

MINUTES of the Finance Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council held on Monday 6th February 2017 at Crown Chambers, Melksham at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Cllrs. John Glover (Committee Chair) Richard Wood, Rolf Brindle, Pat Nicol, Mike Mills, & Alan Baines

Officers: Teresa Strange (Clerk) & Sharon Newton (Finance Assistant)

Apologies: There were no apologies

Housekeeping: The Committee Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and explained the evacuation procedures in the event of a fire. New torches had been purchased and were now ready for use.

348/16 **Declarations of Interest:** Cllr Brindle declared an interest as a member of Bowerhill Village Hall and MRDG (Melksham Railway Development Group). Cllr Mills declared an interest as the Chairman & Trustee of BRAG (Bowerhill Residents Action Group), as Chairman & Trustee of Bowerhill Village Hall, and as a member of Melksham Gardeners' Society and Melksham in Bloom. Cllr Baines declared an interest as a volunteer for Melksham Christmas Lights. Cllr Glover declared an interest as a member of MRDG, Cllr Wood declared an interest as Chairman of BASRAG (Berryfield & Semington Road Action Group) and Berryfield Village Hall. The members took no part in the voting on the grants to be awarded for those organisations that they had declared an interest in. The Clerk declared an interest in Broughton Gifford & Holt Scouts as her son was a Scout, as a Trustee of Young Melksham, and as a Committee member of Melksham Gardeners' Society.

349/16 **Public Participation:** There were no members of the public present.

350/16 **Grant Aid:**

- a) The Committee noted Melksham "Our Community Matters" report and the local priorities for action in the Melksham Community area.
- b) The Committee noted the current Grant Aid Policy. The Committee were reminded of the change to their Policy last year to reflect Minute 574/15b (*Full Council meeting 21st March 2016*) following the SLCC advice that Parish and Town Councils are not allowed to give money to Churches or Church Halls, even if they are the only building available for community use, until there is a repeal of the 1972 Local Government Act covering this.

c) Grant Aid 2017/18 Budget provision and S137 spend limits:

The members noted the Budget provision for Grant Aid. It was noted that there was still a Reserve of £2,500 for Bowerhill Youth Club of which the Budget shows of spending of £1,000 in 2017/18 for funding youth projects in the Parish.

Section 137 Grants	£ 7,970
Section 133 Village Hall grants	£ 6,250
Section 144 Tourism grants	£ 500

Melksham Community Area Partnership	£ 250
Bowerhill Youth Club Reserve	<u>£ 1,000</u>
TOTAL	£15,970

The amount shown for village halls only covers Shaw & Bowerhill and it was agreed that some of the funds under the s137 grant budget heading should be vired across to the s133 Village Hall grant budget heading to cover all the village halls that the Parish Council supports. This is in line with the advice from the Internal Auditor that the correct power should always be used, and that s137 is only used when there is no other appropriate power. The Council needs to report each year the amount of spend under s137 against the maximum limit allowed to be spent under s137 in that year.

Recommendation: The Council vire £1,200 from “s137 Grants” to “s133 Village Hall Grants” budget headings for 2017/18.

The Clerk reported that she had not yet been able to find the published maximum limit for spend for s137 for 2017/18 yet (as usually published mid March) and had therefore calculated the limit using the 2016/17 figure (acknowledging that the limit per elector is always raised by a few pence each year). The Department of Community and Local Government (DCLG) had confirmed that the appropriate sum for the purpose of Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 for parish and town councils in England for 2016/17 was £7.42. Based on £7.42 x 5,421 electors in 2017/18 would give a maximum limit of £40,223.82 that could be spent under s137 powers.

- d) **Grant Aid awarded 2017/18:** The Committee Chairman reported that the Council had received 48 applications for Grant Aid with requests totalling £34,274.99. It was agreed that priority for grant aid should be for groups and organisations that directly support residents in the parish such as the Village Halls and Action Groups.

Recommendation: *The Council award grants to the following organisations:*

Application number	ORGANISATION	Awarding in 2017/18
1	Bowerhill Village Hall Trust	2,700
2	Shaw Hill Playing Field and Village Hall	3,550
	TOTAL	£6,250
3	Berryfield Village Hall	500
4	Whitley Reading Rooms	500
5	The Rachel Fowler Centre RESERVED PENDING RECEIPT OF MORE DETAILED ACCOUNTS	200
6	VOID – error in numbering	-
7	Bowerhill Residents Action Group (BRAG)	400
8	Berryfield & Semington Rd Action Group (BASRAG)	400
9	Community Action Whitley Shaw (CAWS)	380
11	1 st Broughton Gifford & Holt Scout Group	200

