Minutes of the Finance Committee held on 30th January 2012.

Members: * Cllr H Linsley

* Cllr G Logan * Cllr B Mayo (Chairman)

* Cllr K Budden

* Cllr A Wright

* Present

Clerk: R Bowery

01/FIN/12 Declarations of interests

There were no declarations.

02/FIN/12 Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of 31st October 2011

Cllr Wright, referring to minute 27/FIN/11 said that the proposed Liss Landscape Character Assessment for HCC/SDNPA was not now proceeding in the current financial year; consequently LPC would not incur the £350 cost involved in 11/12.

03/FIN/12 Consideration of the Main & Charities accounts for the 10 months to 31st January 2012.

The Clerk tabled accounts with supporting schedules.

Main Accounts

The Clerk highlighted the main areas of variance from budget; these included additional pension costs, training for staff & councillors & the high cost of mower repair.

Charities Accounts

It was noted that village hall rental receipts were below budget, this was offset by increased receipts for west Liss pavilion hire. Expenditure on allotments was over budget due to the installation of water tanks & the cost of fence repairs.

04/FIN/12 Consideration of grant applications

The Clerk reported that there were no new grant applications. He was concerned over issues relating to 2012/13 approved grants where final accounts relating to two items had been only recently received. Both sets of accounts revealed that the organisations were holding substantial reserves.

After discussion it was agreed that no changes be made to the approved grant budget; however, payments would be accompanied by a letter informing all applicants that no consideration would taken of applications not supported by accounts dated six months or less before 30th September 2012. Further, applicants would be instructed to detail the exact reason for funding requirements.

05/FIN/12 Any other business

Bank mandate

The Clerk explained that one additional form was required for the new pavilion development account & that this would be dealt with as soon as practicable.

Discretionary Rate Relief

The Clerk informed the meeting that EHDC had halved the DRR for the village hall from 20% to 10%. This would lead to a cost for 12/13 of £57. The 80% statutory relief remained.

Village Hall maintenance

Referring to the minutes of the Building Committee of 29th November 2011, the Clerk informed that a contractor had visited & costed the proposed repairs to the ladies washroom hand basin & vanity unit as well as replacement urinals, piping, tiles & hand basin in the gents. The total for both jobs was £3.3k. Members agreed that the work was necessary to enhance the attraction of hiring the facility.

Next Meeting: 19.30pm Tuesday 8th May 2012

19/FIN/08 Exempt Items

Restructure of grounds staff

After discussion it was agreed that it was not prudent to proceed with the recruitment of an apprentice groundsman at the moment as this would have a significant impact on the precept. The matter should be reconsidered in two years time at the latest. It was agreed that the present part time grounds maintenance worker would have his working hours reduced from 2 to 1 day per week with effect from 1st October.

Remuneration

After discussion it was agreed that the following grade adjustments would be applied with effect from 1st April 2008.

<u>Job</u>	From <u>Grade</u>	To <u>Grade</u>
Clerk	SCP33	SCP35
Assistant Clerk	SCP16	SCP24
Groundsman	SCP18	SCP19
Cleaner/Caretaker	SCP7	SCP8

All cost of living awards would be applied, back dated to 1st April, when the Employers & Unions reached a settlement.

Minutes of the Finance Committee held on 8th May 2012.

Members: * Cllr H Linsley

* Cllr K Budden

* Cllr G Logan

* Cllr B Mayo (Chairman)

Cllr L Mann

Cllr P Payne

* Cllr A Wright

* Present

Clerk: R Bowery

Apologies: Cllr Mann & Cllr Payne. Cllr Logan arrived half way through the meeting.

06/FIN/12 Declarations of interests

There were no declarations.

07/FIN/12 Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of 30th January 2012

The minutes of the meeting of 30th January, approved at Council on 20th February were taken as read.

It was noted that the bank mandate hade now been updated and that the village hall toilet repairs were to be discussed at the Buildings committee meeting on 14th May.

08/FIN/12 Consideration of the Main & Charities accounts for the year to 31st March 2012.

