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**STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET PARISH COUNCIL F&GP COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a meeting of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held on Wednesday 22nd February 2023 at 7.30pm in the Mountfitchet Exchange, Crafton Green, 72 Chapel Hill, Stansted Mountfitchet, Essex

**PRESENT** Cllr J O’Brien (Chair), Cllrs M Caton, J Hogg, P Jones, F Richards and G Sell

**ATTENDING** Mrs Ruth Clifford – Parish Clerk

Mrs Emma Philbrick – Deputy Clerk

1 member of the press (Via Zoom)

1 member of the public (Via Zoom)

**361 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Jessup – Working

Having been proposed by Cllr O’Brien and seconded by Cllr Jones, it was unanimously:

**RESOLVED** to accept the apologies for absence from Cllr Jessup

**362 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Sell declared an interest in agenda item 9 as he is the UDC representative for Uttlesford Community Travel – He will not vote on this item

**363 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11TH JANUARY 2023**

**RESOLVED** To accept the minutes of the meeting held on 11th January 2023 as a true and accurate account

**364 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON ACTION POINTS FROM THE LAST MEETING**

None

**365 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE CHAIR, CLLR O’BRIEN**

Attached

**366 LIGHTING**

**a) TO RECEIVE AN OUTAGE REPORT**

Cllrs Caton and O’Brien advised of lights that were out in West Road and St John’s Road. These will be reported by the office in the morning.

**b) TO RECEIVE A GENERAL REPORT ON LIGHTING**

Nothing further to report

**367 FINANCE**

**a) TO APPROVE THE LIST OF PAYMENTS FOR AUTHORISATION**

The Clerk advised that Cllr Jones had checked the invoices against the schedule before the start of the meeting. The list of payments was approved.

**b) TO RECEIVE THE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT ON 31ST JANUARY 2023**

This was circulated to members ahead of the meeting. There were no questions.

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**368 TO CONSIDER QUOTES FOR REPLACEMENT FENCING AT FORESTHALL PARK**

The Clerk advised that this was a knee rail in Jordan Close which was rotten and beyond repair. Two quotes had been received which were only £10 different from each other. She advised that the money would be paid from the Foresthall Park Maintenance fund. Cllr Sell asked how much was left in the fund and the Clerk explained that she did not have the figure to hand but that they were still awaiting the £93,000 plus from Croudace. The solicitors were still chasing this but UDC need to give us the details of who at Croudace is dealing with it so that they can be contacted direct. The Clerk will be chasing the S106 Officer, Emma Barry, on this again. Cllr Sell advised that he would speak to Dean Hermitage to see if he could do anything.

Having been proposed by Cllr Jones and seconded by Cllr Richards, it was unanimously:

**RESOLVED** To accept the cheaper quote for the replacement of the knee rail.

**369 TO CONSIDER A SECOND GRANT REQUEST FROM UTTLESFORD COMMUNITY TRAVEL**

The email received from Uttlesford Community Travel was circulated to members with the agenda. Members sympathised that they were suffering due to the increased costs of petrol and other rising costs. They acknowledged that the service was used regularly to get people to Touchpoint. Members questioned how many drivers they had and Cllr Sell advised that they have 2 x full time drivers and a number of ad hoc drivers who are called upon as and when needed. They have 6 vans on the road. It is the voluntary drivers who they are losing mainly. These drivers use their own vehicles to take parishioners to their hospital appointments but the amount they are paid per mile does not cover the cost of fuel so they are making a loss.

Cllr Jones proposed granting them £400.

Cllr Caton commented that although she would not like to see them cease, she was concerned they were not being as effective as they could be. They should be doing succession planning and have a contingency plan in place. Cllr Sell offered to feed this back to them. Cllr Richards thinks the Parish Council should see a business plan for any future grant requests as this could result in them being awarded a higher sum.

Having been proposed by Cllr Jones and seconded by Cllr Richards, with 5 votes in favour and 1 abstention, it was:

**RESOLVED** to award Uttlesford Community Travel a grant of £400.

Cllr Jones offered to put some questions together for UCT which Cllr Sell would present to them.

**370 CHRISTMAS LIGHTING – TO DISCUSS PLANS FOR CHRISTMAS 2023**

Cllr O’Brien advised that the previous working group consisted of himself and Cllrs Caton, Hogg, Prior and Smith. He had emailed them all asking if they wished to continue and so far Cllr Caton was the only other member confirmed as well as himself. Cllr Hogg confirmed he did not have the time but would help where he could. Cllr Jones agreed to help if the other members were not going to continue. Cllr O’Brien outlined some potential ideas for Christmas 2023 which included focusing on decorative lighting. Many freeholders had made it clear that they did not want to get involved and it was clear that they did not want to be contacted again regarding this. Another idea could be to sponsor Christmas trees which would be offered around for people to decorate.

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**371 CRAFTON GREEN – TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES ON THE COMMUNITY BUILDINGS**

The Clerk thanked Cllr O’Brien who had designed a spec for the refurbishment of the toilets for the Day Centre. This would be put forward in the next round of the Shared Prosperity grants as this year’s window was too short. A complaint about this has been made by the Clerk but she is yet to hear back.

**372 WINDMILL – TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES**

Nothing to update. Cllr O’Brien advised that they are looking at means for applying for grants and they may approach the Council to seek using the Windmill fund held as part funding. The Clerk advised that if this were to happen, then a meeting of the Trustees would need to be called.

**373 YOUTH MATTERS – TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES**

Cllr Caton advised the following:

Youth Club – This is due to open at the end of the month at the new site at the Peter Kirk Centre. Herself and the Clerk had visited the site and it looks very smart and very good. Essex Youth Initiative will be doing the publicity for the opening.

Youth Council – Along with the Clerk, she has appointments to visit Bentfield School and Forest Hall School.

**374** **STAFF MATTERS – TO RECEIVE ANY AVAILABLE UPDATES**

Nothing to update.

Meeting closed at 8.00pm

**ACTION POINTS**

366 Office to report light outages in West Road and St John’s Road

370 Working Group to work on ideas and costings and bring back to Committee