

OXTED PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES JUBILEE COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 17th July 2012 at 8.45am in
 Jack Farrell Room, Tandridge District Council Offices, Station Road East, Oxted**

Present: Councillors: Mr T Dillon (TD) - Chairman
 Mr M Fisher (MF)
 Mr D Weightman (DWe)
 Mr P Whitehurst (PW)
 Mr R Wingate (RW)

In attendance: Councillor: Mrs K Weightman (KWe) - for Item 4
 Locum Parish Clerk - Mr D Johnson (DJ)

Item		Action
1	<u>Apologies for absence</u> None.	
2	<u>Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest</u> Mr M Fisher - for Item 4 as he is the Treasurer for the Barn Theatre and also a Church Warden at St Marys Church. Mr D Weightman - for Item 4 as he is the Honorary Assistant Curate at St Marys Church. Mr R Wingate - for Item 4 as he is an elder of Oxted URC who organise the Bluehouse Festival.	
3	<u>Public Session</u> No members of the public were present.	
4	<u>To authorise payment of grants (consider recommendations from Grant Aid Working Party)</u> On behalf of the Grant Aid Working Party, Mrs K Weightman presented their recommendations. She explained that they received 8 applications with the total requested being £5,249 against the Grant Aid budget of £4,000. Each application was considered against the criteria and also checks were made to see if they were in receipt of funds from SCC or TDC. They were also mindful of the Internal Auditor's recommendation to not grant funds for the same purpose year in/year out. The Working Party then looked to ensure that each bid got at least some of what they applied for, with a concern that each recipient is monitored to ensure that the monies are "policed." The Committee agreed to fund the following organisations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bluehouse Festival 2012 - £475.00 • 1st Hurst Green Scout Group - £825.00 • Age Concern Oxted, Limpsfield & District - £500.00 • St Mary's Oxted Church Parochial Council - £400.00 • St. Catherine's Hospice - £400.00 • Oxted Young Persons Theatre - £500.00 • East Surrey Community Mediation - £500.00 • Oxted Citizens Advice Bureau - £400.00 	

	<p>Please note that Councillors Fisher; D Weightman and R Wingate did not vote for those organisations for which they had declared interests in item 2. The meeting remained quorate throughout.</p> <p>It was agreed that apart from informing the individual groups of the decisions, the Locum Clerk will draft a press release to go out at the same time.</p>	DJ
5	<p><u>To approve the cheque list</u> There was one cheque on the list £141.00 to Codec Facilities to remove the damaged QDJ bench and fit extra anchors to the other two. This was agreed.</p>	DJ
6	<p><u>To check bank reconciliation</u> The draft Bank Reconciliation was considered. The Locum Clerk had prepared this for April -June (Q1) against the Bank Statements; however Mr M Fisher had pointed out that the practice had been to prepare the Bank Reconciliation against the Cash Book and it was these figures that have been signed-off by the External Auditor. Deposit account balance to be listed as well. It was agreed that there would be little to be gained from switching to a higher-interest deposit account, because of the need to access this account at short-notice.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Locum Clerk would re-draft it on that basis and forward it to the Committee members. Mr Dillon, Mr Fisher and the Locum Clerk would then meet to sign it off.</p> <p>Mr M Fisher, as the previous RFO, has the budget figures for 2012-2013; he will add in the QDJ budget and forward to Mr Dillon and the Locum Clerk to ensure a full hand-over of the RFO function. All three will then meet to ensure that all tasks and roles are in place.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the (annual) VAT return was submitted and the rebate of £2,788.05 has been received.</p>	DJ MF/TD/DJ
7	<p><u>To monitor budget spend</u> The expenditure and income for Q1 as noted. The Locum Clerk said that by adding in the starting budget for 2012-13, as agreed in the previous item, and then future quarterly monitoring would move up a gear to full budget monitoring.</p>	MF/DJ
8	<p><u>To formally delegate the Burial Ground Committee's budget 2012-13.</u> This was agreed.</p> <p>It was agreed that with a new contract tendering process about to start that the available annual budget for the Burial Ground be increased to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine Work - £9,200 and, • Other Work/Contingencies -£2,000 <p>NB This has no inference for the eventual new contract sum as it would cover a range of budget headings for the Burial Ground.</p>	
9	<p><u>To Review the Assets Register and Insurance Schedule</u> The updated Assets Register was circulated by the Locum Clerk and is listed as Annexe 1. He highlighted that the QDJ benches have been added to the Register and that there was no recent insurance/replacement values to hand. The</p>	

