

Ash Parish Council Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday 9 November 2009 at 7.30pm Ash Village Hall Library

1. Present: Mr Foat (Chairman), Mr Darvell, Mr Lambie, Mr Cooper
Apologies: Mrs Bilham, Mr Gregory, Mr King, Mr Palmer, Mr Pratt, Prof Swingland, Mr Whitburn
2. Minutes of the Finance Committee held on 10 November 2008 were proposed by Mr Cooper, seconded by Mr Darvell, agreed and signed a true record.
3. Matters Arising – None
4. To be considered:
 - i) Possible current year spending was noted:-
 - to carry out tree work on Recreation Ground with the large ash tree to come down. Quotes being sought.
 - Chequer Lane footpath is being dealt with by DDC Horticultural Department, as is the silver birch in The Street Car Park
 - Dog Warden there is £300 left in current budget. It was agreed to ask if the Dog Warden could cover a full day or two half days and to include request for dogs to be kept on a lead on the Recreation Ground
 - Proposed by Mr Darvell, seconded by Mr Lambie and agreed to recommend that the Parish Council would fund half of the accepted quote for the Ash Village Hall curtains to be cleaned and fire proofed. This amount could be taken out of the contingency allocation in the current budget.
 - It was agreed to recommend considering a request for assistance from Scouts towards the refurbishment of new floor should it be made. If agreed this could come out of the contingency allocation in the current budget.
 - It was agreed to recommend ordering two Alcohol Designated Zone signs, costing £36 each from the Community Safety Unit to be put at Pound Corner and The Street Bus Shelter. Sgt Steele and PCSO Pollard had agreed that this would be helpful.
 - It was noted that the other items on order ie the bins for Pound Corner and The Street Bus Shelter had been allowed for in the current budget.
 - ii) Recommendations on new and earmarked reserves: –
 - a) To grant the Heritage Project - £1,500 with £500 allocated to the current budget and £1,000 to be held in ring fenced reserves
 - b) PCSO – hold the £6,000 in reserves but no additional money to be added
 - c) Youth - hold the £3,000 in reserves but no additional money to be added
 - d) Parish Plan – request information from the PP Group for the December meeting
 - iii) Administration costs recommended at £3,300 with no increased spend except for newsletters
 - iv) LDF Site Allocations Consultation – it was recommended to add £150 to hall hire as there may be a need to hold a public meeting when the consultation opens in 2010.
 - v) Contribution to Gateways – on the assumption that the grant application will be successful, it was recommended that £2,000 be included in the budget to complete the work.
 - vi) Contribution to Pavilion Paving – it was recommended that this be referred to the Sports Clubs
 - vii) Play area equipment and safety surfacing all in good order and only requiring ongoing maintenance.
 - viii) Grants recommend hold at same level as last year for:

- Ash Village Hall and Westmarsh Village Hall (Management Committee to be written to about the submission of their accounts to the Charity Commission)
- Parochial Church Council
- BTCV (Tree and Pond Warden Scheme)

- ix) Dog Warden recommend £500
 - x) Beating the Bounds boat hire and other costs for October event – recommend £500
 - xi) Tree work an amount for emergencies is needed, recommend £1,500 as in past years.
 - xii) The Recreation Ground cutting contract was considered and the two quotes from Saunders House and C&W Groundcare Ltd were considered. A recommendation would be taken at the December meeting.
 - xiii) The Street Toilets – Dover District Council were asking for £9,466 which is the total cost, broken down to cleaning £5,401, utilities £985, dryers £215, non domestic rates £1,576, maintenance £1,289. The current contribution is £2,600. The committee was appalled at the request and would be seeking more information from DDC at the Annual Town and Parishes Liaison meeting on Wed 11 Nov. The Clerk was asked to find out if the business rates would apply if the provision only covered the dis-abled toilet or if the 50% discount for sole provision would be applicable. There was a discussion on charging methods for the toilets. Wingham Parish Council would be contacted as they had received a similar request.
 - xiv) PCSO – it was recommended that the contract for the PCSO should continue, with a yearly review. The contribution was £13,500 for the year.
 - xv) Local Housing Needs Survey – £150 had been included in the administrative costs in case DDC insisted on updated information.
 - xvi) Staff matters. The national agreement for Town and Parish clerks had awarded a cost of living increase of 1% for the current year. There was no expectation that this would be any higher for the coming year. It was recommended that the Environment Assistant's increase stay in line with National Agricultural Craft Rate.
5. The Clerk was asked to compile the draft budget, with a recommended precept increase of 1.5%, not allowing for the yet to be determined contribution to the DDC Toilets at The Street car park.
6. Allotment Charges – one year's notice is required for any increase. Current Rent is £14 per annum and after consideration of increased water costs, it was recommended that the charge be increased to £18 per full plot as from 1 January 2011.
7. Any Other Business
- a cheque for £204.39 for Southern Water was signed which would need to be ratified at the December Council meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9pm.