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

MINUTES of the F&GP COMMITTEE meeting held on Wednesday 28th June 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, P Jones, A Khan and G Sell

**ATTENDING** Mrs Ruth Clifford – Clerk

Mrs Emma Philbrick – Deputy Clerk

Cllrs A Barnes, A Guney, J Hogg and L Prior – via Zoom

1 member of the press

4 members of the public – 1 via Zoom

**82 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Hogg – Holiday.

It was unanimously agreed to accept the apologies from Cllr Hogg.

Cllr Caton also sent her apologies for lateness as she is stuck in traffic.

**83 TO RECEIVE DELARATIONS OF INTEREST** - None

**84 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17TH MAY 2023**

**RESOLVED** To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17th May 2023 as a true and accurate account.

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

The Clerk has emailed Fiona Gardiner regarding both action points. Despite chasing there has been no reply. Cllr Sell offered to try to contact Fiona too so the Clerk will forward the emails to him.

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

Attached

Cllr Caton arrived at the meeting during the Chair’s report.

As the members of the public were in attendance for agenda item 11, the Chair suggested bringing this item forward to be discussed now. This was agreed.

**87 FIVE ACRES CABINET – TO CONSIDER THE REMEDIAL PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD BY GIGACLEAR**

The Chair read out the attached report with his proposal. Emails from residents of Five Acres, and also from Gigaclear, had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting.

A discussion took place between members and they all stated that they agreed with Cllr O’Brien’s comments. Whilst they welcomed the fact that Gigaclear are bringing a much-needed fast broadband service to the village, they expressed their disappointment in the way that Gigaclear have gone about it. Having been proposed by Cllr O’Brien and seconded by Cllr Jones, it was unanimously:

**RESOLVED** That this Council insists Gigaclear move the junction box to an area behind the bench seat, masked by existing vegetation, to make good the grassed area and recompense the Parish Council with the sum of

£25,000, for the loss of amenity and failure to consult fully in this matter.

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The Clerk suggested that she ask Gigaclear to attend a site visit with herself, Cllr O’Brien and the owners of the first house - which is the most directly affected - to see if the relocation site was suitable.

Cllr O’Brien asked the Five Acres residents who were in attendance if the new suggested site would be supported by them and they confirmed it would.

**88 LIGHTING**

**a) TO RECEIVE AN OUTAGE REPORT**

One light in Lower Street had been reported as day-burning.

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

The company due to carry out the structural and electrical testing have reported delays, so the decision has been made to start the conversion of the lights to LED. Cllrs O’Brien and Jones will be walking the village at night to identify which columns would be suitable for conversion to part-night lighting. The list will be brought before this committee for a decision on which ones to change for a trial period.

**89 FINANCE – TO APPROVE THE LIST OF PAYMENTS**

The Clerk advised that Cllr Jones had checked the invoices against the payment schedule before the start of the meeting.

The list of payments was approved.

**90 SAVINGS ACCOUNT – TO AUTHORISE THE THREE SIGNATORIES ON THE COUNCIL’S ACCOUNTS (THE CLERK, CLLRS CATON AND SELL) TO OPEN NEW SAVINGS ACCOUNTS AT UK BANKS/BUILDING SOCIETIES IN LINE WITH THE COUNCIL’S INVESTMENT STRATEGY. THIS INCLUDES OPENING A PUBLIC SECTOR DEPOSIT FUND ACCOUNT WITH THE CCLA, SAVINGS ACCOUNTS AT CAMBRIDGE AND COUNTIES AND ANY OTHER APPROPRIATE BANKS/BUILDING SOCIETES.**

The principle of investing the Council’s money into savings accounts, in line with our Investment Policy, has already been agreed. However, in selecting the particular funds appropriate for our needs, some have requested a minute of the meeting at which the named signatories are authorised to proceed. On that basis, having been proposed by Cllr Jones and seconded by Cllr Khan, it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** To authorise Cllr Maureen Caton, Cllr Geoffrey Sell and Ruth Clifford, Clerk and RFO to proceed with opening savings accounts with The Cambridge & Counties Building Society, the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund Account and any other bank/building society which they consider suitable.

**91 BANKING – TO AUTHORISE THE THREE SIGNATORIES NAMED ABOVE TO PROCEED WITH THE SWITCH TO A UNITY TRUST BANK CURRENT ACCOUNT**

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

**RESOLVED** To authorise the three signatories named above to proceed with the switch to a Unity Trust Bank Current Account.

**92 TO APPOINT A FOURTH SIGNATORY ON THE COUNCIL’S ACCOUNTS TO ENABLE PAYMENTS TO BE AUTHORISED IN A TIMELY MANNER E.G IF ONE OF THE OTHER SIGNATORIES IS ON HOLIDAY**

The Clerk advised that once the Council moves to Unity Trust, they will have a two stage authorisation process for payments and, to ensure availability of signatories i.e during holiday periods, a fourth signatory on the bank mandate would be

beneficial. Having been proposed by Cllr Caton and seconded by Cllr Sell, it was unanimously

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**RESOLVED** that Cllr Jones be added as the fourth signatory on the Council’s accounts once the switch to Unity Trust has taken place.

**93 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS – TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM CLLR O’BRIEN**

Cllr O’Brien advised that he had received a quote from the previous provider for the Christmas Lights for 2023. The money was in the Ear Marked Reserves.

Having been proposed by Cllr O’Brien and seconded by Cllr Sell it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** to proceed with the quote for the Christmas Lights for 2023.

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

A Licence to Occupy has been granted to Touchpoint for Crafton Green House. They are applying for several grants which require evidence of this. Members stated that the range of activities/support available through Touchpoint has been transformational for the community and for the Crafton Green site. They voiced the need to keep updating the public about what’s on offer and reiterating the support that the Parish Council provides.

**95 WINDMILL – TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES**

The Millers have decided that the Lottery Heritage Fund is not for them as there are too many complications with the re-pointing project to overcome at this stage. They are putting all their efforts into the fete and raising funds.

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

Cllr Caton gave the following updates:

Youth Council

The Council’s relationship with Forest Hall School was paying off and they have two new members and hopefully another one coming on board, giving four members in total. They school are also going to speak to the older students who are studying Citizenship to see if they will get involved. The members will be taken on a trip to the Houses of Parliament, along with students visiting from Rungis, later in the year.

Youth Club

Some information has been received from the service providers which has not allayed a number of concerns that we have raised previously, including the low attendance, the quality of activities being offered and the very limited social media and publicity material that has been seen. A further meeting will be held with the providers to discuss and address the issues.

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

The Clerk advised that there were no updates. Cllr O’Brien gave thanks to the staff for all their hard work especially when faced with criticism for lack of progress on projects – not necessarily within their control. This was supported by other members of the Committee.

Meeting closed at 8.12pm

**ACTION POINTS**

85 Clerk to forward her emails to Fiona Gardiner to Cllr Sell who will try to obtain answers.

88b Cllrs O’Brien and Jones to draft a proposal detailing which streetlights should be trialled for part-night lighting.