	RESERVED PENDING RECEIPT OF ACCOUNTS	
12	Melksham Adventure Centre Association	100
14	2385 (Melksham) Squadron ATC	250
15	Happy Circle Day Centre	150
16	Group Five	300
17	Melksham PHAB Club	250
18	Relate Mid Wiltshire	-
19	West Wiltshire Citizens Advice	-
20	Melksham Community Bus	200
21	Melksham Read Easy	100
22	Wiltshire Mind	200
23	Wiltshire Air Ambulance	250
24	Devizes & District Opportunity Centre	-
25	ABLE (Action for a Better Life)	-
26	Bradford-on-Avon Leg Club	100
27	Stepping Stones	-
28	Melksham Community Area Partnership for Melksham Community Area Neighbourhood Watch Group	100
29	Melksham & District Seniors 55+ RESERVED PENDING RECEIPT OF MORE DETAILED ACCOUNTS	150
30	Melksham Christmas Lights	250
31	Melksham Carnival	150
32	Melksham Food & River Festival	150
33	Parents & Friends of Shaw School	200
34	Melksham In Bloom	250
35	Bowerhill Villager	250
36	Shaw & Whitley Connect	250
37	Christchurch Shaw & Whitley Parish Church	-
38	Melksham Railway Development Group	200
39	Beanacre & Melksham Cricket Club	250
40	AFC Melksham (Disabled)	250
41	Melksham Choral Society	100
42	Melksham Gardeners' Society RESERVED PENDING RECEIPT OF MORE DETAILED ACCOUNTS	150
43	Enigma	100
44	Shaw & Whitley Friendship Club	200
45	Melksham Ukulele Social Club	-
46	Shaw & Whitley Garden Club	100
47	Whitley Art Group	50
	TOTAL	£7,630
13	Young Melksham	1,000
	TOTAL	£1,000

10	Melksham Community Area Partnership for the Melksham Community Area Community Safety Group	250
	TOTAL	£250
48	Melksham Tourist Information Centre	500
	TOTAL	£500
		£15,630

Recommendation: The Council do not award Grants to the following organisations for the following reasons:

18. Relate Mid Wiltshire: Due to the large balances and profits of the organisation.

19. West Wilts Citizens Advice: Due to the large unrestricted funds and profits of the organisation.

24. Devizes & District Opportunity Centre: As the request states that they support 3 children in the surrounding parishes, but they do not confirm that any of them are actually residents of the parish of Melksham Without; which does not comply to the Grant Aid Policy (Clause 1).

25. ABLE (Action for a Better Life): Due to the large funds of the organisation and that it was not clear if the 6 people supported were residents of the parish which does not comply to the Grant Aid Policy (Clause 1).

27. Stepping Stones: Due to the lack of evidence that those residents supported are from the Parish which does not comply to the Grant Aid Policy (Clause 1) and the large funds of the organisation.

37. Christchurch Shaw & Whitley Parish Church: Due to being unable legally to provide funding for churches (under the Local Government Act 1972).

45. Melksham Ukulele Social Club: Due to them providing gifts and funding to other organisations which is contrary to the Council's Grant Aid policy (Clause 7).

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Subscriptions 2017/18: The Committee noted that the Budget provision for Subscriptions for 2017/18 was £515. **Recommendation:** The Council formally approve the renewal of the following subscriptions as they are received throughout the year (estimated amounts).

Society of Local Council Clerks	£ 210
ILCM	£ 50
Wilts & Berks Canal Trust	£ 30
CPRE	£ 40
Community First	£ 40
Local Council Review	£ 45
Clerks & Councils Direct	£ 15

<i>Fields in Trust</i>	£ 35
<i>Open Spaces Society</i>	£ 50
TOTAL	£ 515

- 352/16 **Items to be Held in Committee: Resolved:** *Agenda items 7a – 7f to be held in Committee in line with Standing Order 61: “That in the view of the special/confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw”. Reasons:*
 (b) terms of tenders and proposals and counter-proposals in negotiations for contracts.

353/16 **Tenders & Quotations:**

a) **3 year contract for grasscutting and maintenance:**

It was noted that the Tenders were opened in Crown Chambers by the Apprentice Parish Officer at midday on Monday 30th January 2017 (the tender deadline) which was witnessed by the Clerk, Cllr John Glover and Cllr Rolf Brindle.

The members discussed the service that had been provided in the past by a variety of those who had submitted tenders and reviewed the costing and documentation of all provided. A comparative table had been calculated by the Officers to ensure a true “like for like” costing comparison.