	<p>Committee felt that pragmatically “self-insurance” was appropriate for many items as Parish Councils do not depreciate assets. There is a need to consider regularly updating insurance/replacement values for such items as the War Memorials in Master Park and Hurst Green as their purchase values would be significantly out of date. It was agreed that the Locum Clerk would arrange for this to be done.</p> <p>Also, the Locum Clerk would circulate the Assets Register with draft insurance values for the key assets that are critical to the Parish Council’s reputation. This new draft would be considered at the next meeting, with the Assets Register to become a standing item for the F&GP Committee.</p>	<p>DJ</p> <p>DJ</p>
10	<p><u>To appoint an Internal Auditor</u> In considering 3 bids, the Committee agreed to appoint John Roberts as its new Internal Auditor.</p>	<p>DJ</p>
11	<p><u>To consider proposals for Localising Support for Council Tax</u> Given his role as a senior member of TDC, Mr M Fisher updated the Committee on the likely changes to the way that Council Tax Benefit (CTB) will be funded from April 2013. The legislation is coming, but the date for Royal Assent is yet to be confirmed.</p> <p>The cost of CTB has previously been borne by central government, but it is now proposed that a grant be paid to the principal authorities (i.e. the District Council) but at 10% (or more) less than the current level, with a likelihood of it reducing further. Of the grant for CTB, half is ring-fenced for the over 65s and so the grant reduction will need to be spread over the remaining 50%. Therefore the notional 10% grant reduction might be nearer 20% in reality, with an additional risk of more defaulters from amongst low-earners.</p> <p>It is likely that as the Parish Council prepares its precept for 2013-14, it will need to consider how to address a shortfall of about £200 to £1,000 a year. Oxted Parish Council will need to carefully consider possible budget pressures, especially where costs might need to rise, but balanced against where savings/efficiencies could be made.</p> <p>TDC will be consulting Parish Councils in November on these changes. In addition, the non-capped precept power of Parish Councils is likely to go from 2014-15. The next F & GP Committee meeting will need to consider the options carefully to be able to make robust recommendations on the Precept & Budget to Full Council in January 2013.</p>	
12	<p><u>Dates of future meetings</u> The Committee considered the possible change of meeting dates to enable a change of councillor, but felt that it should stick with the planned dates of Tuesday mornings for the foreseeable future.</p>	

1	<p><u>PART II of the meeting is confidential and closed to members of the public and press.</u></p> <p><u>To consider a Tendering Process for the Burial Ground Contract 2013-16</u></p> <p>The Locum Clerk presented a paper outlining a process for tendering for the new contract. In addition, the Committee discussed a number of issues about the present contract.</p> <p>It was agreed that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Tendering Process for the new contract be delegated to the Burial Ground Committee to manage, starting straightaway and the recommended contractor be ratified by the F & GP Committee on 29th January 2013. b) The present contractor has raised a legitimate concern about, in previous years, having to wait till Full Council in September to be paid for July. The Committee agreed that for any valid invoice during the summer period (from any supplier) the Locum Clerk will prepare a cheque list and arrange for 2 signatories and then make payment in a timely fashion. Such cheques will only need to be noted at the subsequent Full Council meeting on 11th September. 	<p>BG Committee</p> <p>DJ</p>
	<p>The date of the next meeting will be Tuesday 30th October 2012 at 8.45 am in the Jack Farrell Room, Tandridge District Council offices, Oxted.</p> <p>There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.35am.</p>	