The Clerk had circulated accounts together with analysis details prior to the meeting. Main Accounts

Cllr Wright asked how the level of free reserves held by LPC compared with other local parishes & the Clerk was requested to investigate.

The Chairman drew attention to the level of reserve held for play equipment & said it was insufficient to meet the possible expansion programme resulting from the Village Plan Questionnaire. It was noted that the issue would be discussed at the next Grounds Committee meeting. A schedule of petty cash payments amounting to £1008.72 for the 2011/12 year was tabled. The Clerk explained the higher than normal cash expenditure resulted in the need to buy mower fuel with cash following the closure of the White Rose forecourt; this had added £480 to cash expenditure.

The Chairman signed the schedule of cash payments with the agreement of the Committee. Charities Accounts

The Clerk highlighted falling rentals for the village hall & said that these had been slightly compensated for by increased rentals at the West Liss pavilion.

The Clerk reported that the PRS/PPL fees for the coming year had more than doubled & that he was in discussions with those bodies. It might be necessary to pass the charges on to those organisations playing background music.

09/FIN/12 Statement of Internal Control

The Statement of Internal control was reviewed by Members & subsequently signed by the Chairman.

10/FIN/12 Adoption of Investment Strategy

A draft Investment Strategy was tabled &discussed. Members agreed to adopt the Investment Strategy subject to the amendment of item 5 under Strategy to read:

"On the basis of that cash flow forecast, to invest only in:

Fixed term deposit investments *normally* with the Council's main bankers, *or other authorised* banks & building societies.

The placing of such deposits will be determined by the Council's Responsible Financial Officer."

10/FIN/12 Consideration of revisions to Schedule of Charges

The Clerk presented a schedule of charges showing suggestions for rates to be charged to any commercial businesses that wished to hire LPC facilities. He explained that certain grant application procedures required applicants to have such a two tier rate giving preferential rates to local charities.

After discussion it was agreed that the Clerk & Assistant Clerk would charge a premium on commercial hires but would be allowed to use their judgement to establish the charges.

11/FIN/12 Consideration of grant applications

The following grant applications were considered & agreed:

- Home Start Butser - £150.

The Chairman declared a prejudicial interest in the following application arising from his position as LPC's appointed representative to Rake Village Hall Committee.

- Rake Village Jubilee Picnic - £60.

12/FIN/12 Any other business

Newman Collard Tennis Courts

A letter had been received from Liss Tennis Club requesting that courts 1 & 2 be fully resurfaced in March 2013 but the NCPFT had not yet confirmed their preferred course of action. The Clerk would request NCPFT to submit their letter.

There was a discussion on what work was actually needed & Cllr Linsley felt that an independent evaluation needed to be carried out.

Cllr Logan said that two contractors had submitted quotations for the various options & that site visits had been carried out by LPC, NCPFT & Tennis Club representatives.

It was agreed that any works order needed to be placed as soon as practicable in order that contractors could ensure works would be done in March 2013.

It was noted that the Tennis Club wished to have conduit to the courts incorporated in the work in order to facilitate any future installation of floodlighting.

It was agreed that it might be best to secure planning permission for floodlights before any costs were incurred.

Next Meeting: 19.30pm Tuesday 6th August 2012

19/FIN/08 Exempt Items

Restructure of grounds staff

After discussion it was agreed that it was not prudent to proceed with the recruitment of an apprentice groundsman at the moment as this would have a significant impact on the precept. The matter should be reconsidered in two years time at the latest. It was agreed that the present part time grounds maintenance worker would have his working hours reduced from 2 to 1 day per week with effect from 1st October.

Remuneration

After discussion it was agreed that the following grade adjustments would be applied with effect from 1st April 2008.

<u>Job</u>	From <u>Grade</u>	To <u>Grade</u>
Clerk	SCP33	SCP35
Assistant Clerk	SCP16	SCP24
Groundsman	SCP18	SCP19
Cleaner/Caretaker	SCP7	SCP8

All cost of living awards would be applied, back dated to 1st April, when the Employers & Unions reached a settlement.

Minutes of the Finance Committee held on 6th August 2012.

