

**SCOTTER PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2012**

**PRESENT:** Councillor C. Day (Chairman), Councillors M. Armstrong, C. Baker, B. Billam, J. Bullivent, D. Capes, J. Fillingham, S. Hinman and A. Sheardown, M. Brown (Acting Clerk).

**In attendance :** Ward Councillor W. Parry

With no members of the public present, the meeting commenced at 7.34pm.

**118 2012/13 : To receive and approve apologies for absence**

No apologies were received. However, the Council noted the absence of Councillor Rayner.

**119 2012/13 : To receive declarations of interest in accordance with the Localism Act 2011**

Personal interests were declared by Councillors Baker and Hinman in relation to agenda item 5 (minute ref. 122 2012/13), by Councillors Billam, Fillingham and Sheardown in relation to agenda item 6 (minute ref. 123 2012/13), by Councillor Day in relation to item 7 (minute ref. 124 2012/13), by Councillor Capes in relation to item 10 (minute ref. 127 2012/13) and by Councillors Baker, Bullivent and Sheardown in relation to item 13 (minute ref. 130 2012/13), the Councillors concerned being sitting members of the committees of the organisations in question or, in the case of Councillor Capes, being a member of the club. They declared their intention to refrain from voting on the relevant matter. No other declarations were made at this time.

**120 2012/13 : To examine proposals for income and expenditure during the financial year 2013/14**

The Chairman introduced this agenda item by appraising members of the Council of the current financial position, to assist them in their deliberations on the setting of the Precept. He further commented that two organisations had submitted requests for grants in 2013/14 to cover expenditure that had already been made by them and suggested that, prior to the meeting to set the Precept for 2014/15, the Council should develop a policy in relation to such requests.

The Council then considered the paper circulated with the agenda in relation to this item, which included an evaluation of payments expected for the rest of 2012/13 and an estimate of payments expected to be made in 2013/14 and an evaluation of the income expected for the rest of 2012/13 and an estimate of income expected in 2013/14 (excluding the Precept amount). With the exception of the proposed expenditure covered in other items on the agenda, the Council considered the draft payments and receipts on a line by line basis and made the following specific resolutions in support of or to amend the paper :

With identified needs for training in playground inspections and, for those involved with the young people, in first aid, it was

**RESOLVED : To increase the 2013/14 budget for general training to £350.**

With drainage issues still apparent at Scotterthorpe allotments,

**RESOLVED : To increase the 2013/14 maintenance budget at the allotments to £500.**

Whilst recognising the limits on her personal time in the next year,

**RESOLVED : To include £300 for training of the appointed Clerk during 2013/14.**

This is likely to involve some form of distance learning, to suit her circumstances.

In light of the current economic situation, it was

**RESOLVED : To maintain the budget for general maintenance and seat/litter bin replacement at the reduced level of £200 in the 2013/14 Precept.**

It was further

**Initialed ..... Chairman**

**RESOLVED : That, in accordance with its powers under section 137 of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Council intends to make a donation of £75 in 2013/14 for a poppy wreath which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the inhabitants of the Parish and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure.**

**121 2012/13 : To consider the replacement of the ride-on mower and the timing thereof**

The Council considered the paper provided, which outlined the various model options available for a replacement mower. With Husqvarna now having developed a model that is especially designed for the type of work undertaken by the Council, it was :

**RESOLVED : To replace the ride-on mower at the end of its second year of operation (i.e. in March 2013) with the professional Model P524 machine at a part-exchange cost of £6450 +VAT.**

Considering the cost of exchange, it was further

**RESOLVED : To increase the element of the machinery replacement reserve associated with the ride-on mower to £2375 per annum with effect from 2013/14.**

**122 2012/13 : To consider whether to provide a Youth Club during 2013/14**

Councillor Baker explained that feedback she had received suggested that the lack of uptake of the offered youth club is much to do with the name itself and the connotations that the name has with younger people. She asked for the Council's support for a re-launch of a facility for the younger children during April 2013, based on the provision of 4-week blocks of specific activities (e.g. cookery, performing arts, art and crafts, outdoor sports at the MUGA, etc.). This focussed approach would also show which activities were the most popular, allowing future concentration on them for maximum benefit. Taking into account meeting room and hut rental costs and materials, the likely budget is c. £1.5k for the facility for the 2013/14 year. With the exception of Councillors Baker and Hinman who abstained, it was

