

NEWTON POPPLEFORD & HARPFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Finance Committee meeting on
Thursday 10th February 2020 at 7pm in Harpford Hall, Harpford.

ACTION by:

	<p>Present Cllrs Burhop (Chair), Walker (Vice-Chair), Dalton and Lee. (Q) Clerk. 0 members of the public. Meeting began at 7.00pm.</p>	
Public Forum	<p>Fire Regulations Chair Outlined Public Questions No public questions or representations.</p>	
FC20/009	<p>Apologies for absence: Cllr Tillotson had sent her apologies for personal reasons. Noted and accepted.</p>	
FC20/010	<p>Declarations of Interest made: All members present are, by definition, members of the NPPFF Trustee Board and declared their interests as such.</p>	
FC20/011	<p>To consider and, if thought fit, to approve the minutes of previous Finance Committee meeting 16th January 2020 as previously circulated to members. Approval of minutes was proposed by Chair, seconded by Cllr Dalton. Resolved unanimously. Chair signed the minutes as a true and accurate record of that meeting. Matters arising: Section 106 progress and monies available (see below) Discussions with CDE regarding funding for parish amenities (CB) Allotment Administration update and financials.</p>	
FC20/012a	<p>a) To consider Council's Action Plan for 2020/21: Revisions were made to Action Plan after discussion. Clerk was directed to update and recirculate to all members.</p>	Clerk
FC20/012b	<p>b) To consider report on s.106 funds available for sports and youth projects in the parish:</p> <p>Clerk had prepared a further report based on additional funding updates from EDDC s.106 officer. After discussion and consideration of monies available and youth needs around the village, and taking into account the recent consultation on the MUGA principle undertaken by Cllr. Ranger which had been accepted by EDDC as evidence, it was agreed by committee that a new all-weather MUGA to replace the existing facility was viable and that funds could be used from the s.106 to deliver the new amenity. However, committee pulled back from making a formal recommendation to Council that a formal expression of intent be proposed until such time as quotes could be obtained from play providers to ensure that the project was deliverable and thus prevent a lack of funding to delay the project and thus disappoint younger residents. Clerk was directed to seek quotes and return to Fin.Comm. with information and findings as quickly as possible.</p> <p>Clerk: Please note and contact at least 3 play providers with a view to obtaining quotations for an all-weather MUGA at the site in question.</p>	Clerk

FC20/012c	<p>c) To consider current progress with WC refurbishment project:</p> <p>Clerk reported that he had met with the architect once again as requested and that amendments had been made to the plans as per Working Party suggestions. No further charges had been made for the revisions.</p> <p>Committee members were happy to proceed with the next stage of the project which would entail seeking quotations for the works from suitable contractors but Chair felt it appropriate for Full Council to consider the matter collectively at the next Ordinary meeting, taking on board the recommendations of Fin.Comm. Agreed.</p> <p>Clerk: Please note and add to FEB ORD agenda accordingly.</p>	Clerk
FC20/012d	<p>d) To consider proposal for installation of village CCTV system as a public safety measure:</p> <p>Chair outlined current status of CCTV coverage and made suggestions as to where a suitable system could be sited to give maximum coverage but also to be visually unobtrusive. After significant discussion, it was felt that this matter should be considered by Full Council because of the potential costs and the sensitive nature of CCTV and public perception and possible objections to the scheme. Agreed.</p> <p>Clerk: Please note and add to FEB ORD agenda accordingly.</p>	Clerk
FC20/012e	<p>e) To consider financial implications of Council's recent Climate Change Emergency Declaration:</p> <p>In light of recent email correspondence between members on the subject of the formation of a Climate Change Working Party, it was felt that this matter should be deferred until the establishment of said working party and agreement on Terms of Reference, meeting format etc. That subject would be discussed at the next Full meeting of Council. Deferred.</p> <p>Clerk: Please note and add to FEB ORD agenda accordingly.</p>	Clerk
FC20/012f	<p>f) To consider potential costs of ongoing project to determine Possessory Title on the land known as the Playing Fields:</p> <p>Clerk provided a report based on previous discussions and directions on this matter. Clerk had been unable to provide a definite figure for the overall cost of proving title at the Land Registry (LR) as several actions needed to be undertaken first to provide the necessary evidence as per LR requirements, all of which carried their own costs, which varied by supplier. After discussion, and review of the plans for the site, which was currently unregistered land, and ongoing discussions with DCC and the Public Rights of Way officers, it was suggested that this matter be deferred until a definitive agreement was possible on WHAT land area needed to be included in the title claim. Clerk was asked to obtain more information from DCC and report back to Council for further instructions.</p> <p>Clerk: Please note and add to FEB ORD agenda accordingly. Please liaise with DCC to obtain further clarification of the historic land use and responsibility for the FP3 footpath route.</p>	Clerk

