposite Budgens Garage: Letter received from David Arnup stating that he will arrange a meeting with the contractor to start the ball rolling with pricing up reconstruction of the footway.
- Parking at Chapel Plaister: Clerk to ask Gemma Winslow from Wiltshire Council to look at the site again. A new sign for the Chapel parking had been made and will be put up shortly
- Metro Count Wadswick – This will take place once lockdown is lifted
- Highways Improvement Request Form: A request form had been submitted to CATG by the Parish Council to look at the signage at the entrance to the Market Place to stop large lorries using this narrow road.
- Bus shelter by Rising Sun: Letter received from Wiltshire Council stating that in the first instance the anti-social behaviour should be reported to the local Policing team. Regarding the removal of the wall they did not feel that this would be the solution. The wall offers valuable protection from the elements whilst waiting for the bus. It is very exposed at this location. Clerk to inform the parishioner that raised this issue.

14. Items for discussion:

Climate Strategy Working Group:

- Article for the Parish Magazine/Newsletter/Website: The draft article for the Parish Magazine was discussed and agreed with a minor change
- Energy survey and Thrive grant application: It was reported that the Parish Council is not eligible for the Thrive grant application but other grants will be pursued. A survey re the solar panels for the Pavilion and Tractor shed had been carried out and a full energy survey will be carried out. This will be discussed by the Playing Fields & Pavilion Management Committee.
- Draft Action Plan: The final copy of the draft Action Plan will be circulated to all Councillors.

15. Items raised at Full Council:

Kingfisher Trail: Cllr Walton reported on the Kingfisher Trail and the good press coverage. The prize giving for the colouring competition will take place on 19th September

Transparency Code: Following the statement made at Full Council by a member of the public regarding the draft Council meeting not being on the website, the following advice had been received from Wiltshire Association of Local Councils:

“The Transparency Code for smaller authorities which is for councils with an annual turnover of £25k or less, requires those councils to publish draft minutes of full council and committee meetings on the council’s website within a month of the meeting taking place. It is recommended best practice for councils that are not bound by the Transparency Code to do the same. This is for openness and transparency reasons but there is nothing to say that the minutes can not be accepted until the parishioners have had an opportunity to scrutinise/comment on them. They are minutes of the council meeting and they are the clerk’s account of that meeting.”

Provision of defibrillator at Rudloe: This will be taken to the next meeting of the Box Hill & Rudloe Open Space Committee in October

Farming in Protected Landscape: This had been approved at Full Council

16. Items of Report:

- a. **Work by Gigaclear:** The Clerk was asked to get an update from them.

17. Date of next meeting: 11th October 2021 at 7.30 pm

Chairman

Meeting closed at 10.00 pm