

**Minutes of the Meeting of  
CHURCH CROOKHAM PARISH COUNCIL  
POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**Date and Time:** Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2011 – 7.30pm

**Place:** Willis Hall, Church Crookham

**Present:**

**Councillors:** Andrea Ong(Chairman), Nick Harris(NH), John Bennison (JB),Michael Burford(MB)  
Helen Butler(HB)

**Also:** Jayne Hawkins - Clerk

1 member of the public

*Action*

**26/11 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were given by Bill Shambrook on the following day. He was held up at a hospital appointment and was unable to contact the clerk.

**27/11 To approve minutes of the meeting held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April**

The meeting minutes were reviewed and were approved and signed as a true reflection of the meeting.

**28/11 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**29/11 To appoint a Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the Policy and Finance Committee**

NH nominated Councillor Andrea Ong to be Chairman, this was seconded by JB and agreed by all.

AO nominated Councillor Bill Shambrook to be Vice-Chairman, this was seconded by MJB and agreed by all.

**30/11 Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman made the following announcements

- The annual audit form has been sent to the external auditor, no response yet
- The first quarterly review of actuals vs forecasts will be done at the July Parish Council meeting and from then on at the Policy and Finance Committee meeting

**31/11 Public Session**

There were no comments

**32/11 To action the recommendations of the internal audit report for financial year 2010 2011:**

1. **Update on valuation of Parish Assets:** Two companies have quoted for valuing the Peter Driver Centre - Asset valuations from Parke Steel is £500 and from Cunningham & Lindsey is £350. It was decided that the Parish Clerk should ask Cunningham & Lindsey to carry out a valuation of the Peter Driver Centre, the five a side pitch and the War Memorial. (Clerk to check when the war memorial was last valued

**Clerk**

## 2. To review the Parish Councils responsibilities relating to fraud

The finance Committee reviewed their procedures with regard to the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption and decided that the following current processes and procedures are sufficient.

- Financial regulations reviewed annually
- Internal Auditor appointed, independent to Parish Council
- Clerk cannot authorise payments
- All cheques signed by two councillors and matched to invoices, cheque stubs are also initialled by two Councillors
- Monthly financial report circulated to all Councillors
- Monthly bank statements are checked and signed by a Parish Councillor
- Expenses signed off by the Chairman of Parish Council
- Payroll has been outsourced.

It was agreed that any direct debits would be reviewed annually.

### 33/11 Annual review of financial regulations and standing orders.

The Committee reviewed number of changes proposed by the Clerk and Councillor Harris. It was decided to make the following changes:

- Include the following as recommended by the internal auditor: *At least once a year, prior to approving the annual return, the Council shall conduct a review of their procedures for prevention of fraud.*
- 2.3 – Budget to be agreed before the end of December each year at the latest as Precept forms have to be in during January
- 3.2 No expenditure may be incurred that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure. *If the Council consider additional expenditure is necessary under a budget heading then money can be vired from another budget heading following approval from the full Council once the full implications have been fully considered.*
- 3.4 The Clerk may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council which is necessary to carry out any repair replacement or other work which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £1000. *The Clerk also has authority to spend up to £500 on small items. The Clerk shall report the action to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter. This was agreed in the December 2010 Parish Council meeting*
- 5.3 Remove the sentence - *cheques to be counter signed by RFO*
- 5.4 Include: *2 Councillors to check and initial the bank statements each month*
- 6.2 Add in - *2 Councillors to check and initial invoices when the monthly cheques are approved*
- 6.5 Refer to the Expenses policy as agreed at Parish Council meeting minute 82/11 on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2011.

Clerk

Council agreed to investigate electronic banking in preparation for when cheques are discontinued. HMRC already require online payments for vat and the council currently has no provision for doing this.

Standing Orders:

- All Meetings shall not exceed 3 hours *and on any evening all meetings should finish by 10.30pm at the latest.*

**34/11 To decide whether to stop using the Abacus HR service and move to the new HALC HR Service**

Abacus: £138.72 plus vat

HALC: £60.00 plus vat (3 employees) plus additional services if required £150.00 plus vat per half day

NH proposed that the Parish Council move to the HALC service and give notice to Abacus as the HALC service is tailored to Parish Councils needs this was seconded by AO and agreed by all. The Clerk was asked to organise this.

**Clerk**

**35/11 To decide whether to move our phone and broadband services to BT from Cryle Telecommunications**

**Telephone and Broadband services review**

**Current Provider (one phone line)**

Phoenix Managed Communications

Costs for Line rental and Broad Band £35.41

Average costs for calls £25.00

Total **£60.41**

**New Provider (two phone lines)**

BT

Cost for installation of line and Broad Band free

Cost for installation of secondary line free

Monthly line rental (inc 500 free mins per line) £29.98

Monthly line rental for broadband £18.00

Total **£47.98**

(equipment and installation all free, also first three months are free)

Will need to purchase a second phone.

MJB proposed that the Parish Council move there phone service to BT, this was seconded by JB and agreed by all. The Clerk was asked to organise.

**Clerk**

**36/11 To discuss Parish staffing levels and to decide whether a permanent deputy clerk should be recruited. If a permanent deputy is recommended then consideration to be made of the impact on the budget and from which existing budget the funds should be vired.**

A hand out detailing current and proposed staffing costs was studied by Councillors. It was proposed that the current clerks hours were increased from 25 per week to 30 per week, that the deputy clerk was asked to work for an additional month in August and that a new deputy clerk is recruited to start in September at 20hours a week £9.25 per hour. This was proposed by NH and seconded by JB and agreed by all.

This proposal would cost an additional £17K and it was agreed to vire funds from the Community Youth Project reserved funds. The Clerk was asked to advertise for a permanent deputy clerk.

**Clerk**

**37/11 To review and agree the updated policy on travellers**

An updated policy on unauthorised encampments had been updated and circulated.

The Clerk was asked to make the following amendment:

*5. Include the Parish Council will take immediate action to evict he travellers as soon as possible but will take advice from the Police and the Gypsy Liaison Officer as to whether a welfare check is necessary.*

**Clerk**

AO proposed that the policy was adopted, this was seconded by NH, all were in favour.

**38/11 To consider the consultation on preventing homelessness. Previously circulated.**

It was agreed that comments circulated by NH would be submitted.

**Clerk**

It was agreed that the Clerk should rotate consultations around councillors in the same way that planning applications are. Clerk will allocate new consultations to the next councillor on the list, they can then either make their own comments for review by the council or suggest that the Council doesn't comment or gather responses from all councillors.

**24/11 Agenda items for next meeting**

- Review all direct debits
- Review any outstanding debts from 2010/2011 and write off if not recoverable.
- Review the Council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.
- Review the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media
- Review charges for football fees and leases, decide whether to increase - this might need to go to Parish Council before a football meeting in July.

**Date of next meeting – 10<sup>th</sup> October 2011**

**There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.10 pm**

**Signed.....**

**Date.....**