

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 2nd FEBRUARY 2005 AT 10.00 a.m.
AT THE PAVILION, MANOR FIELD**

Present: Cllr Mr L Abraham
Cllr Mr C Alford (Chairman)
Cllr Mr A Barnett
Cllr Mr J Gaywood
Cllr Mr B Ramsay

In attendance: Cllr Mr M Harris
Mrs J Hoad (Clerk)
2 members of the public

1. Apologies

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED: That, the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 24th November 2004 be approved and signed as a correct record.

4. Bus Services

The Chairman invited Cllr Harris to present a report on the proposed withdrawal of the Kent County Council's subsidised bus service the K14/15 to and from Hartley. Members of the Committee were circulated with copies of correspondence received from Dr Stoate, Kent County Council's Strategic Director of Resources and Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, in response to a letter written by Cllr Harris to the aforementioned Cabinet Member. Members of the Committee were offered the opportunity to express their views on the matter.

RESOLVED: That, (1) whilst the Council understands the reason for withdrawing the K14 and K15 bus service to and from Hartley, it is nevertheless still concerned that the commercial bus service (423) operated by Arriva does not provide adequate service to the community, particularly in respect of access to the local hospital and that representation be made to Kent County Council requesting this matter be reviewed and,

(2) the Parish Plan Steering Committee be asked to address the issues surrounding the provision of public transport within the Parish Plan.

Cllr Harris left the meeting at 10.36 a.m.

5. Parish Office

(a) The Committee considered an analysis of the returned tenders in respect of the relocation of the Parish Office in Hartley Library, as set out in appendix 1 attached to these minutes. The Committee considered the architect's comments on the returned tenders and noted his view that as the two lowest tenders were within approximately 7.5% of each other, it was reasonable to suppose they represented current pricing levels. The Committee noted that the contract period required by the lowest tenderer was 5 weeks, some three weeks shorter than that of the next highest tenderer.

It was reported that pre tender estimates of £9,000 and £12,500 for the construction works had been received by the Council and this being the case, formal tenders for the relocation of the Parish Office had been invited on the basis that the tender sum would fall below £14,000. This being the case, the Council advertised its intention to seek tenders in compliance with its Financial Regulation 11.1 (c), by placing a notice on the Council's notice board outside Hartley Library.

The Committee supported the relocation of the Parish Office as it believed it would improve the service provided by the Council to the community, as the Parish Office would be accessible to the public five days a week and would not be restricted to the normal weekly opening times of the Library. In addition, the Committee considered the increased usage of the library premises would help to safeguard the future of the library and noted that it is Kent County Council's policy to encourage and expand the use of such premises to the wider community.

RECOMMENDED: That,

(1) the tender from C H Construction Services South East Ltd for the sum of £16,650.00 plus VAT be accepted and that the Clerk be asked, in consultation with the architect, to proceed with contract as soon as possible,

(2) the quotation from Kent County Council to temporarily move the County Council's computer equipment away from the construction area and to return and recable the equipment in its new position at the appropriate time for the sum of £278.00 be accepted and,

(3) investigations be made into the provision of a telephone line to the Parish Office.

(b) It was reported that one of the Council's two printers is no longer functioning. The Committee expressed some concern that the Parish Office was now relying on one printer and considered it prudent to purchase a second printer to safeguard against any interruption to the working of the Council in the event of a further breakdown.

RECOMMENDED: That, the Clerk in consultation with Cllr Abraham be asked to investigate the most appropriate and suitable laser printer for the needs of the Council and subject to these investigation, be authorised to purchase a new laser printer upto a limit of £300.

6. Income and expenditure

The Committee examined a financial report indicating the Council's net position for the period 1st April 2004 to 27th January 2005 and anticipated there may be a slight underspend at the end of the financial year.

RESOLVED: That, the financial report for the period 1st April 2004 to 27th January 2005, as set out in appendix 2 attached to these minutes, be received and noted.

7. Internal Audit

The Committee considered the internal auditor's report in respect of the half year internal audit from 1st April to 30th September 2004.

RESOLVED: That, the internal auditor's report be noted.

8. Risk Assessment

(a) The Committee considered a risk assessment undertaken in respect of cash handling and transport.

RECOMMENDED: That, the risk assessment in respect of cash handling and transport, as set out in appendix 3 attached to these minutes, be received and adopted.

(b) The Committee considered a risk assessment undertaken in respect of lone working and violence at work.

RECOMMENDED: That, the risk assessment in respect of lone working and violence at work, as set out in appendix 4 attached to these minutes, be received and adopted.

