

PATCHWAY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance Committee held on 6 March 2012 at Callicroft House, Rodway Road, Patchway

Present: Cllr. C. Mills (in the Chair)
E. Gordon JP
M. Grotzke
P. Cottrell
S. Scott
D. Tiley
Mrs E. Orpen
Ms R. Thorne
K. Walker

In attendance: Mrs L. Hamid
M. Winter

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Moore.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Chairman asked any members having an interest in a matter to be discussed in the meeting to declare it at the appropriate time.

4. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 7 February 2012 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed Gordon, seconded Scott
The Chairman asked that the attendance of officers should in future be recorded in the Minutes.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

a) Rent increases

The Committee agreed that as only two groups were using Callicroft House regularly and one group using the Casson Centre, there should be No rent increase for the 2012-13 year. Proposed R.Thorne, seconded M.Grotzke.

It was agreed that the rent for Patchway Common Pavilion should be

increased by 5% for the children's groups . Proposed P. Cottrell,
Seconded K. Walker

b) Youth Work

The summary of the SGC Children & Young People's Review had been circulated to all Councillors. Julie Close from southern Brooks Community Partnership had asked if she could come and speak to the Council about the proposals for Patchway in this Review and it was agreed to have this discussion at the April meeting of the Finance Committee as there was already a speaker booked for the April Council meeting. The Committee agreed that the Town Council would wish to see Patchway Youth Centre kept open to provide facilities for local young people.

c) Garage extension at Scott Park

The Committee noted that the contract for this work was almost Complete and was within budget, the expenditure having been agreed by The Parks & Open Spaces Committee in 2010. Additional work on blocked drains at the rear of the pavilion was being carried out by the same contractor and the sum of £7,000 had been agreed in 2011 for this work.

5. Current financial position

The Committee noted the bank balances at today's date were:

Current account:	£2,060.00
Business Reserve account	£125,093.84

6. Monthly summary of expenditure

The Committee noted the summary of expenditure for the month February and also the income and expenditure accounts for the same period . The Committee would like to see the income and expenditure sheets each month but asked that personal wage details should not be included. The Chairman stated that in future Mike Winter as Deputy Clerk would present the figures and take responsibility for answering questions on both documents.

The Committee agreed unanimously that from this month, once the Finance Committee had approved the expenditure there should be no alterations to the figures and any additions should be recorded in the following month's column Proposed D. Tiley, seconded K. Walker.

7. Gorse Covert and Scott Park

The Clerk reported on a conference she had attended on the management of open spaces. Two useful pieces of information had arisen from discussions:

Gorse Covert

South Gloucestershire Council had agreed that any parish or town council could be issued with a 50 year Lease for an area of open space in their parish at nil rent. Patchway Town Council had applied some years ago for a Lease for Gorse Covert and been refused but now SGC would be willing to issue a Lease. The Committee agreed that this item should be on the agenda for the Council meeting with a recommendation that this opportunity should be taken up so that the Council would be able to manage the woodland and grassland for the benefit of local residents and could ensure that no threat of development.

Scott Park

There was an opportunity for the Council to register Scott Park (and also Gorse Covert if a Lease was issued by SGC) as a Queen Elizabeth II Field to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. This would give the land added protection from Development and make it eligible for external grant funding from Sport England and SITA. This registration would be through Fields in Trust which was the operating name of the National Playing Fields Association.

The Committee agreed to recommend to Council that Scott Park should be Registered as Queen Elizabeth II Field.

8. Meeting with Patchway Community Association

It was noted that this meeting with members of the Finance Committee had been arranged for Wednesday 21 March at 7 p.m. It was agreed that members would meet at 6.30 p.m. with the architect prior to the meeting and that a series of bullet points should be prepared for the meeting.

It was regretted that no SG Councillors would be able to attend due to a SG Council Meeting that night.

9. Other financial & urgent matters

a) Accounting software

The Chairman stated that other local councils used dedicated software for their book keeping rather than Excel Spread sheets used by the Council. He proposed that the Council should consider a dedicated package produced for local councils, such as RBS solutions which was to be used by Stoke Gifford Parish Council from the next financial year and which was recommended by NALC. The cost to purchase this system was approximately £1,700 and there was also a small annual licence fee. It was noted that SGC

Audit Department would be carrying out work on the Council's accounts shortly and it was suggested that the Clerk obtained their advice on a suitable package before a decision was taken.

b) Reducing Isolation & Loneliness

The Committee noted that Julie Close was making an application to South Gloucestershire Council for funding for the Day Centre for the Elderly from this fund which was offering one –off funding to help expand and develop existing initiatives offering help and support to older people. The application was being supported by Age UK.

c) Almondsbury Parish Council

The Committee noted that Almondsbury Parish Council wished to set up a working group to look at the future of the Cemetery jointly managed by Patchway and Almondsbury. They were asking Patchway to put forward the names of three Councillors who were not already involved in the management committee. Cllrs Walker, Scott and Mills agreed to join this working group.

d) Town Council van

The Chairman reported that the Council's Ford Escort van had failed its MOT due to extensive rust and that a new clutch was also needed. He had Met with the groundstaff and it was agreed that it was not cost effective to Repair the van which was X Registration. The groundstaff had stated that they Would be able to operate more efficiently if the van was replaced by a small Tipper vehicle and the Chairman recommended that this was done. After discussion the Committee authorised the Chairman to agree to the purchase of a second-hand vehicle in good condition up to the cost of £6,999. Proposed K. Walker, seconded S. Scott.

e) Repairs to Ransome gang mower

The Committee agreed to repairs to the Ransomes 951 mower which Had been found necessary during the winter service of this vehicle. Replacement of the deck spindle, bearing, hydraulic hose and deck pins and Bushes for the wing decks would cost £2,287. The Committee noted that the Cost of replacing this mower would be £30,000 and agreed to these essential repairs. Proposed Gordon seconded. D.Tiley.

f) Councillors Training

It was agreed that in order to control training costs that all attendance at Training sessions should be booked through the office and should be beneficial to the work of a councillor.

g) Annual Town Meeting

The Committee noted that this public meeting must be held during the month of May. It was agreed to propose to Council that the meeting should be

held on Wednesday 2 May with no speaker. The preferred venue was Patchway Community Centre, but Coniston Community Centre was proposed as an alternative.

h) Patchway Town FC

The football club had asked if it could erect its railing round the main Pitch in Scott Park during July so that a football tournament could be held during the Festival. Although this request would be referred to the Parks & Open Spaces Committee, Councillors considered it unlikely that this would be Agreed because of the Council decision that railing should not be erected in the Park during the summer holidays as they restricted the use of the Park by the public.

i) Merlin Housing Society

Merlin would like to meet with the Council on Friday 16 March in confidential session to inform Councillors of the recommendations which would be made on sheltered housing in Patchway to the residents at the end of the month and to the Merlin Board in June. It was agreed to arrange this meeting at 3 p.m. to enable the maximum number of Councillors to attend.

j) Patchway Community Centre roof

The Clerk circulated for information photographs of damage to the Centre's roof caused by the theft of lead which had allowed rain water to penetrate the ceiling of the kitchen and Room 3. The Committee noted that the Centre's manager was contacting their insurance company and arranging emergency repairs.

10. Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 3 April at 7.30 p.m.