Recommendations:

- 1) *The Council appoint J. H. Jones & Sons for the three year contract commencing 1st April 2017 for grasscutting and maintenance at the following cost summaries with the following provisos:*
 - * *The Clerk clarifies this costing as may be an error in calculation*
 - ** *Contact for work at Hornchurch Road Play Area to not commence until the Parish Council take responsibility for the play area.*
- 2) *The Council chose the contract option for weekly (not fortnightly) bin emptying at the Jubilee Sports Field.*
- 3) *The Council continue with the Parish Caretaker emptying the bins in play areas during the non grasscutting season but if this becomes too onerous for the Caretaker then J. H. Jones to be employed at the price quoted in their tender submission.*

Grasscutting:

<i>Berryfield Allotment</i>	£ 245 per annum
<i>Briansfield Allotment</i>	£ 435
<i>Beanacre Play Area</i>	£ 625*
<i>Kestrel Court Play Area</i>	£ 1,092
<i>Berryfield Play Area</i>	£ 819
<i>Hornchurch Road Play Area</i>	£ 273**

Jubilee Sports Field:

<i>Marking pitches</i>	£ 1,320 per annum
<i>Sanding pitches</i>	£ 240
<i>Goal mouths</i>	£ 240
<i>Grasscutting</i>	£ 1,906
<i>Goal Post care</i>	£ 525

Goal Post removal	<u>£ 270</u>
Cost per annum	£ 7,990
Cost for 3 year contract	£23,970

Bin emptying during grass cutting season:

Beanacre Play Area	£ 105 per annum
Berryfield Play Area	£ 105
Hornchurch Road Play Area	<u>£ 105**</u>
Cost per annum	£ 315
Cost for 3 year contract	£ 945

Bin emptying weekly at Jubilee Sports Field:

Cost per annum	£ 910
Cost for 3 year contract	£2,730

TOTAL COST OF CONTRACT FOR 3 YEARS £27,645

All prices quoted are exclusive of VAT.

Cllr Baines reported that he had heard from the model aircraft club who had commented on how well the grass surface was maintained at Bowerhill Sports Field.

- b) **Legionella Control Measures at Jubilee Sports Field Pavilion:** The Clerk reported that the initially appointed contractor, Aqualogy had not taken up the appointment. On following up with the company they were now known as Suez and were re-appointed and they did undertake a Risk Assessment but again had not attended site on a monthly basis. They had now provided a new quotation, which the 2017/18 Budget £2,700 figure was based on but it had been agreed to look again at this contract supply and seek quotes from alternative suppliers (*Min. 299/16c*). Peter Hussey had been contacted, who runs the Stanley Park football facilities in Chippenham and he recommended Aquasafe Environmental who they had used for a couple of years. Aquasafe had provided two quotations, one which met the specification provided from the original Risk Assessment by Suez and an alternative quotation which provided a more rigorous testing regime. Another quote had been supplied by an alternative contractor, who had been appointed recently by Bratton Recreation Committee but they were yet to undertake the service.

Recommendation: *The Council appoint Aquasafe Environmental Services for the Service Maintenance contract for the Jubilee Sports Field Pavilion for one year commencing 1st March 2018 for their "alternative" quote Ref. 170101(a) at £1,380 excluding VAT.*

- c) **New telephone system for office:** The Clerk reported that this item had been deferred from the November Full Council meeting (*Min. 239/16e*) to investigate further whether the Council's broadband speed was able to support both an internet hosted 'phone system and the computer usage. Sirius Telecom had undertaken some speed tests and confirmed that in principal there was no reason why the existing broadband would not suffice however they did accept that broadband speeds can fluctuate which could

potentially have a negative effect on both the voice and internet usage. They therefore recommended a Fibre Broadband option and had requested on that basis.

There were concerns that some of the companies who provided quotes were not UK based and it was noted that Sirius had already conducted a site visit and were based in Chandlers Ford. There were a variety of options to consider including renting or buying handsets and packages with fixed or unlimited call minutes.

Recommendation:

1. The Council appoint Sirius Telecom to provide an upgraded telephone system to an iPECS communications platform powered by LG/Ericsson as per their revised quotation dated 31st January 2017 with 4 x iPECS LIP 9020 IP Handsets, free unlimited minutes based on a 36 month contract, and additional fixed service costs for fibre broadband.

4 x user licences (£5.33 each)	£ 21.32
1 x solution rental	£ 57.79
1 x local, national and mobile calls	£ 0.00
Fibre Broadband	<u>£ 24.99</u>
	£104.10 per month excl of VAT

2. The Council enter into a 36 month agreement, and set up a direct debit payment to Sirius for £104.10 per month.

- d) **To cut back willow branches overhanging Briansfield allotments:**

Recommendation: The Council accept J.H.Jones quotation 254 for £195 exclusive of VAT (boughs/branches to be left in the owner's property).

- e) **To clear leaves at Kestrel Court Play Area: Recommendation:** The Council accept J.H. Jones quotation 254 to rake up leaves at £79.50 and remove leaves from site for £97.50, all exclusive of VAT.