9. Purchase of land at Manor Field

The Committee received a verbal report on the history of the negotiations with the landowner of the two strips of land bordering Manor Field to purchase the said land since 1992. A report on recent discussions with the District Valuer was tabled for discussion. The Committee noted that the land owner is only willing to sell the strip of land along the southern boundary of Manor Field, for a sum in the region of £10,000 and no longer wishes to dispose of the strip of land along the western boundary of the field or the land at the entrance gate to the field.

The District Valuer's view is that it may not be in the best interest of the Council to proceed with the negotiations on this basis, as the Council would still not have control over the entrance gate and would still require rights of access over land at the entrance gate, in order to gain access to the southern strip of land and the public open space.

RECOMMENDED: That,

(1) Having regard to the fact that Messrs Glover had been prepared to sell two strips of land along the southern and western boundary edges of Manor Field to the Parish Council for the sum of £6,300, the latest offer from the company to sell just one strip for £10,000 be declined as the Council considers the price to be too high and not in the public interest.

(2) Messrs Glover be advised that (a) the Council is still willing to purchase the two strips of land including the access way to the field for upto £10,000 in total, subject to confirmation from the District Valuer, (b) as part of the purchase arrangements the Council would be prepared to grant the company rights of way in perpetuity along the western strip of land to enable them to service adjoining land in their ownership and (c) the Council require a response to its offer within one calendar month.

10. Donations

The Committee considered requests for donations from:

(a) Victim Support, North Kent and Medway.

(b) Open Spaces Society

RESOLVED: That, the Council decline the requests for donations from Victim Support and the Open Spaces Society.

11. Conditions of service

The Committee considered the new National Agreement on Salaries and Conditions of Service of Local Council Clerks in England and Wales, which replaces the agreement established in 1996. The new agreement consists of three parts; the new national agreement, new model contract and guide to good employment practice in local councils.

12. Admission of the public and press to meetings

RESOLVED: That, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and that they be instructed to withdraw.

The members of the public withdrew from the meeting.

In view of the nature of the business to be transacted by the Committee, the Clerk withdrew from the meeting during further consideration of minute item 11, in respect of the new Terms and Conditions Local Council Clerks.

13. Conditions of service (continued)

RECOMMENDED: That,

(1) the new National Agreement on Salaries and Conditions of Service of Local Council Clerks in England and Wales be adopted with effect from 1st April 2005,

(2) under the terms of the new agreement, the Clerk's pay be fixed on salary point 30, within the substantive benchmark range 30 to 34 of profile 2, with effect from 1st April 2005 and the salary to rise annually by automatic increase on the 1st April each year by incremental steps upto the scale maximum and,

(3) further information be sought on position of the Assistant Clerk with regard to the terms and conditions of the new agreement and that the position of the Assistant Clerk be reviewed at the next meeting. Any approved changes implemented to the terms and conditions of service of the Assistant Clerk to be effective from 1st April 2005

14. Date of the next meeting

To be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 12.20 p.m.

Signed:.....
Chairman of F & G P Committee

Date:.....

HARTLEY PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE - ALTERATION

TENDER ANALYSIS

1/ TENDER DOCUMENTATION

	CH	MACKRILL	O'NEIL
a) Complete	Yes	Yes	Yes
b) Receipt on time	Yes	No (i)	Yes
c) Insurance	Yes (ii)	Yes	Yes (ii)
d) Qualification to tender	None	None	None
e) VAT registered	Yes		No
f) Earliest start	21 March 2005	4 April 2005	2 May 2005
g) Site duration	5 weeks	6 weeks	8 weeks
h) Completion	25 April 2005	13 May 2005	27 June 2005

2/ COSTS

a) Tender sum	16,650.00	28,453.00	17,720.00
b) VAT	2,913.75	N/A	N/A
c) Total	19,563.75	28,453.00	17,720.00

(i) Received on 29.01.05

(ii) Copy of full current cover provided post 27.01.05

Hartley Parish Council
Summary of Receipts and Payments
Summary - Cost Centres Only

