

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes -2nd March 2022

Present: Cllr Melvin (AM), Cllr Meade (CM), Clerk Lisa Spindler (LS), Deputy Clerk Lisa Tilston (LT)

Apologies: Cllr France-Moore

1. Update on current financial position (& reports for meetings & website)

Bank reconciliation discussed, being brought to FCM on 8/3. Approved invoices to bring to 8/3 FCM
Request from NWI to fund £450 towards NWI's technical consultants, whose costs were £1,200 above original estimate, due to HCC's last-minute data table adjustments, etc. NWI is asking if the three Parish Councils (BinBenFro) could fund £450 each.

2. Progress on action points from last meetings

Due to time pressure, action points from previous meetings (Appendix A) were not discussed in full.

Item #1: EMRs were discussed: Clerk brought to meeting the current items in EMR. It was noted that these were not updated from previous RFO and this will be rectified as soon as possible (hoping to resolve prior to FCM.)

Item #40: Remuneration for Clerk from 1 April 2022 now agreed (+3%).

3. Update on income and contract renewals

Blacknest Grazing (Rec Field): new contract has been sent out but not signed by her. Rent has been paid.

Tennis & Croquet Club new contract has been agreed: Tennis element is £215pa Croquet is £200pa.

Football Contract has still not yet been signed, the club hopes to have its fees reduced, the Football committee will attend FCM on 8/3.

Cricket does NOT have a new contract. RCC applied for £2K funding towards the Cricket nets and ground work. This bid was unsuccessful. Need to arrange meeting with RCC.

AM started to develop a list of contract renewal dates – see Appendix B. LS and LT will develop further.

4. Preparations for 1/4 Charitable Trust accounting.

AM will contact the Charitable Commission regarding Holt Pound Recreation Ground Charity. We would ideally like two separate accounts - can the current single charitable trust be split e.g. Blacknest Fields Charitable Trust and the Holt Pound Oval Charitable Trust? Name for Single Charity to be agreed at 8/3 PCM as a fallback option.

We need to open up the new bank account once the Charitable name has been agreed for the new financial year. Starling bank has won awards for business banking, Virgin also gets good reviews for its business accounts. LS asked if we can trial Starling for the Charitable account. This was agreed, subject to doing an analysis of fee structures. If performance of new bank is good, will look to change bank for main council accounts in the future.

5. Preparations for APM presentation at the Wickham Institute on Wednesday 6/4

We need to agree details of budget for APM, and arrange catering – could drinks be supplied sale/return from pubs more competitively than e.g. Majestic Wines?

It was agreed it would be nice for local community groups to have a table each at our APM - AM is keeping track of attendees. We also need to send other invitations out for the event. Good opportunity to highlight that we are now FIVE councillors down (APM could be a good time to recruit new Councillors.). AM suggested that we invite Cllr Mark Kemp Gee and SDNP to talk at APM. This to be confirmed at 8/3 PCM.

6. Update on quotations for work

We have had two potential contractors from Local Treasures contact us lately, getting quotes on installing the shed in the allotments along with the patio base. Installing the new loft ladder along with a board of MDF to cover the plumbing pipe. LS shall be getting a quote on repositioning roof insulation (or additional roof insulation) and Rad valves once the new ladder is in place.

We need to do something with the old roots on the left edge of the Binsted Recreation ground. Ground keeper mentioned getting in a grab loader from the back field. AM agreed to find and contact the land owner to ask for permission to use the track at back of Rec for this.

7. Update on bids submitted, in preparation and being considered:

Tree Council 'Branching Out' grant (approved, Blacknest Fields.) Hedge planting & press release all done. By 31 March, need to submit bills and photographic evidence that hedge has been planted, to get paid (approx. £1K).

Expression of Interest for SDNP's Call for Sites for Nature Recovery (submitted Nov 2021, for Blacknest Fields). Expect to hear Spring 2022 if UNSUCCESSFUL; successful candidates probably won't be notified til Autumn 2023.

Expression of Interest for SDNP's Beelines call – AM hopes to develop and submit bid for Blacknest Fields by 20 March deadline, but this is tight!

8. Platinum Jubilee Festivities

Need to EMR the £5K Jubilee budget and finish detailed costings. LS is getting costings on Coins or medals, cups and Beakers, Bunting and perhaps plates and cutlery. If a Beacon is agreed, will try to get a volunteer Bugler, and possibly a Town Crier. (Action: AM will speak to Ron Neil for suggestions.) Bonfire rather than LPG beacon is our preferred option.

We also need to look at Risk Assessments for event - LS to ask Fete committee what paperwork they can share for risk assessments.

9. Energy Costs

Karen Ray had previously stated that BPC had fixed price for gas and electricity until Feb 2023. Currently paying £94/£50 for Gas and Electric respectively, this has increased from £70/£25 in 2021, LT will look into this increase and supply new meter readings. AM also asked LT to calculate actual use since EDF contract started (for use in potential bid and for ongoing tracking purposes.)

10. Future meeting dates

Transport Committee meeting 10th March has had to be postponed. AM has asked Cllr Mark Kemp-Gee to suggest alternative dates.

Planning and Finance and Governance committee meeting 12th April 7.30pm.

Finance Committee meeting is Wednesday 30th March at 10am.