**RESOLVED : To re-launch a weekly facility for younger children in 2013/14 at an estimated cost of £1500.**

**123 2012/13 : To consider a request from Scotter Village Hall Association to include a donation to the Association when setting the 2013/14 Precept**

The Council discussed the request for consideration of a grant during 2013/14 to cover the excess of the cost of car park repairs over the grant made by the Council during 2012/13, the total amount of that excess being £1510. The request was considered against the background of the Council's usual level of support for this community asset, the size of the Association's reserves (as witnessed by its most recent accounts) and the excess of expenditure over income that has occurred over each of the previous two years, reducing liquid funds by £7.6k to £12k and (with the exception of Councillors Billam, Fillingham and Sheardown who abstained) :

**RESOLVED : To include a donation of £2000 to Scotter Village Hall Association in the 2013/14 Precept.**

**124 2012/13 : To consider a request from Scotter War Memorial Playing Fields Committee to include £800 in the 2013/14 Precept to cover employers liability and public liability insurance at the fields**

The Council has historically approved this annual request for recompense of insurance costs and included an amount of £800 in its Precept for 2012/13 to meet the expected request in March 2013 (currently estimated at £800). Whilst the cost in March 2014 is not known, the Council noted that the Committee has requested the same amount to be included in the 2013/14 Precept for this purpose. With the exception of Councillor Day who abstained, it was :

**RESOLVED : To include an amount of £800 to cover the cost of employers liability and public liability insurance at the fields in the 2013/14 Precept.**

**125 2012/13 : To consider a request from Scotter Junior Football Club to include £2890 in the 2013/14 Precept to cover the cost of grass cutting and bank strimming at the playing fields and a further request to meet 50% of the cost of repairs to the pavilion floor**

The Chairman explained that the first letter received from the Club had requested £3051 towards the grass cutting and that, whilst he had expected an increase in the request due to the presence of the additional playing field and the footpath around it, the increase had seemed excessive. The Club has since re-negotiated with its contractor and the cost has been reduced to £2890. The Council considered this element of the request, with accompanying revised quotation showing how the requested sum would be spent during the 2013/14 cutting season and :

**RESOLVED : To include £2890 in the 2013/14 Precept to cover grass cutting and bank strimming costs during that season, such monies to be released on receipt of invoices in substantiation.**

The Council also noted that the club wished to submit a claim for 50% of the cost of repairs to its pavilion floor, the cheapest quotation submitted to the Council being in the amount of £4560 inclusive of VAT. The flooring is in a very poor condition and it is highly unlikely that a new pavilion will be provided in the short to medium term, making its replacement vital. The Council also noted that, other than requests for grass cutting (which benefits all users of the playing fields), the Club has not prior asked it for any other support. In light of this, it further

**RESOLVED : To include a maximum of £2280 in the 2013/14 Precept towards the cost of repairs to the pavilion floor, such monies to be released on receipt of invoices in substantiation.**

**126 2012/13 : To consider a request from Scotter United Football Club to include an amount of £1200 in the 2013/14 Precept as a contribution towards fertiliser, grass seed and general grounds maintenance work**

The Council considered the letter from SUFC, which requested support during 2013/14 in relation to grounds maintenance costs. It also examined the financial position of the Club for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2012 and :

**RESOLVED : To include £1200 in the 2013/14 Precept towards grounds maintenance costs, such monies to be released on receipt of invoices in substantiation.**

**127 2012/13 : To consider a request from Scotter Bowls Club to include an amount in the 2013/14 Precept as a contribution towards £840 incurred during 2012 for a new pump for the watering system and £130 which the Club would wish to spend on a new hedge trimmer**

Councillor Capes explained that the league membership of the club has fallen quite substantially such that, going forward, there will be a pressure on its funds and a likely increase in members' subscriptions. The Council then considered the letter from the Bowls Club against the background of the financial position of the Club for the 9 month period to end September 2012 and, with the exception of Councillor Capes who abstained, :

**RESOLVED : To include £970 in the 2013/14 Precept towards the pump purchased for the watering system and the purchase of a new hedge trimmer, such funds to be released on receipt of invoices in substantiation.**