FC20/012g)	<p>g) To consider matters relating to Council’s Annual Risk Assessment (part 2/3):</p> <p>Finance Committee considered part 2 of the Annual Risk Assessment and made revisions as discussed; these included: <i>Parish Council Election financial reserves held</i> <i>Amendments to banking risk status re: signatories</i> <i>Internal Auditor notes</i> <i>Loss of Key Personnel and associated risks to Council</i></p> <p>It was agreed to finalise the Risk Assessment at the next Finance Committee meeting whereby the substantive document could be voted upon and recommended for approval by Full Council. Clerk: Please amend as directed and re-circulate to Fin.Comm. members for next meeting.</p>	Clerk
FC20/012h	<p>h) To agree content and format of Chair’s Annual Budget and Precept statement to parish:</p> <p>Chair agreed to draft the statement to include the key points: <i>No increase in precept demand</i> <i>Effective decrease in Band D equiv. due to higher taxbase</i> <i>Multiple projects ongoing / in pipeline</i> <i>Healthy financial position with stable and reasonable reserves</i> Chair: Please prepare and circulate to members of Council prior to Annual Parish Meeting and publication.</p>	Chair
FC20/012i	<p>i) To consider expansion of parish handyman contract:</p> <p>Clerk asked that Committee consider this matter in closed session as certain aspects of the discussion were likely to include confidential contractor information which may be prejudicial to the public interest. Proposed by Chair. Resolved (see below)</p>	
FC20/012j	<p>j) To consider expenditure relating to Fire Safety equipment at the Surgery building:</p> <p><i>Chair declared a personal interest as a shareholder in a commercial organisation that provides such equipment, although NOT for this location presently.</i></p> <p>Clerk had sought quotes for both servicing of the existing equipment and also for the like-for-like replacement of the same. Chair had felt that unnecessary replacement of the equipment (which was believed to be in good condition) was not in accordance with the principles of the Council’s recent Climate Change Declaration and had asked Clerk to seek service quotations, which were presented to committee.</p> <p>One Contractor (D) was cheaper but Clerk wondered whether all the equipment (including that at the Pavilion) could be serviced for the price quoted. Chair stated that usual practice was to certificate “per site” and that consolidation probably would not be permitted. Clerk was directed to seek further information but delegated to act to ensure that Council was not in breach re: expiry dates etc. Clerk: Please note and action accordingly</p>	Clerk

FC20/013	<p>Matters considered as urgent by presiding Chair: Clerk provided an update on the matter of the tree stump in the Car Park at Back Lane. Chair proposed to use his delegated authority (on the grounds of public safety and risk to Council) to authorise the expenditure of £200 to contract out the grinding and removal of the stump. Clerk: Please note and arrange accordingly as a matter of urgency.</p>	Clerk
FC20/014	<p>Date and time of next Finance Committee meeting; It was proposed that the next meeting of the Finance Committee be held on Thursday 19th March, 7pm, venue to be agreed upon.</p>	
FC20/015	<p>It was proposed that, under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by Local Government Act 1972, the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed. (P) Chair. (S) Vice-Chair. Resolved unanimously.</p>	
FC20/016	<p>Matters to be considered in committee:</p> <p>a) Clerk reported on an employment matter. Noted but no further action required at present. No financial implication to Council. b) Members discussed a matter relating to the provision and delivery of Council's Service Contracts. It was agreed to take further action and notify the relevant parties accordingly. It was also agreed to amend the Council's banking arrangements accordingly. Proposed Chair, seconded Vice-Chair. Resolved unanimously. c) As per above (item FC20/12i) the Clerk gave a verbal report on the progress and delivery of the Parish Handyman Scheme. Noted. No further action required at the present time.</p>	
	<p>With no further business to consider, the Chair closed the meeting of the Finance Committee at 8.45pm.</p>	

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Signed as a true record of the meeting above:

Chair: _____

Date: _____