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**STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a meeting of the **FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held at 8.00pm on Wednesday 30th March 2022 at The Mountfitchet Exchange, Crafton Green, 72 Chapel Hill, Stansted Mountfitchet, Essex

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

**ATTENDING** Mrs Ruth Clifford – Parish Clerk

 Mrs Emma Philbrick – Trainee Deputy Clerk

 Cllrs J Hudson & P Jones

 Cllrs A Barnes, A Guney, L Prior and T Smith – On Zoom

 1 member of the public – On Zoom

**392 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr Smith is attending via Zoom due to being in close contact with a positive Covid case.

**393 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST -** None

**394 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12TH JANUARY 2022**

 **RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 12th January 2022 as a true and accurate account

**395 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON PROGRESS SINCE THE LAST MEETING**

Nothing to update

**396 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE CHAIR, CLLR O’BRIEN -** Attached

**397 LIGHTING**

**a) TO RECEIVE AN OUTAGE REPORT**

The Clerk reported that there was an issue with all of the lights in Crafton Green and the car park but this was down to UKPN and they had been on site trying to resolve this since Monday morning.

 There was an issue with the lights in Park Road but A&J Lighting were on site today looking at these.

 Cllr Hogg asked regarding the lights which were removed along Cambridge Road. The Clerk explained that they were removed by Essex Highways as they failed their Safety Inspection Test. The Clerk had been chasing to see when these would be replaced but was still awaiting confirmation.

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

Cllr O’Brien advised that the lighting along the Black Bridge was being looked at and he was awaiting a quote from A&J Lighting for an alteration to WR5 which is sited within a property’s garden. He was also trying to speak to Network Rail to see if the Parish Council could obtain a licence to install lighting.

**398 FINANCE – TO APPROVE THE LIST OF PAYMENTS FOR AUTHORISATION -** Approved

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**399 PARISH GRANTS – TO CONSIDER APPLICATIONS RECEIVED**

Cllr Sell declared an interest as he is the UDC representative on the Uttlesford Community Travel board so will not vote on this application.

 Applications had been received from the Stansted Millers, Uttlesford Community Travel, Stansted Hall & Elsenham Cricket Club and Touchpoint.

The Clerk gave details of the four applications received. She highlighted the amount they were requesting and what they would use the money for. Cllr Sell said in his opinion the Windmill Fete was the most significant fete in Stansted and people from outside the village come to it also. Cllr O’Brien advised that one objection had been received to the application from the Millers. Cllr Sell added that he believed that the money would go towards enhancing the tourist attraction. Cllr O’Brien commented that it was an asset of the village.

The Chair gave permission to Cllr Jones to speak and he commented that he was impressed with the amount of youngsters who were attending the Stansted Hall & Elsenham Cricket Club and that it should be supported. He also believed that aside from the other work TouchPoint were doing, it was good that they were seeking match-funding.

 Application 1 – Stansted Millers

 Having been proposed by Cllr Sell and seconded by Cllr Jessup it was unanimously:

 **RESOLVED** to award a grant of £500 to the Stansted Millers

 Application 2 – Uttlesford Community Travel

 Having been proposed by Cllr Jessup and seconded by Cllr Richards and with 4 votes in favour, 1 abstention and 1 vote against it was:

 **RESOLVED** to award a grant of £1,250 to Uttlesford Community Travel

 Application 3 – Stansted Hall & Elsenham Cricket Club

 Having been proposed by Cllr Jessup and seconded by Cllr Caton it was unanimously:

 **RESOLVED** to award a grant of £500 to Stansted Hall & Elsenham Cricket Club

 Application 4 – Touchpoint

 Having been proposed by Cllr Sell and seconded by Cllr Hogg it was unanimously:

 **RESOLVED** to award a grant of £1,150 to Touchpoint

**400 CHRISTMAS LIGHTING – TO ESTABLISH A WORKING GROUP**

Cllr O’Brien advised that it was time to start looking into a scheme to improve the lighting in the village for Christmas 2022 and the best way for this to be done was for a working group to be set up to research ideas and costs. Cllrs Caton, Hogg, Jessup, O’Brien, Prior and Smith all put themselves forward to be on the working group.

**401 BONFIRE NIGHT – TO CONSIDER DELEGATING TO THE EVENTS WORKING GROUP**

It was unanimously agreed that the working group set up at the Full Council meeting should be asked to organise the Bonfire night event and that looking for premises should be the first job.

**402 PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE**

**a) TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24TH MARCH ’22 –** Received

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**b) TO CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING**

Cllr Richards advised that there were two recommendations that needed considering:

Under minute 381 - Parish Council Opening Hours – Having been proposed by Cllr Richards and seconded by Cllr Jessup it was unanimously:

 **RESOLVED** to change the opening hours of the Parish Council reception desk to 10am to 2pm Monday to Friday with a review in 6 months.

 This does not apply to telephone and email contact with the Parish Council office which remains unchanged.

 Cllr Sell asked if any plans were in place to work in association with Uttlesford District Council to deliver their services direct to the community from The Mountfitchet Exchange. Cllr Caton advised that discussions are ongoing with the new Chief Executive and when she has clarification she will report this to the Council. Cllr Jones recalled that for many years there had been £10,000 allocated for this purpose in the UDC budget and Cllr Sell agreed to find out whether any funds are still available.

Under minute 384, Staff Pay Awards – Having been proposed by Cllr Richards and seconded by Cllr Sell it was unanimously:

 **RESOLVED** to award staff members a 1.75% pay increase with effect from 1st April 2022

 This is in line with the National Joint Council award for April 2021.

**403 STAFF MATTERS**

The Clerk advised that members will be receiving further proposals from the Personnel Committee at the next meeting.

**404 CRAFTON GREEN**

The Clerk gave the following update:

 The Crafton Green Working Group are meeting on Monday to consider the schedule of repairs to enable Touchpoint to get installed as soon as possible.

 A quote has been accepted for the knock through, but a start date is awaited.

 Touchpoint have secured funding for other improvements around the Day Centre.

**405 WINDMILL**

Cllr O’Brien gave the following update:

 A Windmill meeting took place earlier where a report was received from Richard Thomas, Treasurer to Stansted Millers.

 It had previously been agreed at Full Council that the Parish Council would underwrite the costs of the summer fete which they were very grateful for.

 They had previously approached the lottery fund for grants for the fete but this year they were going to apply to the Lottery Heritage Fund instead for between £40,000 and £50,000 towards the repointing of the brickwork.

 The stock clamps are shaped, treated and ready and are due to be put in place later this year.

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**406 RISK ASSESSMENTS**

The updated risk assessment document had been emailed to Committee members prior to the meeting. The Clerk confirmed that she had reviewed the document and the Chair confirmed that he had done the same and then also compiled a summary of each category which will be circulated with the minutes. The Clerk also advised that together with the Chair, she was devising a new, more workable document as this version is too unwieldy.

**407 YOUTH MATTERS**

Cllr Caton advised the following:

 Have been trying to promote more members to attend the Youth Council. At present there are three vibrant members who all bring a lot of individuality.

 The Parish Council, ECC and the District Council held their quarterly Partnership meeting last week regarding the Youth Centre. We are now starting to prepare for inviting tenders for the service from April 2023. This is being done with caution as there are not that many providers around. We have been with the current provider for a number of years, and this does not mean we will not continue with them but the tender should be done as a matter of course.

 The Youth Centre did have a recent issue of youngsters attending from Harlow and Bishops Stortford, but the team have advised them that it was for Stansted residents only and they have not returned. Our PCSO and Special Constable have also attended site and spent time interacting with those attending.

Meeting closed at 8.57pm