Members: * Cllr H Linsley

* Cllr K Budden

* Cllr G Logan

* Cllr B Mayo (Chairman)

Cllr L Mann

Cllr P Payne

* Cllr A Wright

* Present

Clerk: R Bowery

Apologies: Cllr Mann & Cllr Payne.

13/FIN/12 Declarations of interests

There were no declarations.

14/FIN/12 Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of 28th May 2012

The minutes of the meeting of 8th May, approved at Council on 21st May were taken as read.

Cllr Wright, referring to Council minute 69/12, asked if LPC did have a strategy for addressing the lower than recommended level of general reserves as highlighted in the internal auditor's report on the 2011/12 accounts.

The Chairman said that LPC was always mindful of this but there was no defined strategy.

The Clerk reminded Members that LPC was attempting to increase the level of general reserve over a period of years by adding an identified sum to the budget every year & had added £5000 into the 1012/13 budget.

Cllr Linsley said that LPC were aware of the situation & taking appropriate action.

Cllr Budden was concerned that the reduction of Government contribution to local councils might lead to some services being devolved to parishes & that LPC had no resources should this be necessary.

Cllr Linsley felt that this was a matter to address in the compilation of the 2013/14 budget.

15/FIN/12 Consideration of the Main accounts for the 4 months to 31st July 2012.

The Clerk had circulated accounts together prior to the meeting & tabled a detailed breakdown of operating costs.

The Clerk highlighted the variances from budget other than timing differences; these included £1267 for fence repairs at Newman Collard Playing Field. He added that there were also some upcoming costs to be met for equipment rental while the ride-on mower was being repaired.

The Chairman asked if it was felt that technicological advances might require the CCTV system to be upgraded. The Clerk replied that all transmitters had been upgraded to digital & that the system was much improved with no further work necessary.

Cllr Budden said that there appeared to be no specific provision for staff training. The Clerk replied that such expenses were met from the general expenses budget & that no specific requirements had yet been identified.

16/FIN/12 Consideration of the Charities accounts for the 4 months to 31st July 2012.

The Charities accounts were reviewed.

The Chairman asked if the level of village hall bookings was improved & the Clerk replied that they seemed to have levelled out.

The Chairman commented that allotment water bills could be expected to be lower due to the wetter than normal weather.

17/FIN/12 Consideration of the Pavilion Development accounts for the 4 months to 31st July 2012.

The Pavilion Development accounts were reviewed.

Cllr Linsley asked if all the project funding was secured. Cllr Budden replied that there was a gap of about £100k at the moment but he was confident that it was attainable.

Cllr Wright asked if future architect's fees would be payable once the building work was started. Cllr Budden replied that was correct.

Cllr Budden said that some project funding would not be received until after the project was complete; this meant that LPC might need to cover £50-60k. It was agreed that bank loans would be utilised should the need occur.

18/FIN/12 Consideration of grant applications

There had been no grant applications.

19/FIN/12 Any other business

Audit

The Clerk reported that the Audit Commission had cleared the accounts for 2011/12 with no comments.

Telephone Account

The Clerk reported that Boxx Communications had solicited a transfer of the LPC account; savings on line rental & calls could be achieved. Members agreed that no change in present arrangements should be made.

Part time staff

The Clerk said that there was now a desperate need to get some assistance for the Groundsma Contrary to some comments, this was not a case of creating new posts; there had been two full time & one part-time staff a year ago & LPC was now down to one full time employee only. After discussion it was agreed that an interview with the individual who had approached LPC about part-time work be carried out by the Chairman of Grounds, office staff & the Groundsman It was understood that any appointment would be for an initial period ending on 30th September Staff uniform work wear

It was agreed that polo shirts, work trousers & fleeces with an LPC logo be purchased for the Groundsman, the Caretaker & the Litter Picker at a cost of ££465.

It was agreed that protective chain saw trousers be purchased for the Groundsman at a cost of £55.

Groundsman's Phone

It was agreed to purchase a cheap pay-as-you-go phone for work calls only.