**128 2012/13 : To consider a request from Scotter Good Companions to include an amount of £600 in the 2013/14 Precept to cover the cost of meeting room hire, replacement games and transport costs for 6 No. outings during the year**

The Council considered the letter from Scotter Good Companions against the background of the financial position of the club and its expected bank balance at the end of its financial year (31<sup>st</sup> January 2013). Whilst supportive of the Club's purpose, the submitted request appears to cover the vast majority of its expenditure in any year and was seen as rather excessive for the number of members involved. In consequence, it was :

**RESOLVED : That, in accordance with its powers under section 137 of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Council intends to include £400 in the 2013/14 Precept to cover the cost of meeting room hire for Scotter Good Companions (such monies to be released on receipt of**

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invoices/receipts in substantiation) which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the inhabitants of the Parish and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure.

**129 2012/13 : To consider a request from Scotter Pre-School to include an amount of £5000 in the 2013/14 Precept towards the cost of a sun canopy for its outdoor play area**

The Council considered the letter from Scotter Pre-School requesting a major contribution towards the canopy's cost against the background of its financial situation. With the future location of the organisation being in a state of flux and concerns regarding the safety and security from vandalism of such a structure, it was

**RESOLVED : To refuse the request.**

**130 2012/13 : To consider a request from the Scotter Forward Committee to include a sufficient sum for Community Projects in the 2013/14 Precept to support parish plan projects**

The Council considered the letter received and noted the number of projects still ongoing for which seed funding will be required. The Chairman drew the Council's specific attention to the requirement for a new 3-phase electrical supply to the playing fields which will benefit users of the playing fields, the tennis courts, the MUGA and walkers on the field. Whilst a price is still awaited from YEDL, it is anticipated that this will be very substantial. £7k towards the cost of the supply will remain from the external funding received for the MUGA but, if that is not spent relatively quickly, it will be lost. The balance of cost may be of the order of £15k and it is unlikely that further grants can be obtained for this element of the project. Even with contributions towards the cost from the various clubs that use the facilities, there is likely to be a substantial shortfall. To this end (and in the absence of Councillors Baker, Bullivent and Sheardown, who abstained), it was

**RESOLVED : To include a sum of £10,000 in the 2013/14 Precept for Community Projects.**

**131 2012/13 : To consider a request from West Lindsey Citizens Advice Bureau to include an amount in the 2013/14 Precept in support of its work.**

The Council considered the request for assistance against the background of the significantly increased debt-management workload (up by 8% in the last year alone) faced by the local CAB due to the current economic downturn and

**RESOLVED : To include £300 in the 2013/14 Precept in favour of West Lindsey Citizens Advice Bureau, such monies to be paid in April 2013.**

**132 2012/13 : To consider and approve the Council's Precept requirement for the financial year 2013/14**

In light of the foregoing resolutions, the Clerk amended the expected payments figures and the position was summarised as follows :

Opening Cash Book Balance at 01.04.2012	79,987.52
Add Projected Receipts to 31.03.2013	<u>208,188.77</u>
	288,176.29
Less Projected Payments to 31.03.2013	<u>199,372.78</u>
Projected Closing Bank Balance at 31.03.2013	88,803.51

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Opening Cash Balance at 01.04.2013	88,803.51
Less Mower Replacement Reserve at 01.04.2013	-
Less Memorial Safety Reserve at 01.04.2013	1,200.00
Less The Granary, Elizabeth Close & The Rookery reserves as at 01.04.13	68,000.00
Less Key Deposit Reserve at 01.04.13	52.00
Less Budgeted Payments for 2013/14	<u>62,781.00</u>
	- 43,229.49
Add Budgeted Income for 2013/14 (excl. precept)	<u>7,361.16</u>
Nett Expenditure (excl. precept)	-35,868.33

The Council then considered and discussed an appropriate level of contingency to be applied to this figure to cover unexpected expenses and to allow for a year end bank balance and it was :

**RESOLVED : To submit to the District Council a Precept for 2013/14 to cover general expenses in the amount of £41,000.**

This represents a reduction of 11% in the level of general expenses requested compared with 2012/13. The necessary paperwork in support of this was completed and signed at the meeting.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.46pm.

Clerk: .....

Chairman: .....

Date: .....