- f) **To remove tree saplings in fence line at Berryfield Play Area:**

Recommendation: The Council accept J.H.Jones quotation 254 to remove saplings (aerial roots from trees) between slats in fencing as required for £78.00 exclusive of VAT.

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Banking arrangements:

- a) **Current situation with new Online Bank account:** The Council were continuing with their trial to make online payments, currently just with staff wage payments. In light of a couple of Finance Committee members still not set up sufficiently to authorise online payments and the forthcoming elections where new members may have to be set up it was agreed at this time to continue with the trial stage only at this point and not move over to more online payments.
- b) **Direct Debit for new mobile phone contract (Min. 239/16f) :**
Recommendation: The Council set up a new direct debit for £5 per month for 24 months with Talkmobile for the Emergency Out of Hours Mobile Phone (07341 474234).

- c) **Bank Mandate for Unity Multipay Card: Recommendation:** *The Council approve the Bank Mandate for a Unity Multiplay (prepaid) Card for the Clerk & RFO (Responsible Finance Officer) Teresa Strange to a maximum limit of £500 with restrictions that the card cannot be used for the following transactions; fuel for car, car rental, hotels and restaurants and cash withdrawals with a maximum spend limit of £500 per transaction. The Bank Mandate and accompanying Indemnity Paperwork to be signed by the Clerk and countersigned by the Chair or Vice Chair.*

355/16 **Projects for future CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) spending (from the Parish Council proportion) to submit to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, for projects within the designated area.** It was agreed that Melksham Without Parish and Melksham Town Council may be best served to agree between themselves what their CIL spending ideas were before submitting to the Steering Group so that any discussions were held between the two councils directly and not via the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

The members noted the Wiltshire Council CIL report for 2015/16 and that only 3 councils to date had received any CIL payments so that it was still difficult to interpret the remit of projects that could be funded by CIL payments under the current definition “*for the provision of local infrastructure improvements or other measures to support the development of the area (referred to as Local CIL)*”

Members discussed a range of options and projects and agreed that as the Neighbourhood Plan ran until 2026 it would be better to agree some higher level generic areas for spending rather than specific projects.

Recommendation: *The Council submit the following suggestions to Melksham Town Council as ideas for potential Local CIL spending to be listed in the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan.*

- Highway improvements
- Recreational improvements
- Health & Wellbeing facility improvements
- Public Transport improvements
- Provision of youth facilities
- Pedestrian and cycleway improvements

356/16 **LIBOR Grant funding:** Following the good news that the new Operational HQ for Wiltshire Air Ambulance had been awarded funds from the Libor fines the Clerk had been tasked to see if any LIBOR funding would be available for the Parish Council to apply for. It was noted that only military and emergency services charities and related good causes were invited to apply and so not applicable.

357/16 **Allocation of Remembrance Wreath costs to budget heading:** The Clerk had sought advice from the Internal Auditor further to the query (*Min 239/16h*) as to where Remembrance Wreath costs should be attributed. The advice received was that it was not strictly covered by s137 of the Local Government Act 1972 but the majority of Councils do allocate it to that Budget Heading. The

Committee noted the Officer's delegated decision for the cost of the annual Remembrance Wreath to remain under the Chairman's Allowance budget heading; this too was the current Chairman's wish.

- 358/16 **UPRN (Unique Property Reference Numbers):** The Council had needed to source UPRN numbers for Parish Council owned property to inform the Local Transparency Code Compliant Report. The Clerk was pleased to report that a very helpful member of the Wiltshire Council property team had managed to source these for the Parish Council.
- 359/16 **Wessex Water work at Berryfield Play Area:** The Clerk reported that work was currently being undertaken at Berryfield Play Area by Wessex Water following a burst underground sewage pipe. The members watched a video of the water finding its way to the ground surface at the edge of basketball court, with water gushing on an intermittent basis. The pumping station at Berryfield had been turned off whilst the work was being undertaken. Sewage had covered the ground between the basketball court and fenced play area which had leached into the play area in front of the slide; and towards the Teen Shelter. Wessex Water had confirmed that the leak had not entered into the brook. The land had been dug for a couple of days and the leak found, and was being repaired and then the large hole would be filled in, the court repaired and the grass scraped and replaced with top soil and re-seeded. The Clerk had provided photographic evidence to Wessex Water showing that the raised crack under the teen shelter had not been there in December and had been caused by this leak and therefore the Parish Council were expecting Wessex Water to also repair/resurface this section too. The Clerk had reported the work being done to Wiltshire Council's Property Department (Mike Dawson) as the land was leased from Wiltshire Council. The Wessex Water reference for the job is 32683685001 dated 31/01/17.

Meeting closed at 9.15pm

Chairman, 6th March, 2017