

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held on 11 December 2003 in the Parish Room, Fiddlers Lane, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor A Bailey (in the Chair)  
Councillor C Wynne-Eyton  
Councillor Mrs M Wynne-Eyton  
Councillor A Warrington

63 PARISH COUNCIL BUDGET

The Committee gave initial consideration to the Council's budget for 2004/05 assigning priorities as it considered appropriate in advance of the Council's Budget Meeting scheduled for Monday, 19 January 2004. An interim revised budget for 2004/05 was prepared. (Appendix 1)

RECOMMENDED: That

- (1) Appendix 1 to the Minutes form the basis for discussion when the Council determines its budget and sets its precept at its meeting on 19 January 2004;
- (2) if the work required to enhance the lighting of the Vernon Institute Clock can not be undertaken in this financial year then the £800 grant aid secured from Chester City Council be placed in a designated fund until such time as it can be done;
- (3) Council be **RECOMMENDED** to give consideration to maintaining the Cheshire Railings within the Parish; and
- (4) Council be **RECOMMENDED** to give consideration to paying an honorarium of £25 each year to Mr Dobson, the Internal Auditor, for the work he undertakes in respect of the Council's Accounts.

64 GOLDEN JUBILEE PARK DEVELOPMENT

The Clerk had received a request from a former resident of Saughall who had requested that the deeds to the Fiddlers Lane Playing Field be made available to him for inspection.

The Clerk had made arrangements to redeem the deeds from the Bank and they were passed to the Chairman.

The Chairman intended to inspect the deeds himself to ascertain if any conditions had been laid down when the land had been gifted to the Parish Council.

RESOLVED:

That the Chairman be requested to bring a report to the Council on his findings and make a recommendation on whether to comply with the request received.

65 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS WITHIN PARISH COUNCILS

The Clerk reported that she had received a letter dated 26 November 2003 from Chester City Council's Strategic Director (Resources), Mr Jim Cassin, after the agenda had been dispatched. The letter informed that the City Council had agreed to undertake a review of its financial arrangements with Parish Councils in order to identify possible solutions to avoid "double taxation".

Double taxation was a long standing national and local issue for some Parishes and this was recognised by the issue of Government Guidance on how to avoid it in May 2002. It was defined as:

"a situation where a service/function is provided by a parish council for its locality rather than by the principal authority but the principal authority still charges taxpayers for the equivalent service/function it provides elsewhere".

The Strategic Director wanted to know whether the Parish Council had a problem with double taxation. He asked for initial perceptions, views and opinions on the approach to be taken in undertaking the review.

The City Council's Examinations & Review Committee would be undertaking the review and would also be consulting with the City Council's Area Committees, the County Council and the Cheshire Association of Town and Parish Councils. Timescales were being set in respect of the review and a response was requested by 26 January 2004. A report and supporting documentation was enclosed for Members information and each Member of the Committee was provided with a copy.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Chairman be requested to discuss the issues involved with Councillor Kerr and make a recommendation to the Council at its meeting on 5 January 2004 in respect of the response to be submitted to Chester City Council.

## Saughall and Shotwick Park Parish Council Proposed Budget 2004/2005

Budget Head	Proposed 2004/2005
<b>Environment Matters</b>	
Saughall Village Pride Competition	250.00
Noticeboards	150.00
Street Cleaning	9,000.00
Trees	500.00
Litter Bins	500.00
Grass Cutting (Playing Fields) (Weekly cut)	2,400.00
Play Field Maintenance	500.00
Play Equipment (rolling replacement programme)	2,000.00
Sub Total	15,300.00
<b>Golden Jubilee Park</b>	
Grass & Hedge Cutting	1,000.00
Weed Control	500.00
Environmental Projects	500.00
Contingency	500.00
Sub Total	2,500.00
<b>Finance and General Purposes</b>	
<b>(a) Administration</b>	
Principal Officer to the Parish Council	8,755.00
Assistant to the Principal Officer	1,000.00
Stationary/Postage	700.00
Parish Councillor's Expenses	250.00
Computer	800.00
Newsletter publication costs	1,000.00
Training/Seminars	750.00
IT Fund	500.00
Sub Total	13,755.00
<b>(b) Annual Payments</b>	
Parish Room rental and associated costs	2,500.00
Audit Fees	400.00
Donations/Honorarium	250.00
Insurance	1,500.00
Subscriptions (APC £500, PFA £20, Com CI £30)	700.00
VI Clock Service	200.00
Website Hosting	150.00
Homewatch Support	250.00
Golden Jubilee Park Loan Repayment	3,656.00
Sub Total	9,606.00
<b>(c) Vernon Institute - Annual Grant</b>	
	1,500.00
<b>(d) Contingency</b>	
<b>Highways Matters</b>	
Cheshire Railings Maintenance	1,000.00
Bus Shelter replacement	2,000.00
Bus Shelter maintenance	1,500.00
Safety Initiatives	500.00
Sub Total	5,000.00
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>47,661.00</b>