

**DOWNEND AND BROMLEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL  
MINUTES: FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

MEETING HELD ON  
7 March 2024, 11am in the Parish Office

**Present:**

**Committee members:** - Councillors Phil Abbott, Janet Biggin and Matt Pitts.

**Officers:** - Angela Hocking and Kevin Spratt

*Please Note - All items detailed below are recommendations from the Finance & General Purposes Sub Committee, for authorisation by a meeting of Full Council.*

**1. Apologies for Absence**

None received.

**2. Requests for dispensations**

Received from Cllr Phil Abbott (website); Cllr Janet Biggin (Downend Folk House Association).

**3. Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting held 1 February 2024**

The Minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

**4. Matters Arising**

Full DBS documentation has been received for Kevin Spratt, which is satisfactory.

**5. Banking arrangements – update**

Angela Hocking confirmed that signatories had been changed on the HSBC account. There is no online banking with this account. Signatories are now any three from Angela Hocking, Kevin Spratt, Phil Abbott, Janet Biggin, Ben Burton and Matt Pitts. Angela Hocking will be removed from the account at the end of the month.

In respect of the Lloyds accounts, this is ongoing. Current signatories are Angela Hocking, with any two from Phil Abbott, Janet Biggin, Ben Burton and Matt Pitts. If changes have not been made prior to Angela Hocking leaving,

**RESOLVED that one of the account signatories (as detailed above) will attend the Parish Office the day after Full Council meetings (when payments have been authorised) to liaise with Kevin on the input of data, and to provide the necessary authority to make payments.**

**6. Requests for funding:**

- a) **Downend Folk House Association** – Application received for funding towards making the building more efficient in terms of its heating. The full cost of the project is £1,280. Any financial contribution is welcomed and DFHA confirm they will have to delve into reserves to complete the project.

**AGREED to award £500 to the Downend Folk House Association.**

- b) Citizens Advice South Gloucestershire** – (S137 application) - This group provides advice and information services to residents across south Gloucestershire. The report suggests demand from residents of the parish has doubled in the last 12 months alone. In 2023, advice was provided to 125 residents of the parish which helped them to manage 470 separate problems with issues ranging from benefits, tax credits, debt etc.

**AGREED not to award a grant to Citizens Advice South Gloucestershire at this time in view of the many ongoing projects currently in place.**

#### **7. New pavilion project at Badminton Road / King George V Playing Fields**

Chairman highlighted a letter received from Derbybeech after they had been notified that they had been unsuccessful for the award of the contract for the building of the new pavilion at King George V / Badminton Road Playing Fields. Members acknowledged that the decision made at the Full Council meeting in February fits with all legislation and internal policy governing the process. Having subsequently taken legal advice from the Avon Local Councils Association (ALCA), they confirm that the Parish Council does not need to communicate further as Derbybeech have been notified that they have been unsuccessful. The decision made by Full Council is in the public record and it would be detrimental to the reputation of the Parish Council to then take an alternative course of action without justification.

Financial Regulations item 12.1.9 states:

‘The Parish Council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate’.

Three companies were shortlisted from the initial tendering process: Derbybeech, Healthmatic and Wernick. Wernick were the middle cost of the three tenders.

**AGREED to recommend to Full Council that no further response is made to Derbybeech in this matter.**

#### **8. Seat in Leap Valley**

Quotation received from C R Belcher for £560 to install a base for the new bench at Leap Valley. A Glasdon Phoenix seat costs £585, which totals £1145 which the grant awarded to the Friends Group from Downend Round Table will easily cover. Clerk confirmed that a formal Licence has been received from SGC to implement the project.

**AGREED that the Clerk progresses the work for the seat at Leap Valley.**

**ACTION – Clerk to contact Mary Lewis, Friends Group, to ensure that the donation can be awarded without delay.**

#### **9. Request from D&BH in Bloom regarding planters**

As part of the £9,000 grant, In Bloom wish to buy 5 carrier baskets which totals £742.50 plus £148.50 VAT. This money would come out of their £9,000 yearly grant. A grant has been received from SGC to include more sustainable planting in the High Street. As part of this

scheme, they are planning to buy 4 x large floor standing planters. In Bloom ask if the Parish Council purchase these planters on behalf of In Bloom, who will then award a donation to D&BH PC.

**AGREED to order the planters on behalf of In Bloom.**

#### **10. Payments for authorisation**

Payments to be taken to Full Council on 21 March.

#### **11. Any other business**

- Downend roundabout – Chris Boulton outlined a new project being explored which will include paving around the edge of the roundabout, upturn of a small wall (2 bricks high) and a planting scheme. SGC Traffic Management will have to become involved. Estimated costs are expected to be in the region of £10,000-£15,000 although Chris will return to the Parish Council with a firmed-up analysis. After discussion amongst the committee,  
**AGREED that the Parish Council will be able to provide sufficient funding towards the scheme.**
- Downend Men in Sheds have provided the Parish Council with a donation of £2,500 as previously agreed, towards the new shipping container at Bromley Heath Playing Fields. As such, the order has now been placed for the new container. **NOTED.**
- Direct Debit has been setup with Smarty at £10 per month for a SIM only contact on the new mobile phone. **NOTED.**
- Christmas electrical quotation – As requested, CT Electrical have supplied a quotation for all the electrical maintenance in 2024. This totals £5,220 in addition to ad hoc maintenance at £60 per hour. As three quotations had already been obtained,  
**AGREED to accept the quotation from CT Electrical for Christmas 2024.**
- Shredding – Quotation received for a large amount of confidential waste disposal at £25 + VAT.  
**AGREED to proceed, as detailed above.**
- Members were advised that Kevin Spratt has holidays booked for the end of May and during August. **NOTED and AGREED.**
- Future stationery orders – Members discussed if a limit should be set on the ordering of stationery.  
**AGREED that this was not necessary, although noted that the next order will include for a new laptop bag.**
- **AGREED to order for Kevin Spratt:**
  - **new business cards**
  - **obtain costings for a new uniform****AGREED to order for all members and the Clerk:**
  - **Lanyards**
- Skatepark – Clerk confirmed that Nick Ball would be attending the next Council meeting to update members on proposed next steps following the recent skatepark consultation.
- LCNAP – One volunteer has come forward who is keen to engage in the project. **NOTED.**
- Cllr Biggin advised that the Post Office in Downend is now open with only one till for customers.
- 19 March is a Green Spaces meeting at the Bean Tree Café at Page Park. Cllr Biggin and Cllr Pick hope to attend.

- Friends of Page Park are liaising with Cllr Mike Richards about Hill House Park. It is hoped the new toilets at Page Park will be completed by May.
- Kevin Spratt has obtained information on progressing the Certificate in Local Council Administration. The CiLCA programme itself involves the preparation of a portfolio of evidence that is put together based on experience of the annual cycle of the council. As such, it is not recommended that Clerks engage without at least 12 months of experience, as it would be very difficult to complete and would put more pressure on a Clerk at a time when they are learning the different elements of the role. **NOTED.**

**12. Date and time of future F&GP Committee meeting**

Thursday 4 April 2024, 11am in the Parish Office.

**Chairman:**

**Date:**