



Watlington Parish Council

Parish Clerk: Kristina Tynan
Watlington Parish
Council
1 Old School Place
Watlington
OXON OX49 5QH

Tel: 01491 613867 Email: WPC@watlington-oxon-pc.gov.uk

Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance Committee Held on Tuesday 16th January 2024 at 7pm in the Parish Office

Present:

Councillors: Steve Bolingbroke (SB) -Chair
Nicky Smallbone (NS) – Vice-Chair
Karyn Buck (KB)
Tim Horton (TH)
Ian Hill (IH)

Councillors attending for Agenda Item 5.1: Andy Aherne, Roger Beattie, Brenda Bradford

Officer: Kristina Tynan (KT)

01/24 Apologies for absence

There were none.

02/24 Approval of Minutes from 21/11/2023 to be agreed as a correct record. These were accepted by Council on 12 /12/23.

Resolved: That these minutes be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

03/24 Matters Arising

1. **CCT Legal Advice** – There was no update on this issue (Minute Reference 30/23.4)

04/24 Declarations of Interest

There were none notified.

05/24 Financial Issues

1. **Alternative Plan for running the Pavilion.**

SB gave some background information on this. A motion was passed in 2021 to wind down the subsidy over two years to £5K and then £0K for 24/25. The clubs were given 2 years to put together a proposal for alternative arrangements.

Karyn Buck and Leo Pesci offered to help the clubs with this and a proposal from the clubs was submitted to WPC in November 2022. WPC have responded to this with our comments. SB said that the meeting held was very productive, but we have had no response to our comments to date. This meeting tonight is to decide on a Plan B if the clubs do not produce a plan for April 24. We need to decide what a Plan B could be, this could be temporary or permanent, but we need to get Full Council approval before April.

Plan A is to lease the building to the clubs on a peppercorn rent with a repairing lease. We would need to contract with a body of legal standing for this eg The Sports Club. There would be break clauses included. WPC would retain the lease with Beechwood Estates.

SB said that the Watlington Club runs a facility which includes tennis, squash etc and could be one option for running the Pavilion. This could have some synergy benefits with the skills they already have.

TH raised the idea of having a Trust and had sent out a note on this to members as a Plan B. SB asked how this would be different to the current PSFC set up.

AA stated that there is a big demand for a Gym in Watlington and asked if after 24 December 2024 the building could be used for this. The agreement with the Football Foundation runs out on this date and the building could then be run for anything we wished.

There was much discussion on a Plan B and SB agreed to take the points raised and put them in in a paper which when agreed by Members could be presented to the Full Council February meeting. TH requested that, if necessary, another meeting be held.

Plan B is shown below as an addendum to these minutes.

2. Management Accounts – update on budget position. These were circulated. SB reported that these are produced every month, and this is a very useful way of tracking our expenditure. There is a known late payment discrepancy of £4700 for utilities by the Clubs.

2. Budget for 2024/25

SB reported that this was passed by Full Council. TH asked if the Co-op will be asked to increase their contribution. SB said that he was planning to write to them asking for an increase to the current £6K. After discussion it was agreed that TH and IH draft the letter to the Co-op which will then be sent by the Clerk.

06/24 General Issues

1. **Deed of Easement over Willow Close for Redrow**–. SB reported that LGP have been very slow and difficult to deal with.
Resolved: That the deed be signed by NS and SB and witnessed by the Clerk (as per our standing orders number 23).

07/24 Confidential Session

Resolved: That Council go into Confidential Session to discuss the next agenda item.

08/24 Staff Issues

1. **Staff Salaries** – SB

Public Minute

The Finance Committee agreed that the job descriptions of all three office staff would be updated and independently evaluated. This will cost approximately £300. If this results in changes to staff pay scales those changes will be implemented. If the proposed changes are unaffordable within approved budgets, Finance Committee will decide what action to take.

It was further agreed:

- 1: That payroll calculations are checked and signed off by Chair of Finance and/or another councillor who has not been involved in calculating the figures.
- 2: That variances in the management accounts be investigated more closely each month
- 3: That a consistent salary calculation model be maintained which documents salary, grade and working hour changes and can be used to reconcile to actual payments if needed.

09/24 Correspondence

1. WTFC – MUGA increase
2. Smurfit – MUGA increase

These were noted and WPC had invited them to attend a meeting to discuss MUGA issues.

[Post Minute Note: A meeting will be held on 2/2/24 at 3pm in the Parish Office – main users of the MUGA have also been invited. NS, IH, RB and AA will attend this meeting]

10/24 Any Other Business

Organising of Office Space – NS reported that every Wednesday she and all office workers will spend an hour clearing out old information and organising files. She said that she has agreed that staff, if necessary, will be paid for an extra hour per week.

11/24 Date of next scheduled meeting 2023: **26th March 2024**

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9PM

Pavilion and Sports Field – Plan B

By: Steve Bolingbroke

Date: 19th January 2024

Issue: For Finance Committee review before recommendation to Full Council

We have been working with the sports clubs for several years to transition the management of the pavilion away from the PC to the clubs by 1st April 2024. The clubs have recently made some progress on this, but it is possible that they will not be ready by the deadline. This paper lays out the PCs proposed actions should that be the case.

1. Temporary Pavilion Management Arrangement

The Parish Council will work with a single organisation on all matters. Which organisation (WSC, WTFC, WCC or another) and named contact to be decided by the clubs. The PSFC constitution and meetings will be discontinued.

For ongoing services the PC will agree what contracts the clubs wish to continue (Electricity, gas, internet, waste, grass cutting etc.).

For ad hoc items the clubs will request work to be carried out. The PC will contract the work.

The PC will insure the pavilion and maintain the lease of the sports field.

The PC will continue to take bookings for the pavilion on days agreed by the clubs.

Each month, the PC will invoice the single point of contact for all of the costs described above that have been incurred less the following items:

- WPC consumption of utilities (MUGA and car park lighting)
- Any revenue received from bookings

WPC will not carry out any other work (e.g. cleaning) at the pavilion

2. Term and Termination

These arrangements will be put in place for 6 months unless a more permanent management structure is agreed with the clubs. After six months if, in the opinion of the PC, the arrangements are not working or there is no reasonable likelihood that a more permanent structure is possible, the PC will close the pavilion to the clubs and seek other uses for it.

If at any point in the six months the clubs fail to pay the invoices as described, act unsafely or irresponsibly or bring the PC into disrepute, the pavilion will be closed.

3. Other Activities

During the six month term, WPC will seek commercial partners for the use of the pavilion. A preferred option is to operate it as a commercial gym. There may be an option to work with the Watlington Club on joint management arrangements. WPC will explore those options.

Tim Horton has proposed a Trust structure for the management of the pavilion. This may be of interest to the clubs, and they should talk to Tim about how that would work.