

Burwell Parish Council
Finance and General Purposes
28th September 2021

Present: Hazel Williams (Chair), Joan Lonsdale, Liz Swift, Michael Swift, Yvonne Rix (Clerk and RFO) and Robin Dyos for the item on the Mandeville Hall Ceiling.

F&GP/28092021/01 Apologies for absences and declarations of interests

Apologies for absence had been received from Paul Webb and Brenda Wilson.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair of the F&GP Working Group

Hazel Williams was appointed Chair of the Group following a proposal by Liz Swift which was seconded by Michal Swift.

Joan Lonsdale was appointed Vice Chair of the Group following a proposal by Liz Swift which was seconded by Michael Swift.

F&GP/28092021/02 Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 27th July 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th July 2021 were approved as a true and correct record.

F&GP/28092021/06 Mandeville Hall Ceiling

Robin Dyos ran through the history of the issues with the ceiling with those present. The option of taking legal action through the Small Claims Court was discussed. It was felt that the staff time required to put the case together, the likely need to obtain a further opinion and legal advice would make going to Court not cost effective.

It was agreed that at this stage in time the Council has sufficient storage capacity within its existing properties and that it is unlikely the roof space over Room 1 will need to be utilised.

The quotation supplied to the Council by Smithers Purslow, to carry out work included in their proposal to rectify the issue of the deflecting trusses, is in the region of £13,000 to £14,000 and could be higher due to the current increases in building costs.

Mandeville Hall is likely to require work to bring the building in line with the Council's Climate Change Carbon Neutral Policy by the year 2030 and that repairs to the roof Structure could possibly be carried out at the same time.

It was suggested by Michael Swift that the Council should start setting money aside for the work to be carried out.

The Group makes the following recommendation to Full Council:

The Finance and General Purposes Working Group recommends to Full Council that an email acknowledging receipt of the details of the proposal and copy quotation is sent to Smithers Purslow.

That the roof space over Room 1, despite being told by Graham Cooley of Smithers Purslow that the floor will withhold the weight of lightweight items, is not utilised for storage until such time as remedial work has been carried out.

That no legal action is taken.

That the Council budgets for the work over the next few years and when funds are available further quotations are sought for the work to be carried out.

Robin Dyos left the meeting.

F&GP/28092021/03 Consideration of the Action Sheet (Appendix 1)

The following updates to the Action Sheet were noted:

Local Council Risk System – Update needs to be carried out. The Clerk to schedule a time for this to be carried out.

CCLA Investment £101,219.16 on 31st August 2021.

Three to Five Year Plan – Agenda Item

Mandeville Hall -Agenda Item discussed previously

F&GP/28092021/04 Current Financial Situation including GMH Funding Update

The Group noted the following document detailing the Councils current financial Situation. The 2nd part of the Precept had been received on 28th September 2021.

Liz Swift asked if it would be possible to pay for Carl Turner to assist with the Spring Close Working Day to help with the mechanical cutting of brambles on some of the slopes. It was agreed that this would be acceptable. The Spring Close interpretation boards need to be replaced and some work needs to be carried out to the bridges. This will need to be budgeted for. It was questioned if the bridges are the responsibility of the County Council Rights of Way Team. Yvonne Rix agreed to find out.

F&GP/28092021/05 Revised Five-Year Plan

The draft revised Five-Year Plan was considered, with comments made by Paul Webb being noted. The overall population figure stated is an estimate. The Group felt that the Plan addressed and covered all that is required. Yvonne Rix was praised for her excellent work in compiling the document. The following recommendation to be made to Full Council:

The Group recommends to Full Council that the revised Five-Year Plan is adopted.

F&GP/28092021/07 Covid Cleaning

Yvonne Rix asked if the Keyholders should continue cleaning high contact points at the Mandeville Hall after each booking? They are currently paid £4.50 per booking to do this. The Group agreed that the Keyholders should continue with this practice until the next F&GP meeting in November when more will be known on how the country is coping with the current pandemic.

F&GP/28092021/08 Review of the following

Having reviewed the following documents the Group recommends that they are approved by Full Council. It was noted that the Council no longer holds any petty cash.

Council's Risk Management Policy – Appendix 2
Internal Controls – Appendix 3

Having reviewed the following Direct Debits the Group recommends that they are approved by Full Council:

Anglian Water/Wave – Various Properties
British Gas – Various Properties
British Telecom – Telephone and Internet (JRR and MH)
Corona Energy Retail – Various Properties
Eon – Various Properties
East Cambs District Council – Rates Various Properties
HMRC (VAT)
Information Commissioners Officer
JPMC Re Paypal (Tennis Courts)
Lloyds Bank – Payment cards
NEST Pension
Siemens - Photocopier
Vodafone Limited – Network link between Recreation Ground and Jubilee Reading Room

Safeguarding of Funds

Having reviewed both the Council's Risk Management Policy and its Internal Controls the Group recommends to Full Council that the Parish Funds are currently safeguarded with no additional action being required.

Appointment of Internal Auditor and scope of audit.

The Group agreed that Moore's should be appointed as Internal Auditor for a further year and that the scope of the audit should be the basic audit with no other specific areas covered. This will be a recommendation to Full Council.

F&GP/28092021/09 Any other matters

Fence erected on Hatley Drive

The Group discussed the fence which has been erected by a resident on the Hatley Drive Amenity Area. Concern was also raised about a fence and gate which had been erected at the other end of the amenity area allowing access to the amenity area in Kingfisher Drive. In both cases no permission had been asked for by the residents to erect the fences and gates on Parish Council land. The Clerk to ask the Maintenance Officer to take some photos of the gate and fence. It was agreed that Liz Swift and Hazel Williams should meet with the resident responsible for the fence at the other end of Hatley Drive Amenity Area adjacent to 31 Hatley Drive.

Cemetery – Artificial Grass and Metal Caskets

A question had been raised by one of the undertakers asking if the Council allowed metal caskets for burials. The Group agreed that there is no reason why they cannot be used if they fit in to a normal sized grave space. However, it is important that a record is kept of the location of non-wooden coffins for future reference.

The Group discussed a request to lay artificial grass on an occupied grave. It was agreed that this is not acceptable.

The Group then discussed the absence of Gus Jones due to ill health since January 2021. It was agreed that the Group should recommend to Full Council that his absence should be approved until 31st December 2021. The Clerk to make Cllr Jones aware.

F&GP/28092021/10 Date of the next meeting – 30th November 2021.

The meeting ended at 9.25 pm

Signed

Dated