MINUTES

1: Meeting Header
Meeting Name: Parish Council
Date: Thursday 16th April 2023
Time: 630pm - 9;32pm
Venue: Sports Pavilion, Park Crescent, Stewartby
Chair: Lee Melville

2: Apologies
Present:
Cllr Melville (Chair), Cllrs Law, Banks Serino, Fraser, Nelsey, Haley and Tilly Bartens (Clerk)

Apologies:
Apologies were received from Cllr Burnage.

3: Declarations on Interest in items on the Agenda
None

4: Applications
To consider any applications for dispensation
None

5: Public Participation
None

6: Minutes of the Previous Meeting
The Council RESOLVED that Cllr Melville should sign the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on the 16th March 2023 as a true and accurate record.

7: Matters arising from Previous Minutes
The Clerk advised that the benches that were approved at the last meeting had not yet been ordered. This is because there is an additional charge for fixing that was not known previously. These are in the region of £50 per bench. The Parish Council had resolved to purchase four.

It was RESOLVED that the additional expenditure be approved.

Cllr Law advised that she was looking into grants for the replacement bridge however this is ongoing. It was RESOLVED that Cllr Law should provide an update at the next meeting.

Cllr Law advised that any potholes and issues with street lighting had been reported to Bedford Borough Council. The issue in Green Lane had already been remedied. She advised that there was an issue with street lights in Russett Close however these are the responsibility of the housing developer.

The Clerk advised that she was still chasing the new signed for the playing field about keeping dogs on a lead.

The issue with the contracts with ACE Fire & Security was discussed. It was RESOLVED that Firelec should be given notice. Clerk to send the contracts to all Councillors for information. The Parish Council will start to review in the contracts in two years time however a meeting with ACE will be held to discuss recent issues of concern.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk would start to compile a Register of Contracts.

The Council also discussed the ongoing issue with the electricity provider at the Sports Pavilion and that they have had had a response from EON following the meeting that the Clerk had. The Council is also not receiving any benefit from the Solar Panels as a result of this.

It was RESOLVED that a formal complaint should be registered with Ofgem.

8: Chairman’s Report

Cllr Melville advised that the Premises Licence application was ready for submission to the relevant authorities. This process can take between three and four months.

He advised that an e-mail had been received from a resident to query why the Parish Council is cutting the grass outside 13 Stewartby Way.

It was RESOLVED that this was a long-standing agreement and that it should continue.

Cllr Melville advised that, after the Elections, all Councillors needed to submit an Expenses Form. All forms should be returned to the Clerk to forward on to Bedford Borough Council

9: Report from Bedford Borough Council

The report from Cllr Hill was noted

10: Clerk's Financial Report

9.1 Authorise payments for BACS Transfer
The Clerk advised the meeting of the invoices that were due to be paid and talked them through the report. It was RESOLVED to authorise all of the payments as per the BACS Report.

9.2 Balances of Accounts
Members were advised that as at the 31st March 2023, the balances of the Parish Council and Sports Fields accounts were as follows:
£6,704.78
£31,490.64
£17,895.86
£525,364.64

9.3 Internal Auditor's Report
The Clerk advised that the Internal Auditor's Report regarding the quarter 4 bank reconciliation was not yet available.

9.4 Outstanding Invoice payable to the Parish Council
The Clerk advised that there was an outstanding invoice that had not yet been paid by the Bowls Club for their part of the water and sewage charges. It was RESOLVED that this payment should be sought as a matter of urgency.

11: Quotations for authorisation

10.1 Accounting Package
The Clerk presented a quote from Scribe Accounts. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should seek references and a quote from an alternative provider for consideration at the next meeting.

10.2 Benches for the Playing Field
It was RESOLVED not to accept the quote from Miracle Design & Play due to cost and concerns about the quality of the benches. This matter will be reviewed next year.

10.3 Village Hall Floor & Buffing Machine
The Clerk advised that quotes have not yet been sought. It was RESOLVED that Cllr Serino would take responsibility and present a plan and quotes at the next meeting.

