

BRADWELL PARISH COUNCIL

23rd July 2019

A Meeting of the Finance & General
Purposes Committee at 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Howlett (Chairman), Carrier, Shaw, Steggles and Wells.

IN ATTENDANCE: Parish Clerk J Caborn.

As the committee chairman was absent, and no vice-chairman had been elected, Councillor Wells as Chairman of the Council took the chair for the first three items.

1 **APOLOGIES** – Councillors Francis and Macdonald.

2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – Councillor Carrier declared a personal interest in item 12a, 'Request for annual grant, Bradwell Reading Room Trust'

3 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

It was **resolved that Councillor Howlett be appointed as Vice-Chairman.**

4 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no members of the public present.

5 **MINUTES OF MEETING – 30.4.19 – MATTERS ARISING** – none.

6 **ACCOUNTS TO PAY**

- i) Garden Guardian Ltd. - grounds maintenance charges, June 2019 - £827.60
- ii) A J D Caborn – Parish Clerk's expenses – £276.23
- iii) Mrs S Y French – Deputy Clerk – additional hours/'acting up' allowance - £225.00
- iv) HMRC – Payments due 1.4.19 – 30.6.19 - £1,738.05
- v) Post Office Ltd. – stamps – £185.51
- vi) Norfolk Accident Rescue Service – donation - £100.00
- vii) St Nicholas Church PCC, Bradwell – annual grant towards burial ground expenses (concurrent functions grant) - £1,215.00
- viii) C Gay – supply and fit new allotment tap, Cley Road site - £54.00

The following direct debit payments were made between 1.4.19 and 30.6.19:-

- i) Gamma Business Communications – telephone/Broadband - £54.42 - 23.4.19
- ii) Gamma Business Communications – telephone/Broadband - £52.16 - 22.5.19
- iii) Gamma Business Comms – telephone/Broadband - £16.72 - 22.6.19 (final a/c)
- iv) OneCom Ltd. - telephone/Broadband - £72.35 - 28.6.19 (period 15.5.19 – 30.6.19)
- v) Total Gas & Power – Electricity - 24.4.19 - £113.38
- vi) Total Gas & Power – Electricity - 23.5.19 - £106.25
- vii) Total Gas & Power – Electricity - 22.6.19 - £252.46

The following were signed on the dates shown on the basis of urgency, as per the provisions of Financial Regulation 6.4:-

- ix) Came & Company – insurance, period 1.6.19 – 31.5.20 - £2,069.52 – 104606 – 11.6.19
- x) Garden Guardian Ltd. - grounds maint. charge, May 2019 - £827.60 – 104607 – 11.6.19

It was **resolved that the above accounts i) to viii) be paid, and that direct debits i) – vii), and accounts ix) to x), be retrospectively approved.** Account vi) has been paid via the council's 's137' powers.

7 **STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS – 1.4.19-30.6.18**

The quarterly accounts were tabled, and the Clerk explained two of the items, and that generally the payments made and receipts paid in are fairly typical for this early stage of the financial year.

8 **INTERNAL AUDIT CHECKS – 1.4.19-30.6.19** – will be carried out shortly.

9 **APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO PUBLIC RELATIONS & PUBLICITY SUB-COMMITTEE**

It was **resolved to appoint Councillors Carrier, Howlett, Macdonald, Shaw, Wainwright and Wells to the above committee, and to appoint Councillor Carrier as chairman.**

The date of the next meeting will be 3.9.19, and there will be a number of additional items to be considered.

10 **CCTV SYSTEM - QUOTATION**

It was reported that the council's 'old' CCTV system developed a number of faults, largely with the operation of the 'roaming' camera, and it stopped working altogether earlier this year, probably due to a fault with the control box. Further to previous attempts to obtain a quotation for replacement or upgrading of the system, Councillor Carrier provided a list of local companies that could potentially be approached, and invitations to quote were sent to Securicom Services Ltd., CHS Security and BSA Broadland. BSA were the only company to respond.

Two meetings have been held with a representative of the company, Ben Halliday, involving four members of the committee, and the quotation, copies of which were circulated with the agenda, was submitted after the second meeting, having been slightly amended from the first one. It was resolved to **accept the quotation of £2,759.20 + VAT for the specified installation works, subject to approval by the Parish Council at its 27.8.19 meeting.**

Concern was expressed that a quotation accepted from Mr V Bloom in March 2019, to repair the 'apex' structure above the pavilion entrance door, and to replace the fascias, soffits and guttering for the whole building, has not yet been carried out, and may result in some of those works having to be carried out a second time, if this work has not been completed by the time that the CCTV works are to be carried out. It was suggested that, even if such works do have to be carried out twice, there should not be a great deal of additional cost, and that a way around the problem may be to ask Mr Bloom to carry out the apex works first.

11 **ANGLIAN WATER BUSINESS LTD.**

It was reported to the 16.4.19 meeting of this committee (minute 11) that the above company had failed to continue the arrangement made with its predecessor for refunds to be made to the council in respect of water not returned to the sewer, and had not responded positively to requests to reinstate the practice – it was resolved at that meeting that, if no satisfactory response is received within the near future, a formal complaint would be forwarded to 'Ofwat', the water industry regulator.

There has been further correspondence exchanged between the council and the company (otherwise known as 'Wave') since, and the company has subsequently arranged for a '21% return to sewer allowance for the period 1.5.19 to 30.4.20' to be granted. However, the company did not explain how that '21%' figure was arrived at, and nor did it make any attempt to acknowledge the fact that the council was seeking refunds in respect of its sub-meter readings submitted for water used to irrigate the bowling green, none of which was returned to the sewer, going back to September 2016. A letter of complaint was accordingly sent to the 'Consumer Council for Water' on 12.7.19.

An unexpected piece of mail was received by the council on 16.7.19, from 'Wave', dated 12.7.19, outlining an 'account statement' for the council, which referred to a 'total of withdrawn bills since last bill' of £1,309.74, and an 'account balance as at bill date' of £1,028.93. Ten 'revised' bills were attached to the account statement, covering the period 16.9.16 to 12.6.19, indicating in each case the revised total for the bill, and the amount for the corresponding previous bill which has now been withdrawn. It will be necessary to scrutinise all these bills, to ascertain whether the amounts refunded appear to correlate with the total refund that the council should have received to date, based on its own sub-meter readings for water not returned to the sewer.

A e-mail response was received on 22.7.19 from the Consumer Council for Water, in which it explained its role, and explained that it cannot investigate individual complaints until both stages of the water company's 'written complaints procedure' have been exhausted. It gave a general outline as to how the council should pursue such a complaint.

12 **REQUESTS FOR GRANTS**

a) **Bradwell Reading Room Trust**

The above has submitted a formal request for the 'annual grant' that it receives from the council, for 2019/20. Councillor Carrier, as the council's representative on the Trust, gave an update on recent moves to enable others (e.g. artists wishing to display work) to utilise the building, the Trust's plan to celebrate its centenary next year by arranging a 'display', grants received from other organisations, hope that recent building changes will result in lower energy bills, and the fact that an article recently published in 'Village Voice' attracted many new members. It was **resolved to make a grant of £1,650, the same as last year, towards the running costs of the organisation, with an invitation to the Trust to make a further application later in the year if there is a particular need.**

b) **Age UK Norfolk** – it was resolved to **grant £100 to this organisation.**

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.07 p.m.

Signed: Date :
Date of next meeting – 5.11.19