Cost Centre	Receipts		Payments		Underspend (+)/ Overspend (-)
	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual	
1 Staff costs	0.00	0.00	33,750.00	26,829.86	6,920.14
2 General costs	2,400.00	2,390.75	13,200.00	9,546.38	3,644.37
3 Office costs	0.00	0.00	5,425.00	8,300.53	-2,875.53
4 Burial Grounds	0.00	2,105.00	6,150.00	3,391.21	4,863.79
5 Allotments	350.00	318.78	600.00	515.76	53.02
6 Open Spaces	1,560.00	3,388.64	23,750.00	20,983.11	4,595.53
7 Manor Field Pavilion	1,000.00	1,080.50	6,250.00	6,120.45	210.05
8 Northfield	0.00	0.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	0.00
9 Youth services	0.00	0.00	3,000.00	1,402.98	1,597.02
10 Section 137	0.00	0.00	1,000.00	804.91	195.09
11 Capital Schemes	0.00	0.00	12,000.00	0.00	12,000.00
12 Youth Reserve	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
13 Precept	89,000.00	89,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
14 Interest on investment	2,000.00	2,472.48	0.00	0.00	472.48
15 Book	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
16 Misc Income	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
NET TOTAL	96,310.00	100,756.15	109,625.00	82,395.19	31,675.96
V.A.T.		3,932.54		4,193.04	
GROSS TOTAL		104,688.69		86,588.23	

Risk Assessment Form						
Activity: Cash Handling and Transport			Assessment Date:		Review Date:	
Hazard and Risk	People at risk	Optional Controls	Our Controls	Our Future Controls	Risk Level	Target date & by whom
Theft -Threat to personal safety	Employee	Review need for cash collection/storage.	Cash is stored in a locked cashbox and banked twice weekly to ensure minimal amounts of cash are stored and there is restricted public access to the office.	Continue with current arrangements	Low	Ongoing
		Cash collection and transport arranged via private contractor. Cash stored in safe in office. Minimal amounts of cash stored.	There is a panic alarm located in office and the cash box & office are locked/secured when the office is unattended.	Continue with current arrangements	Low	Ongoing
		Public access to cash offices restricted. CCTV in building. Panic alarms present in offices. Cash office locked/secured.	Cash is banked twice weekly on regular days but at varying times.	Continue with current arrangements and instruct staff to hand over cash if approached by miscreants. Introduce a 'failure to return' system.	Low	January 2005 by Clerk
		Cash banking times varied. Two staff to transport cash. Presence of cash not				

APPENDIX 3

		<p>obvious i.e. not transferred in bank bags!</p> <p>Staff trained and instructed to hand over cash if approached by miscreants.</p> <p>Staff issued with personal attack alarms and radios/mobile phones.</p> <p>'Failure to return' system introduced at office.</p> <p>Post-incident support available to staff.</p> <p>Cash collection office security assessed e.g. bullet proof glass etc.</p>				
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Assessor's signature:

Date:

Clerk's signature

Date:

Risk Assessment Form						
Activity: Lone Working/Violence at Work			Assessment Date:		Review Date:	
Hazard and Risk	People at risk	Optional Controls	Our Controls	Our Future Controls	Risk Level	Target date & by whom
Violence - Injury/death	Employee	High risk Activities identified and individually assessed. Communications provided. Log in/out procedure in use. 'No show' procedure in place. Call in system used. Buddy system used. Staff trained to deal with potentially aggressive situations. Key holders instructed not to enter building if called for alarm sounding and is sign of entry. Staff advised of what action to take if approached for valuables. Formal lone working and/or violence at work policy adopted.	No high risk activities identified.	Continue with current arrangements	Low	Ongoing
			Prior to the commencement of any lone working, details of where the member of staff are going and what time they are expected to return to be given and mobile telephone carried at all times. SEE SEPARATE CASH HANDLING ASSESSMENT	Continue with current arrangements	Low	Ongoing

Risk Assessment (Continued)						
Activity: Lone Working/Violence at Work				Assessment Date:		Review Date:
Hazard and Risk	People at risk	Optional Controls	Our Controls	Our Future Controls	Risk Level	Target date & by whom
Using equipment - Injury/death	Employees/ public	Only trained operatives use equipment. Some equipment use prohibited when lone working e.g. chainsaws, ladders, etc All equipment well maintained and recorded as such. Equipment inspected by operative prior to each use. Log in/out procedure used. 'No show' procedure in place. Call in system used. Communications available	Only trained operatives use equipment.	Continue with current arrangements	Low	Ongoing
			Inspection and maintenance record sheet to be completed prior to use of line marker at Pavilion	Contractor to be advised to complete record sheet confirming that the equipment has been inspected before use and recording any maintenance carried out.	Low	January 2005 Clerk
			Mobile phones to be carried at all times.	Continue with current arrangements	Low	Ongoing
Assessor's signature:				Clerk's signature		
Date:				Date:		