

## Wheathampstead Parish Council

### Finance Committee Meeting 13 November 2017 – 19:30

Present:	Councillors	D Davies	Chairman
		J Booth	
		G Clark	
		L Halford	
		O McKenzie	
		T Reason	
		T Ryan	
		P Woodhams	
		J Warren	Clerk to the Council
		Press	0
		Public	0

#### **5354-17 Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Councillors E Habib and D Johnston (personal reasons)

#### **5355-17 Public Speaking**

None.

#### **5356-17 Specific Declarations of Interest & Dispensations**

None.

#### **5357-17 Minutes of Finance Committee of 9 January 2017**

Councillor Woodhams proposed, seconded by Councillor Halford, and it was agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2017 be approved.

##### **Resolved:**

**To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2017 to be a true and fair account and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

#### **5358-17 Bank Report**

Statements and reconciled bank reports for all accounts were circulated and were noted to correspond.

##### **Resolved:**

**To note the reports.**

#### **5359-17 Finance Assistance**

It was reported that the new Finance and Meetings Administrator would commence employment in January 2018.

Councillor Reason proposed, seconded by Councillor Booth, and it was agreed that the finance contractor be re-employed for up to 15 hours per week until the end of January 2018 with immediate effect.

##### **Resolved:**

- **To note the report and employment of the new Finance and Meetings administrator**

## **Wheathampstead Parish Council**

- **That the finance contractor be re-employed for up to 15 hours per week until the end of January 2018**

### **5360-17 Review of fees and charges for 2018-2019**

The schedule of fees and charges and the hourly facilities hire charge had been circulated. It was noted that the Council's insurance policy covered hirers during the specified hire period. Thus it was essential that invoiced and paid for hire periods equated to use of facilities. This was a particular issue for bookings of the Memorial Hall where scheduling was tight and it was necessary to avoid overlap of hirers.

Councillor Booth proposed, seconded by Councillor McKenzie, and it was agreed, that charges be raised with increases capped by the rate of inflation, 3%; and that there be a negotiated fee for regular hirers to cover the hire period including set up and clear up times.

Councillor Halford proposed, seconded by Councillor Ryan, and it was agreed, that the discount rate for the Wheathampstead Dramatic Society remain unaltered for the forthcoming year, but that this remain under review. The Toddler Group fee to be set at £40 per session for 2018-19.

Councillor Halford proposed, seconded by Councillor Woodhams, and it was agreed, that the allotment charges for 2019-20 to be increased to £4.20 per pole (2018-19 charge is £4.10 per pole).

#### **Resolved:**

- **That charges be raised with increases capped by the rate of inflation, 3%**
- **That there be a negotiated fee for regular hirers to cover the hire period including set up and clear up times**
- **That the discount rate for the Wheathampstead Dramatic Society remain unaltered for the forthcoming year, but that this remain under review.**
- **The Toddler Group fee to be set at £40 per session for 2018-19 for use of the Memorial Hall.**
- **That the allotment charges for 2019-20 to be increased to £4.20 per pole (2018-19 charge is £4.10 per pole).**

### **5361-17 Budget 2017-18 review**

The budget monitoring reports had been circulated. The Chairman proposed and it was agreed to note the reports.

#### **Resolved:**

**To note the reports.**

### **5362-17 Budget projects for 2018-19**

A discussion of possible projects for budget consideration ensued including provision of a new play area at Maltings Drive if the s106 funded play area did not transpire. Consideration was also given to the refurbishment/ regeneration plans for the Memorial Hall.

## **Wheathampstead Parish Council**

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, to form a working group to develop a business case to refurbish or rebuild the Memorial Hall; that the working group consider projects which might necessitate taking out a loan; and to progress the project to a point where Council could then make a decision.

### **Resolved:**

- **To note the report**
- **To form a working group to develop a business case to refurbish or rebuild the Memorial Hall.**
- **That the working group consider projects which might necessitate taking out a loan**
- **Working group to progress the project to a point where Council could then make a decision.**

### **5363-17 Planning consultation- Katherine Warrington School addendum response**

Further to Minute 5334-17 archaeological investigations of sample areas of the site earmarked for the new Katherine Warrington School have revealed a rural burial site from the late 7th Century. Excavations suggest this was for in the region of two dozen people. Further work using DNA and oxygen isotope analysis would be expected to reveal details of this culture, where the people came from, their ethnicity, their backgrounds as well as something of their lifestyles, their burial rituals etc. A rural cemetery such as this is rare in Hertfordshire and is not necessarily comparable to different cultures further east of the country. Given our central location these people may be new Anglo Saxons (incomers from the east) Celts (from the west), Romans who had remained behind, or a mixture. This burial site is the northern part of the site and if not excavated prior to any building works risks being lost forever- be it through damage from earthworks or night hawkers (people with metal detectors). Deep burying is not really an option as the weight of soil may damage the relics and heritage.

Councillor Woodhams proposed, seconded by Councillor Booth, and it was agreed that Hertfordshire County Council (planning authority for this application) be advised:

Wheathampstead Parish Council is now aware of archaeological remains on this site including a locally rare rural cemetery. This burial site of potential national significance dates from the late 7th Century and is vulnerable to development and illicit activities such as night hawking. In the event of development being approved Wheathampstead Parish Council believe that excavation of this site is essential for the long term public benefit and for the acquisition of knowledge. This significantly outweighs any option to deep bury the cemetery in situ.

### **Resolved:**

**That the Clerk write to the Planning Authority stating that:**

## **Wheathampstead Parish Council**

**Wheathampstead Parish Council is now aware of archaeological remains on this site including a locally rare rural cemetery. This burial site of potential national significance dates from the late 7th Century and is vulnerable to development and illicit activities such as night hawking. In the event of development being approved Wheathampstead Parish Council believe that excavation of this site is essential for the long term public benefit and for the acquisition of knowledge. This significantly outweighs any option to deep bury the cemetery in situ.**

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 21:30**

**Dated this                      day of                      2018**

**Chairman**