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Chairman:
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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 9th January 2019 at 7.30pm at the Harrold Centre

Public forum (Parishioner names always withheld for Data Protection)

Three members of the HPFA (Harrold Playing Field Association) attended to update the council on the progress of the pavilion and Scout Hut renovation projects. Pavilion: The ECB (English Cricket Board) have objected to the current renovation plans due to the existing layout not matching current safeguarding guidelines (changing rooms must be visible from the front of the building). This means that a total rebuild to the pavilion would be needed, resulting in a cost far exceeding the current budgeted amount. Discussions are ongoing. Scout Hut: Request for the council to provide £27k of the sidelined £100k put aside for both projects. Council responded favourably to this and will place this on the February agenda for approval.

1. **Present:** R Tickle (Chair), G Lloyd, A Foster (Bedford Borough Council), D Brough (Vice Chair), S Reger, P Pedersen
Apologies: J Peverell, L Duggan, D Mercer, R Brough (Clerk), B Muller, R Barrett
2. **Disclosure of Interest** – Cllr Brough declared an interest in the Clerk salary in the budget and will leave the room for the discussion as to whether the Clerk salary should be aligned to benchmarked NJC guidelines, and not vote. Cllr Pedersen declared an interest in the planning application, which was submitted by a friend. Cllr Pedersen will remain in the room for the discussion, but not vote.
3. **Approval of Minutes** from the Parish Council meeting held 14th November 2018
Council approved the minutes unanimously and the Chairman signed them.
4. **Matters arising from meeting held 14th November 2018:** Clerk's report on the Actions List.
 - Fawns Playgrounds works to install the new fort at the Harrold Centre playground and carry out playground fixes is due to start on 9th January.
 - Remaining actions relate to items on the agenda.
5. **Finance Report:**
 - a. Approval for requests for monthly payments
The following monthly payments were approved:

Ref #	Invoice Date	Payment	Details	Method	Payments		Receipts	
					Net	Gross	Net	Gross
Trans157	11 November 2018	Grass: In Trim	Nov Payment	SO	460.00			
Trans158	11 November 2018	Project: Neighbourhood plan	Neighbourhood Plan Consulting Fees- T Roff	SO	250.00			
Trans159	12 November 2018	Cemetary Income:		Chq			641.00	
Trans160	15 November 2018	Grant Out: Harrold URC	Remembrance Service refreshments	Int Trf	14.21			
Trans161	19 November 2018	Other: Lych Gate repair	50% of total invoice in advance to Alpha 4x4 Joinery	Int Trf	1,056.10			
Trans162	19 November 2018	Stone wall by the bridge - first payment	Nene Valley Homes G8127910712	Int Trf	6,633.00			
Trans163	19 November 2018	Grant Out: Harrold Good Neighbours		Int Trf	500.00			
Trans164	20 November 2018	Clerk Salary: R Brough Tax NI		SO	70.22			
Trans165	20 November 2018	Street Ranger	Luke Clarke	Int Trf	500.00			
Trans171	28 November 2018	Clerk Salary: R Brough		SO	918.12			
Trans172	08 November 2018	Other: Various	Expenses: Replacement xmas light leads and splitters. Xmas direct 717 370 242.	Int Trf	61.94			
Trans173	03 December 2018	Electricity: Buttermarket EON		DD	41.25			
Trans174	03 December 2018	Clerk Salary: R Brough Pension		DD	42.86			
Trans175	03 December 2018	Other: Various	Luke Clarke - bridge signs vegetation clearance	Int Trf	130.00			
Trans176	05 December 2018	Brook: R Sinclair	For Nov work	SO	400.00			
Trans177	05 December 2018	Grant Out: The Bridge magazine		Int Trf	500.00			
Trans178	05 December 2018	Cemetary Income:		Chq			305.00	
Trans179	07 December 2018	Brook: Skip at Town Farm	Riches skips	Int Trf	213.00			
Trans180	07 December 2018	Brook: Skip at Town Farm	Riches skips - missed payment from October	Int Trf	213.00			
Trans181	10 December 2018	Project: Neighbourhood plan	Neighbourhood Plan Consulting Fees- T Roff	SO	250.00			
Trans182	10 December 2018	Other: Insurance	Came & Co Annual Insurance	Int Trf	2,929.02			
Trans183	10 December 2018	Bottle Bank: Income	Quarter 2 Jul - Sep 2018	BACS			277.11	
Trans184	11 December 2018	Office: Phone & Broadband BT		DD	29.42			
Trans185	11 December 2018	Grass: In Trim	Dec Payment	SO	460.00			
Trans186	20 December 2018	Clerk Salary: R Brough Tax NI		SO	70.22			
Trans187	20 December 2018	Street Ranger	Luke Clarke	Int Trf	500.00			
Trans188	24 December 2018	Office: Phone & Broadband BT	Qtrly payment	DD	113.88			
Trans189	27 December 2018	Payroll: Cambridgeshire ACRE		Int Trf	30.00			
Trans190	27 December 2018	Office: Phone & Broadband BT	Phone topup - reimburse D Brough	Int Trf	50.00			
Trans191	28 December 2018	Clerk Salary: R Brough		SO	918.12			
Trans192	29 December 2018	Other: Various	Expenses: Xmas tree lights	Int Trf	85.92			
Trans193	29 December 2018	Other: Various	Expenses: Stagsden Xmas Tree and Delivery	Int Trf	160.00			
Trans194	29 December 2018	Other: Various	Expenses: Street Ranger bin bags	Int Trf	16.60			
					38,677.40		20,561.81	