12: Planning Applications & Decisions

None received

13: Amenities

12.1 Highways/Lighting
This item was covered under Matters Arising.

12.2 Recreation Area
The Council was advised that a tree had fallen down on the main Green. It was RESOLVED that Warners should be asked to remove this.

The Council was also advised that the banks near the slide on the main Green are now dangerous. It was RESOLVED that Warners would be asked to quote for these works and that if the quote was up to £1,000 then the works could be completed immediately (due to Health & Safety concerns). If the quote is in excess of £1,000 then it will need to be approved at the next meeting and the slide may
need to be closed temporarily.

Cllr Fraser advised that there were some issues with drain covers. It was RESOLVED that she would send photographs to Cllr Melville.

12.3 Newsletter
It was RESOLVED that the newsletter would need to be updated and the new copy deadline is the 12th May.

It was RESOLVED to seek an updated article from the Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership and What's on guide.

It was further RESOLVED for an advert to be put out on Facebook for people to deliver the newsletter.

12.4 Sports Field/Pavilion
This matter will be discussed under item 13 on the Agenda.

12.5 Village Hall
Cllr Banks advised that Councillors needed to be shown how to lock the Village Hall correctly. It was RESOLVED that this will take place at the next Village Hall Committee Meeting.

Cllr Law advised that she had received a Council Tax bill for the Village Hall. This is currently in dispute.

The Clerk advised that at the last meeting it was agreed that the Council would review what it pays for at the Village Hall to be clear about what the operational costs are. It was RESOLVED that this would be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting.

12.6 Policing
Cllr Melville advised of the ongoing concerns connected to the Traveller Site. He also advised that there had been a cross-border Policing operation connected to the recent car thefts..

12.7 Covanta
Cllr Law advised that she will be attending a meeting at Covanta next week. The Clerk asked if she would resolve the issue of litter picking that Covanta had paid for one year however the Council is now funding this as no further agreement has been reached.

The grant application for the irrigation system has not yet been considered and they are seeking further information.

14: Sports Pavilion Committee

The Sports Pavilion Committee provided an update following their recent meeting and a meeting with Warners. The pitches need to be maintained monthly rather than once a year.

The committee have also been talking to a holiday club that is potentially interested in the pitches for 8 – 10 weeks a year. They would want certain reassures about DBS checks, fencing off the field and whether 60 children could be accommodated in the Sports Pavilion for breaks/lunch.

The committee will be meeting Daniel Lewis on Monday regarding the Junior Football.

It was RESOLVED to authorise the following expenditure:
- Boot brush @ £300
- Bins x 4 @ £50 each
- Junior goalposts @ £650 (approved in principle pending the outcome of the meeting on Monday)
- Risk Assessment @ £400

Further expenditure will required.

There will be a page on the Parish Council website about the Sports Pavilion and football pitches.

15: Community Events 2023

There was no update available as the Committee has been unable to meet.

16: Village Hall Flat Lease Review

The Clerk advised that the current tenants had comeback with an offer of £525 per month.

It was RESOLVED that the Council would accept this for a further two years.

17: EV Chargers

It was RESOLVED that Cllr Banks would contact Bedford Borough Council and a local company to seek funding/sponsorship for EV Chargers for the Sports Pavilion car park

18: Vacant Parish Councillors Positions

The Clerk advised that, after the Elections, the Council needed to put notices out for Parish Councillors.

19: Items of an urgent nature or for inclusion on the next agenda

- Fountain
- Bowls Day
- Holiday & Sickness Trackers
- Kempston Hardwick
- Village Hall Redecoration Quotes

20: Close of Meeting and items for the next Agenda.

Cllr Melville advised that sub-committees would need to provide minutes of their meetings for circulation with the Parish Council Meeting Agenda going forward.

Meeting closed at 9.22 pm.

21: Date and Time of Next Meeting

Annual General Meeting on Thursday 18th May 2023 @ 6.30 pm followed by the monthly Parish Council Meeting.