

Minutes of the Benson Parish Council Finance Committee meeting held on Thursday 1st June 2006 at 7:30pm in Benson Parish Hall Committee Room

Present:
Cllr W Pattison (Chairman)
Cllr J Fowler (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Spence (Chairman Halls)
Cllr Peers (Chairman Lands & Recreation)
Mrs Lemaire (Finance Officer)
Ms Ellis (DPS)

Proper Officer: Mrs S Brown

1. Apologies: None

2. Budget Update and Budget Monitoring:

Cllrs were shown budget statement and discuss how they would like the Finance Officer to prepare future reports. It was agreed to receive a report containing columns for:

- a. monthly spend and spend to date
- b. monthly income and income to date

It was also requested for concerns to be highlighted.

Spend for April = £13,755 spent, £3,595 income

The precept was £7,631 monthly therefore £2,528 was funded from reserve

Spend for May was £7,894, £5,510 income

Therefore only £2,384 of the precept was spent with enough left over from May to cover the overspend of April

Cllrs requested a simple spreadsheet for Parish Council meetings.

3. To sign off the reconciled bank statement for the current account as at April 30th 2006: Deferred to next full council meeting with the following amendments:

- a. Transfer 3,000 from Denis Bloomfield Trust back to precept savings
- b. Add line to show transfer in payments section

4. To sign cheques:

503360 ACH Flooring Services Ltd	£ 323.13 (VAT 48.13)
503361 Allianz Cornhill Insurance Plc	£3,758.73

5. Staff Feedback:

a. Mrs Tanya Ellis DPS

The DPS and Chairman explained that role was still evolving with a view to more involvement with Hall bookings and stewardship. The temporary employment contract had been left open to cover the period until the DPS registration and licence was complete. This was now complete and a permanent employment contract is to be drawn up for signature. It was noted that the temporary employment contract had not been signed by Mrs Ellis and this was done at the meeting. Cllr Spence was hoping to complete the IT upgrade within the office within the next 2 weeks and this would allow the DPS work at the office more often and have access to notebook facilities. It was pointed out that the DPS was unable to work in the office when both

Clerk and Finance Officer were in due to lack of space. Until this was resolved the office staff would have to evolve a suitable way of working. The DPS will also deal with the issues of opening and closing for hirers, making sure all hirers collect keys where possible and liaise with the Caretaker. The DPS and Clerk will put into operation a key holders list and request the holders to sign a conditions form. The DPS requested that she deal with SODC regarding the variations to the licence if Councilor Booker as no objections. The Committee stressed that all DPS issues should be dealt via the Parish Clerk and that a report should be raised for each Halls Committee meeting.

2. Mrs Elizabeth Lemaire Finance Officer

Mrs Lemaire informed the Committee that she had not signed a Contract of Employment. It was agreed to change the Pensions options as required and note the amendment at the signature box. She requested that Microsoft Office be available for her computer so that she could access Excel for spreadsheets and that attention is drawn to the noise of the CCTV equipment within the office. Cllr Spence agreed to look into this. It was agreed to keep the Finance Officer hours at 20 and also agreed that salary should be based on NALC National Salary Scale LC1 Benchmark 19 £16,740 pro rata. With regard to transfers, the Finance Officer will ensure that a new password is in operation. The security of e-mailing spreadsheets was discussed and agreed that it was acceptable between Councilors.

3. Mrs Sue Brown Parish Clerk

Mrs Brown informed the Committee that she was still finding her feet and that this would take some time. She had concerns with the space within the office, the noisy CCTV equipment and the accessibility to the public. A time sheet of hours worked was being kept and it was showing that the average was approximately 25 hours per week over the last 2 months. The Committee agreed that this was reasonable and could exceed this at times. Contracts of employment had not been signed by any employed staff. It was agreed to draw up formal contracts of employment for the Youth Hall Cleaner and the Youth Club Leader and to ensure that all staff had a signed contract. All staff should also declare other employment and confirm in writing that they are responsible for the payment of their own National Insurance and Tax. The Parish Hall caretaker and outside contractor were paid both by invoice. The Clerk had been visited by Jan Gossett of Oxfordshire Association of Local Clerks who had offered useful advice. One suggestion was to delegate more powers to Committees so as not to have such a long agenda at full Council.

4. Any Other Business:

a. Office Space: Cllr Spence had been looking at the feasibility of alternative office space. Consideration was being given to the loss of revenue of either the lounge or the committee room, and accessibility. The income from the lounge was approximately £2,500 per year. It was noted that the Pavilion was currently underused and could be renovated to accommodate certain hirers.

b. Paddock Lease: Letter had been sent to leaseholder regarding removal of buildings erected without consent. Concern expressed as to whether or not lease agreement required renewal. Committee confirmed that Item 1 of lease

states that the lease will run 'thereafter from year to year until determined by either party giving to the other at least three months notice in writing at any time'. Clerk to confirm with Simon Alden and Committee will wait for a response from Leaseholder before taking matter of the buildings further.

c. Risk Assessment Review: Cllr Spence informed the Finance Officer that the Risk Assessment was reviewed in October 2005 and that the minute showing this (as required by the External Audit) should be found around that date.

d. Proposals: Cllr Peers noted there were quite a lot of proposals on the last Agenda and thought that some had been through Council previously. She asked if the Clerk could keep a list of Proposals/Motions, if this was not being kept already.

e. Parish Hall Heating: Cllr Spence agreed to contact Martin Clark EEP with regard to re-tendering for the works. He would request a quote for the management fees.

There being no other business, meeting closed at 9:45pm