

**Minutes of Finance and Staffing Committee Meeting
held on Monday 21st September 2015**

1. PRESENT:

Mr I Mackie (Chairman)	Miss S Lawn
Mr F. Bowe	Mr L Reeves
Mr J. Emsell	
Mrs T. Mancini-Boyle	

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr T Foreman (Town Clerk)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mr J Ward

2. Declarations of Interest

Mr I Mackie declared an other interest on agenda item 10

3. Minutes of Meeting held on 17th August 2015.

Minutes of the meeting held on 17th August 2015 were approved and signed as a true record.

4. Public Session – Limited to 3 minutes per speaker

None

5. Finance-Report of the External Auditor

The Committee considered the report of the external auditor and were pleased that there was no cause for concern. The committee considered the recommendation that the Council should receive the report of the internal auditor prior to agreeing the Annual Governance Statement. It was **AGREED** for this to take place in future years.

6. Replacement of Key to Town Council Assets

Mr T Foreman presented the written report into the security keys for Town Council assets. It was explained that the patent has expired for the existing key sets and therefore it would be possible for user groups to get security keys cut. Furthermore, the Village Hall previously had no security keys and given the construction and refurbishment it may be an ideal time to put all Town Council buildings and main use padlocks onto an up to date security key system. Mr I Mackie asked for a breakdown of the cost. Mr T Foreman explained that the new system would be a similar cost for lock cylinders of £27.00 to £35.00, however the keys would be slightly more at £7.00 to £12.00 instead of the current £6.00 to £10.00. The upgraded system would allow for 1-22 million lock variations including padlocks and electronic locks, meaning savings could come through including our main building padlocks which are currently replaced frequently. It was further asked how long the patent on the new locks are likely to be. It was explained that the current locks were on a patent from 2003 and have just expired, however the new suite would be both patented and subject to copyright, which gives additional protection. It was proposed by Mr I Mackie, seconded by Mrs Mancini-Boyle and on a show of hands with all in favour **RESOLVED** to proceed with a new locking system on all Town Council assets at a cost not to exceed £2,000.

7. Creation of Event Space

Mr T Foreman updated the Committee on the event space, with the majority of the tree felling having taken place in the preceding weeks. The next phase of the work will include the grinding of tree stumps, levelling the surface and seeding with grass. A tractor with a rotavator attachment will be hired to prepare the land at a cost of £240 for the first day and £200 per day thereafter. Mr T Foreman explained that hiring a tractor is currently the most cost effective

way of undertaking the work as the current machinery owned by the Council is too agricultural to be used effectively on parkland. Mr I Mackie asked that the possibility of purchasing a tractor be added to the next agenda. The Committee noted this report.

8. Bowls Club Lease

The questions posed by the Recreation Bowling Club regarding a new lease were considered by the Committee. The Bowls Club asked

1. What savings will accrue to the club if we do not have a professional survey? Would the Town Council consider granting the Bowls Club this money towards the upkeep of the building if a professional survey were not requested?
2. To what extent can the club carry out its own maintenance?
3. What permissions are needed from the Council before work is done by club members or before contractors are appointed?
4. Could contractors be appointed by the club or would the Council need to appoint, or at least approve, them?
5. Who is legally liable in the case of accidents, negligent maintenance, fire, structural defects etc.?
6. Would the Council be prepared to include the building in its insurance umbrella and be reimbursed by the Club?
7. Would the Council still be the legal landlord?
8. How are responsibilities under Health and Safety legislation shared? i.e. electrical wiring, breakages, trip hazards chemical storage etc.

There was some discussions by the Committee about these questions and how to best support the Bowls Club during the transitional period. It was proposed by Mr I Mackie, seconded by Mr L Reeves and on a show of hands with all in favour **RESOLVED** to provide the following responses to the Recreational Bowling Club.

1. The cost of the survey was estimated to be £500 per organisation, totally £1000 in total. As the Town Council had not budgeted for the cost of a new lease, if a professional survey were not requested, the £500 would contribute to the legal costs of drawing up the lease.
2. The Recreation Bowling Club would be free to carry out minor repairs and general maintenance, but certified and insured tradesman would be required on skilled jobs, for example electrical, plumbing, gas, heating and substantial building work etc.
3. The Town Council should be notified of any work being undertaken on the building other than general maintenance and minor repairs. Permission would not be unreasonably withheld.
4. The Town Council would need to be notified of the contractor used and the work schedule, but the Bowling Club would be free to use any suitably qualified and insured contractor.
5. The insurer would be expected to cover structural defects and loss through fire. Though if it is deliberate or negligent damage et cetera, the Bowling Club would shoulder responsibility. Accidents and incidents et cetera would be the responsibility of the Bowling Club as the organisation responsible for the site in its entirety. As the Bowling Club would be providing the repairs and maintenance, it would not be appropriate for the Town Council to take responsibility.
6. The Town Council will pay for the first 5 years building insurance to allow the Bowling Club to get an undertaking of running cost. At the year 3 renegotiation period, the costs would be discussed with the Bowls Club to allow it to take on the charge after the first 5 year period has elapsed.
7. The Town Council would remain the landlord as the legal owner of the building.

8. The Recreational Bowling Club are responsible for the Health and Safety as the tenant of the building. Electrical testing is required on a maintenance cycle and will fall to the Club to undertake. All trips, slips and chemical storage will be the Clubs responsibility as the Town Council will play no operational role in the use of chemical or maintenance/care of the site.

9. Update on Staffing

The committee were given an oral update on the current staffing position. A new groundsman is due to start on the 19th October 2015 following a successful interview with Mr T Foreman, Mr F Bowe and Mr R Kiddell. The post of Facilities Operative remains open as there were no suitable candidates following interview. The Committee noted this report.

10. Update on Village Hall project

The Committee were given a verbal update on the progress of the Village Hall construction and refurbishment, with the expected completion at the end of November 2015. The work is currently up to date following some difficulty with the roofing. The Committee felt that it was timely that users return to the Village Hall before New Year, and emphasised the limited storage available to prevent the Village Hall returning to its previous condition. The Committee noted this report.

11. Update on Thorpe Ferry

Mr T Foreman tabled a report as an update on the Thorpe Ferry from Bungalow Lane. It was reported that the Thorpe Ferry Company had been given 28 days to return the £5,000 conditional grant as the terms of the grant had not been met. There was a single condition, that the Ferry would be operational from April 2015. Mr T Foreman reported back from the meeting with a co-director of the company where it was said that the delay was due to right of way issues across a neighbour's property. Although the co-director of the Thorpe Ferry Company stores the boat in his boatyard, he believes that using a working boatyard for a public ferry would be unsafe, and therefore the neighbours garden is the only alternative. Mr T Foreman explained that as a condition has been placed on the grant, the Committee should decide what action, if any, should be taken as the grant has not been repaid. The Committee considered a range of options, balancing each with the benefits and drawbacks. It was proposed by Miss S Lawn, seconded by Mrs Mancini-Boyle on a show of hands with all in favour **RESOLVED** to file papers with the relevant civil court to reclaim the grant as its conditions have not been met.

With no other business the meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Date of next meeting: Monday 19th October 2015.

Chairman _____

Date _____