West Liss Pitch Repairs

A quotation for remedial work on the West Liss recreation ground pitch for £1160 had been received. Members agreed that the quotation be accepted & the work carried out as soon as possible.

Ride-on-mower

The Clerk reported that the LPC ride-on-mower was showing signs of age & that replacement should be considered.

It was agreed that the exact requirement be established & appropriate provision be included in the 2013/14 budget.

Next Meeting: 19.30pm Tuesday 29th October 2012

19/FIN/08 Exempt Items

Restructure of grounds staff

After discussion it was agreed that it was not prudent to proceed with the recruitment of an apprentice groundsman at the moment as this would have a significant impact on the precept. The matter should be reconsidered in two years time at the latest. It was agreed that the present part time grounds maintenance worker would have his working hours reduced from 2 to 1 day per week with effect from 1st October.

Remuneration

After discussion it was agreed that the following grade adjustments would be applied with effect from 1st April 2008.

<u>Job</u>	From <u>Grade</u>	To <u>Grade</u>
Clerk	SCP33	SCP35
Assistant Clerk	SCP16	SCP24
Groundsman	SCP18	SCP19
Cleaner/Caretaker	SCP7	SCP8

All cost of living awards would be applied, back dated to 1st April, when the Employers & Unions reached a settlement.

Minutes of the Finance Committee held on 29th October 2012.

Members: * Cllr H Linsley

* Cllr K Budden

* Cllr G Logan

* Cllr B Mayo (Chairman)

* Cllr L Mann

* Cllr P Payne

* Cllr A Wright

Clerk: R Bowery

20/FIN/12 Declarations of interests

Cllr Budden declared a prejudicial interest in financial matters relating to the Liss, Greatham & Hawkley Friendship Fund arising from his position as LPC's appointed trustee representative on that body.

* Present

C;llr Payne joined the meeting during this item.

21/FIN/12 Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of 6th August 2012

Cllr Linsley asked how the part-time grounds assistant was settling in. The Clerk replied that the groundsman appeared content with his work.

Cllr Wright advised that it was important to set out the terms & conditions of employment as a matter of urgency.

Action: Clerk to draw up contract of employment.

22/FIN/12 Consideration of the Main & Charities accounts for the 6 months to 30th September 2012.

The Clerk had circulated accounts with supporting schedules prior to the meeting.

Main Account

Cllr Budden asked why sundry admin. Expenses were high & the Clerk replied that certain annual costs were incurred at the start of the year & created an uneven pattern of expenditure.

Cllr Wright asked why play equipment repairs were over the annual budget. The Clerk replied that these costs related mainly to repairs at West Liss; there was a certain amount of catch-up in repair work that evened out over the years.

Cllr Payne asked why LPC appeared to have paid the bulk of the cost for the new White Bridge. The Clerk replied that £3500 had been received from HCC in the previous year & that LPC had only borne £500 of the project cost.

Charities Accounts

Cllr Budden raised concerns over the high costs for gas & electricity in the village hall. It was agreed that a change of supplier be investigated.

23/FIN/12 Consideration of the Budget for the 2012/13 financial year.

The Clerk had circulated the budget schedules prior to the meeting.

Cllr Linsley raised some items that he felt should be considered for inclusion in the budget. It was agreed to discuss these after the budget as prepared had been reviewed.

The Clerk explained the assumptions made when compiling the budget & Members then debated & agreed the following adjustments:

Precept as presented	Note	£	£ 148370
Adjustments on running costs:			
Donation:			
LAHS donation	1	-300	
Home Start Butser		-10	
Hants Youth Orchestra	2	-60	
Petersfield Open Air Pool	3	-2875	
General donations		50	
Grounds Costs - tree surgery	4	2000	
Admin Costs - training	5	500	
Village Hall - gas/elect provision		600	-95
			148275
Adjustments on Project costs:			
Riverside Walk footpath grading		250	
Rotherbank Farm Lane Bridge repair		-270	-20
Adjusted precept			148255

Notes

- 1 It was agreed that, from documents submitted by LAHS, there was no reason to increase their grant.
- 2 It was agreed that LPC should focus on Liss based activities.
- 3 It was agreed that LPC should focus on Liss based activities & that there were adequate alternate facilities for residents.
- 4 It was agreed that there was a possibility of a great increase in tree surgery requirements.
- 5 It was agreed that provision be made for the training of grounds & admin. staff.