b. Profit & Loss report: Variance analysis - Actual spend vs Budget

To be covered under the Precept setting agenda item (item 10) as the budget is calculated from current spend. In short, current budgeting has been pretty accurate, meaning small variances between budget and spend each year.

c. Balance Sheet: Financial position

To be covered in more detail under the Precept setting agenda item (item 10) as the budget is calculated with consideration for current savings. In short, total funds amounts to 175k with an estimated £24k unallocated savings.

6. Crime statistics and information and intelligence exchange

No crime report given by the police due to systems issues.

7. Borough Councillor's report for Harrold Ward.

Report to be posted on the physical noticeboard and the website under "Communications" (Action Clerk).

8. Planning Applications for comment

APPLICATION NO: 18/03195/FUL Full Planning Application.

PROPOSAL: Proposed single storey front extension and canopy to replace existing front conservatory entrance hall.

LOCATION: Kingfishers School Lane Harrold Bedford Bedfordshire MK43 7DE.

Resolved to issue no objection.

9. Update from Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee

Standing monthly item.

Committee Chair's work commitments have now reduced and works on the Plan should commence again shortly.

10. Agree the budget and precept for 2019/20

To decide the budget for the coming year, to enable the precept to be set.

Cllr Brough talked through the budget calculation – this is available on the council website in the Finance section. In summary, the precept has been increased from £72,645 to £74,708 for inflation (CPI) and a slight increase in the amount of Band D tax registered properties (tax base). Noteable changes to this year’s budget include: Savings from no longer having the office space in the village. Additional costs from the employment of a permanent Street Ranger to litterpick/leafsweep/bin empty, alignment of the Clerk’s salary to NJC benchmarked guidelines (to be voted on in February’s meeting for transparency reasons), an annual accrual for replacing the playgrounds in the long-term future, and a reduction in the amount set aside for maintenance items due to heavier spending in the last two years to maintain items in the village.

Declaration of interests: Cllr Brough left the room for the Clerk salary discussion and did not vote.

Precept and budget were approved unanimously by the remaining councillors.

11. To decide whether to progress with the quote for re-mortaring the Lockup

Quote has been received from Harrold-based DG Stonemasons (c. £3k).

