

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held in The Reading Rooms, Buxted on Tuesday 25th October 2011 at 7.45 p.m.

Present: Cllrs. Warner (Chairman), Blandford, Dopson and Rose
Also present: M J Wilson, Clerk to Parish Council.

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies

2 **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS**

Cllrs. Warner, Blandford and Dopson declared personal interests by being members, appointed by the Council, of the Basil Ionides Memorial Centre Trust (MW/VB) and Buxted Community Hall Trust (VB/MD)

Cllr. Rose declared a personal interest by being a member, appointed by the Council, of the Buxted Pavilion Trust Committee

3 **REVIEW OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25th October 2010 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.

4 **REMUNERATION OF CLERK AND CARETAKER 2012/13**

Members reviewed details of the Clerk and Caretakers remuneration for 2012/13.

The Committee **recommend** to the Full Council that the remuneration for the Clerks be set in accordance with NALC scales. These figures have been built into the budget for 2012/13.

Arrangements for caretaking and Reading Room bookings are under review. It is expected the clerks will take on the booking responsibilities and an allowance for cleaning has been built into the budget.

5 **REVIEW OF ANNUAL RENT CHARGES FOR BUXTED ALLOTMENTS and PIG SYNDICATE**

Members discussed the current annual rent charges for the Buxted allotment plots. To simplify administration it was **agreed** to incorporate the water charges (for 2011 £2.97 per small plot, £5.94 for large plots) for the allotments into the rent. These arrangements will be monitored by the Clerk to ensure there is no large shortfall. It was **resolved** that rentals should be increased as follows:

- a. Current rent £30, future rent £33
- b. Current rent £37, future rent £41
- c. Current rent £50, future rent £56

It was also **resolved** that if the pig syndicate decided to operate in the coming year the rent would stay at £160

6 **PRECEPT AND BUDGET 2011/12**

Members discussed the budget proposals in detail. Following considerable discussion, the Committee **recommend** to the Full Council that the Precept be increased to £80,670, an increase of 1.0%. This will yield a predicted surplus of £463.

The Committee **recommend** to the Full Council that the Receipts budget be £3,716 and the Payments budget be £83,923. The full budget proposals, which include setting grants for the next three years, are attached to these minutes.

7 **ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL AUDIT**

New terms of reference for the internal audit had been agreed with Mulberry & Co. The parish had been one of the 5% sample selected by the external auditors, Mazars, for more detailed inspection and the Clerk reported that the Annual Return for the year ending 31st March 2011 had received a clean bill of health from the internal and the external auditors.

8 **REVIEW OF BUXTED PARISH COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

Revised Financial Regulations were adopted by the parish council at its meeting on 8th February 2011

9 **RISK ASSESSMENT**

The annual Risk Assessment Programme was reviewed and considered to be up to date and no recommendations for changes were made as this time.

The insurance arrangements had been reviewed in full during 2011 taking account of the cover provided and the level of premiums and a new three year agreement through Came & Co had been put in place.

10 **RESERVES**

Current earmarked reserves are as shown in the table below. After detailed review it was agreed to **recommend** to the parish council that the reductions shown in some categories totalling £31,420 be made and the sums transferred to the Community Hall Development reserve fund, subject to planning permission for the development being granted by Wealden District Council.

Reserve	Current	Reduction	Remaining
Election	5,000	4,000	1,000
Staff gratuity	1,500	nil	1,500
Play renewal	14,850	10,000	4,850
Play maintenance	5,420	5,420	nil
Traffic	6,000	6,000	nil

management			
Computer	1,500	nil	1,500
Legal	3,500	nil	3,500
Parish plan	9,000	6,000	3,000
Allotment	1,120	nil	1,120
deposits			
Repairs & renewals	20,000	nil	20,000
Community Hall	31,883	(31,420)	63,303
General	44,694	Fluctuates	as receipts
	(as at 300911)	and payments	are made

11.

BUXTED COMMUNITY HALL TRUST

The Committee remains concerned that the Trust has still not resolved the VAT uncertainties. If the expenditure for the build is passed through the parish council's books then the parish council will be expected by the Auditors to follow purchasing procedures outlined in our Financial Regulations which would effectively mean the parish council running the project, which is not an attractive option. Once the movements of reserves in minute 10 above are approved the Clerk will formally advise the Trust of the level of reserves currently earmarked by the parish council for the hall development but stress that the VAT position must be resolved quickly and that the funds might not be available if the financial circumstances of the parish council changed unexpectedly.

A paper prepared by Cllr Warner looking at potential funding opportunities was discussed and the contents noted.

The meeting closed at 9.10p.m.

Signed:

Chairman

Date: