



Chairman: Councillor Martin Flanagan
Clerk and RFO: Maureen Holliday

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Resources, Staffing, and Strategy Advisory Group
Pitsford Farmhouse, Church Lane, Pitsford. NN6 9AJ
Monday 6th March, 2017 19:30**

Attended by: Cllr Flanagan, Cllr Jaffrey, Cllr Isaacs, Clerk/RFO Maureen Holliday

Recommendations

- 22/16R Resolution to approve apologies for absence:** Apologies received from Cllr Holmes
23/16R Resolution to approve minutes of the meeting 8 November 2016 (previously circulated).
24/16R Declarations of Interest: None
25/16R Budget and Forecast to March, 2017 Reviewed and **Recommended**
26/16R Bank Statement as at 6 March, 2017 Reviewed and **Recommended**
27/16R Reserve allocation 2017/18

See Budget and Forecast Sheet – Reserves **Recommended for agreement**

28/16R Bank Account Signatories

Resources committee bank signatories update forms completed. **Noted**

29/16R Insurance Renewal

The Parish Council currently grants Aid to the Village Hall Management Committee and the Sports Field Management Committee for the insurance of their buildings and declared contents. The PC does not have full control/ownership of these assets and, therefore, some insurance companies are not able to manage the insurance of these separately managed assets. i.e., Zurich. It may be advantageous to obtain separate quotations along with the normal joint quotation. The Clerk suggests that, following discussion with insurance companies at the recent SLCC Conference quotations should be obtained for a combined quotation as normal and also separate quotations for each asset. There should also be a professional valuation of the Village Hall and contents to establish if it is fully covered on a like-for-like basis. This should be undertaken by the Village Hall and Pavilion committees in conjunction with the Parish Clerk. **Recommended.**

30/16R Bus Shelter:

The supplier, Macemain, provided a risk assessment document and confirmation of final details and installation date. The specification for the base has now been agreed and the Clerk has provided a plan for the positioning of the base, being central to the lay-by and alongside the bus stop sign. The length of time for the concrete topping to cure to a safe standard was investigated. The Industry recommendation was 21 days, confirmed by Hanson Concrete Technical Department. The Supplier, Macemain, recommended installation to be no sooner than 2 weeks after the concrete topping was completed. The builder erecting the base has £5m Public Liability cover. The Parish Council has £5m Liability cover.

The RSSA Group **recommends** that 21 days should elapse from the time of completion of the base before installation.

31/16R Planning Advisory Group

The Chairman has been reconsidering the usefulness of the PAG. Since when he has decided that the committee will continue for the time being. Groups and committees are reviewed at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May.

32/16R Guidelines on Parish Council Communication – Recommendation: discussion at full council.

The Clerk presented responses to questions raised on this matter. Following information obtained at a recent Off To A Flying Start training course the Clerk raised questions with DDC, NCALC and a Senior Internal Auditor from NCALC. Transparency guidance followed that e-mail discussion on matters which would be discussed and decided at a Parish Council meeting should not be openly discussed by e-mail, particularly planning. Copies will be provided to all PC members for discussion.

Under the Freedom of Information Act anyone can request copies of e-mails which would have to be provided within 20 working days. SLCC Practitioners Conference:- Many FOI requests arising at present. Clerks claiming bullying/harrasment/slander/libel. Parish Council insurance can be used to protect the Clerk (employee) but not members of the Council.

- Spratton currently have a FOI request following a planning application for work to some trees. The applicant has become aware of mailings discussing the works to be carried out and has requested copies of mails with any content or reference. He feels aggrieved that questions were not straight-forwardly asked of him in open discussion.

- Silverstone is embroiled in an FOI request which is complicated – the Clerk describes FOI requests as ‘nasty’.

- Brixworth are still trying to settle the costs in a legal action which involved careless comments made at meetings and in emails, discrimination and harrassment. The whole matter was very badly handled and has now been running for over 2.5 years. Damages were awarded in the sum of £18k. Costs are being challenged but it is proving to be an extremely complicated and drawn-out case likely to cost the Parish Council over £100k in total unless costs can be reduced.

(Additional notes: - Other cases including claims of bullying/harrassment/libel and slander claims can be found on the ICO website

If the information is not provided within the recommended timescale a request for an Internal Review of the management of the request can be made. See https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/defamation_libel)

33/16R Subscription to Planning Resource - a weekly newsletter and on-line resource for news, decisions, summaries and links to the latest policy and legislation, alerts on plan-making and CIL progress. This magazine provides very up-to-date information on planning actions/cases, updates on Neighbourhood Plans, CIL and other matters.

It was reported recently in this Resource that the Weedon NHP was withdrawn to undergo substantial modifications following Examination.

Recommendation: this subscription could be helpful during the first year of the Neighbourhood Plan at least at a cost of £195.

34/16R Date of Next Meeting: To be confirmed

Signed.....
Chairman

Dated