A second quote was also obtained from Nene Valley Homes (c. £5k). Both contractors were known to perform high quality work so the council resolved to award the work to DG Stonemasons due to the more favourable quote (Unanimous decision). **(Action Clerk).**

12. Ratify grant request from The Bridge magazine

Grant request was received for £500 to cover printing costs.

Resolved to approve this grant request for The Bridge magazine as the council feels the magazine is an important communication tool for villagers, and for the council to provide information to its parishioners (Unanimous decision).

13. Ratify decision to take Street Ranger Luke Clarke on as a permanent role

Currently the Street Ranger is providing cover for the current maintenance contractor. However, there is enough litterpicking/leaf sweeping/bin emptying work for this to be a full-time role.

The council is keen to see the village looking as tidy as possible and is very pleased with Luke’s work (he has been employed temporarily since August 2018). Resolved to employ Luke Clarke at £500 a month given all necessary work has been done for bringing an employee on to the council payroll (eg Employers Liability insurance in place). (Unanimous approval). **(Action Clerk).**

14. Agree wording for sign to be attached to the new lifebag (rescue throwbag) on the Lower Green

The Fire Service will attach their own sign with practical rescue advice. However, the parish council wish to attach their own sign warning of strong currents/pockets of deep water and alerting people to the recent fatality that occurred. This was also recommended by the coroner at the recent inquest attended by Chairman Tickle.

Resolved to add a sign stating: “Danger: Deep water. Strong currents. People have drowned here.” **(Action Clerk).**

15. Agree date for February council meeting

The Harrold Centre have realised there is a double booking for the 13th February and we’ve agreed to rearrange our meeting.

Resolved to choose 20th February 2019 as the date of the next meeting.

16. Any other business

Cllr Lloyd has been approached by a parishioner to request that something be done to assist wheelchair users when crossing the main bridge. Councillors cannot suggest an effective way of dealing with this. Resolved to approach BBC Highways for advice. **(Action Clerk)**.

Cllr Calver and Cllr Brough discussed replacing the lights on The Green. These have broken over the years: in part, due to vandalism, but also due to quality issues. Cllr Brough has run out of replacements and requested last month that the council start to think about replacement with alternatives. Cost of replacements and an alternative method of hanging the lights to be sought. **(Action Cllr Brough)**.

17. Correspondence:

- a) Parishioner emailed to request that we make a plan to remove some of the trees on The Green, which he feels are damaging the thatch on the cottages. Council has previously carried out crown reduction works on the trees, but stopped short of carrying out a full crowning on professional advice.*

This correspondence has previously been discussed by the council. The Tree Working Group will form a plan to put before the council after they finish the project to add new trees in Harrold.

- b) Parishioner emailed to request that we replace the ageing streetlights along the road down by the country park with the newer style (LED) to match the rest of the village, and to provide more light where pedestrians cross the road into the park. Clerk has requested costs from the borough council in case we wish to go ahead with this.*

The borough council have provided some of the costs for the streetlights. They no longer hold stock for fixing the old-style lamps, so we are being encouraged to upgrade to LED. If the borough council do carry out the upgrades then they would want to adopt ownership of them, which will come with costs (not yet specified). There are up to ten Parish Council owned streetlights that would need replacing. The initial survey costs are around £600 to check them all for asbestos and for structural issues. To remedy the asbestos situation (if it was present) and create a scheme to update the streetlights would be £500-800 for each post. If the post were to be replaced there would be costs for putting in a metal version and redoing the electrics - we haven't been given these costs yet. The borough wouldn't be able to start these works before April 2019.

Clerk will pursue this with companies other than the borough council to find out costs, and Alison Foster (Borough Councillor) has agreed to find out if the borough costs are fair. We understand from Alison that other parish councils are facing similar issues and simply cannot afford/justify replacing them. **(Action Clerk)**.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 20th February 2019
In the HARROLD CENTRE