These adjustments gave a precept per dwelling, excluding pavilion development, of:

Precept	<u>2012/13</u> 143553	2013/14 148255
Number of band D dwellings	2597.11	2614
Cost per dwelling Increase %	55.27	56.72 2.62

The Clerk reviewed some of the earmarked reserves & explained some proposals:

<u>Grounds equipment replacement</u>: The sit-on mower was now past it's useful life & it was proposed to replace it with a more substantial & suitable machine. There was a second hand machine

to replace it with a more substantial & suitable machine. There was a second hand machine available locally that was being investigated. There was also a plan to replace a push mower & to purchase some tools. This could be achieved from existing reserves & the increased 13/14 year provision.

NCPF entrance gate: The Clerk explained that these repairs were the responsibility of LPC & needed to be carried out due to health & safety risks as well as aesthetics. Only one quote had been received so far, others would be obtained.

Office copier: The existing machine was now getting old & becoming unreliable.

Other matters discussed were:

The possibility of getting a franking machine to reduce postage costs.

Cllr Linsley suggested that all councillors should receive an allowance to cover the high cost of printing council related documents on home printers. It was agreed that no additional provision be made in the budget & that members should put claims in when necessary in order to establish the need for such a provision.

Cllr Linsley suggested that an independent firm be employed at a cost of about £1000 to review LPC grounds maintenance practises. It was agreed to make enquiries with Petersfield TC who were using the company to see what the benefits were, but no adjustments would be made to the budget proposals.

Play equipment

A document outlining the proposed installation of some new play equipment at Newman Collard Playing Field had been prepared By Cllr Logan & the Assistant Clerk. The Clerk explained that there were funds in reserves as well as some available in Developers' Contributions Funds available; it was also intended to apply for grant funding. The Clerk asked if members were content that the Assistant Clerk proceed with compiling a proposal. Cllr Payne said that he was not content & that the matter should be discussed in Council & that no consultation had been carried out. The Clerk said that consultation had been made & the two items had been identified by village youth as what they wanted.

Other members were content that the project be pursued.

24/FIN/12 Consideration of the schedule of charges for the 2013/14 financial year.

Members reviewed the proposed schedule of charges for 2013/14 & agreed all the proposed charges.

The Chairman explained to members that Cllr Logan had investigated the charges for allotments thoroughly & the new charges were intended to eliminate some dispatities between different sites. He thanked Cllr Logan for the very detailed report that had been compiled.

The Chairman proposed an extension of no more than ten minutes & members agreed.

25/FIN/12 Consideration of grant applications

The Clerk reported that the local walking group, Blissters, had approached LPC for a contribution towards a memorial bench for Mrs Woodcraft. A grant of £200 was agreed.

Cllr Payne left the meeting at this point

26/FIN/12 Any other business

Terms of reference of staff & remuneration committee.

It was agreed to defer this item until the next meeting.

Groundsman's Store

Cllr Budden said that alterations to the groundsman's store were necessary under employment law in order to provide adequate hot water & a dry area to change etc. It was thought that such alterations could be achieved for around £1000 & members agreed this proposal.

Urgent tree surgery

The Clerk tabled three proposals for works at NCPF totalling £1138. Cllr Mann said that he would seek an alternative quotation.

Cllr Linsley thanked the Chairman for managing the meeting so well.

Next Meeting: 19.30pm Monday 28th January 2013

19/FIN/08 Exempt Items

Restructure of grounds staff

After discussion it was agreed that it was not prudent to proceed with the recruitment of an apprentice groundsman at the moment as this would have a significant impact on the precept. The matter should be reconsidered in two years time at the latest. It was agreed that the present part time grounds maintenance worker would have his working hours reduced from 2 to 1 day per week with effect from 1st October.

Remuneration

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