

## **GREAT WALTHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Monday 26th July 2010 at Great Waltham Village Hall**

#### **1. Election of Chairman**

Mr Braisby was elected as Chairman.

#### **2. Record of Members present**

Chairman: Mr Braisby

Councillors: Mrs Dickinson, Mr Blaber and Mr Micklem.

#### **2. Apologies for Absence**

Were received from Mr Jackson and Mr Steel.

#### **3. Declarations of interests (existence and nature) with regard to items on the agenda.**

Mr Micklem declared an interest in item 10.

#### **4. Public Participation session with respect to items on the agenda.**

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

#### **5. Parish Council Accounts as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2010.**

These were presented, discussed and agreed.

The following report was given:

With only three months income and expenditure there is little to report upon.

##### **General Account**

1. Additional income is expected from the insurance claim for the demolished North End bus shelter (estimated £1,600) the Essex Legacy grant for the Mini Olympics (£500) and the prize money for winning Essex Village of the Year (£500). An application will also be made for grant funding of just over 50% of the construction costs of footpaths across Great Waltham Recreation Ground. See also additional expenditure to be incurred.

2. Expenditure on administration has been fairly heavy during the first three months and care will need to be exercised to monitor the expenditure in future months.

3. A greater amount of PAYE Income Tax is being deducted from employees pay. This will be balanced by an additional payment to HM Revenue and Customs at the end of the year.

4. The insurance premium has come in slightly more than expected largely as a result of more playground equipment being added.

5. Expenditure on litter bins will go into an overspend situation if the Parish Council agrees to the full expenditure on a new dog bin at the Great Waltham end of the Essex Way footpath.

6. There is a saving of £300 with funds not required by the Parish Group. There is an additional income of an estimated £200 for funds donated to the Parish Council by the Parish Plan Group which were not required to produce the plan.

7. There is a overspend of £95 on tree maintenance in connection with the felling of the two Cherry trees at the east end of Great Waltham Recreation Ground.

8. The Quality Parish Council fee was actually paid in the financial year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010.

9. The publicity/Communications budget will be underspent by an estimated £989.50. The original budget was £1,800 from which £155.25 has been spent on the Annual report. The revised estimated expenditure to the end of the year is £500 underwriting of the Parish News and £155.25 for a sheet to communicate to the Parish the facts about the Great Waltham Village Hall refurbishment and modification project.

##### **Clerks Gratuity Account**

The transfer has now established sufficient funds to be available in accordance with the Clerks Contract of Employment.

##### **Emergency Staff Payroll Reserve**

Has been set up with an initial reserve of £500 transferred from the general account.

##### **General Reserve**

Nothing to report

##### **Capital Works Account**

See separate report. The balance as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010 has increased because the Ford End Youth Shelter and additional play equipment at Great Waltham Recreation Schemes will not be carried out until at least 2011/12 financial year. It was noted that there may possibly be a

need to include a sum in respect of the Former Ford End Cricket Field at some time in the future.

#### Allotment Account

Nothing to report

#### Changing Rooms Account

Estimated additional income from rent and expenditure on electricity, insurance and caretaking result in a slightly increased deficit of £429.67 which is £10.07 more than the original budget.

#### 7. Outstanding Accounts.

There were no outstanding accounts.

#### 8. To review Capital Works Provision, and the funding of the programme

The Capital Programme was reviewed and approved as follows:

##### Latest Proposed Programme

Project Description	Estimated Cost.	Anticipated Grant	Parish Council Funds	Year for work	Funding Method
Play Equipment, Great Waltham	£21034	£15000	£6034	2009/2010/2011	£15000 Community Initiative Fund (Youth) £6034 Capital Works Account (now completed)
Community Focus Point Project – Feasibility Study	£9476	£7988.00	£1488	2009/2010	£6500.00 Essex County Council £1488.00 Great Waltham Village Hall Committee £1488.00 Capital Works Account Part Payment made 21 <sup>st</sup> September 2009 £5856
<b>Additional Play Equipment</b>	£4000	£2000	£2000	2011/2012	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£34510</b>	<b>£24,988</b>	£9522		

Estimated balance as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 £12967.69

#### 9. Report on outstanding loans

There were no outstanding loans to or from the Parish Council

#### 10. To review Fees and Charges.

Mr Micklem declared an interest.

Fees and charges were reviewed and agreed as follows:

Heading	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Use of Great Waltham Recreation Ground - Senior Football - per match - (excluding winter grasscutting and use of changing rooms)	£20.00	£20.00
Use of Great Waltham Recreation Ground - Senior Football - per match - (including grasscutting and use of changing rooms)	£40.00	£40.00
Use of Great Waltham Recreation Ground - Junior Football- per match (excluding winter grasscutting and use of changing rooms)	£10.00	£10.00
Use of Great Waltham Recreation Ground - Junior Football- per match (including grasscutting and use of changing rooms)	£20.00	£20.00
Use of Ford End Playing Field - Junior Football -per	£10.00 for non-	£10.00 for

match.*** (Excluding Barnston Youth FC (see Licence)	Parish use only	non-Parish use only
Notelets - each	£1.00	£1.00
Postcards - each	15p	15p
Allotments - per square meter (equivalent to £2.50 per rod	£10p	£10p

\*\*\* Goalpost layout is such that organised matches cannot be played at present.

### **11 To review the internal audit report for the financial year 2008/9**

The findings and recommendations made by the internal auditor were considered as follows:

- The Council's Standing Orders and its Financial Regulations have not been reviewed since early in 2004. The NALC has recently issued updated Standing Orders and it is understood that this is an area which the external auditor is testing as part of his 2010 audits.
- In October 2008 it was decided to move the Clerk's Gratuity Account to Barclays Bank. On 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2009 £18068.85 was moved from Bank of Scotland to Barclays. In the period ended to 6<sup>th</sup> December 2009 £4/09 interest has been received. In the current period of very low interest rates some Councils have invested in fixed period bond accounts from 'reputable banks'. In January 2010 the Council mutually agreed with the clerk to extend his contract of employment to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011.
- Over recent years the Council has become more dependent for its business continuity on its IT systems. In discussions with the Clerk regarding backup arrangements there was mutual concern regarding the need for regular copies of the Council's data being store remotely.

#### **Recommendations**

With reference to the above findings I recommend that the Council continue to speedily progress its review of:-

- The Council's Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations including the inclusion of the annual requirement to review the effectiveness of the Internal Audit.
- Investment of surplus funds such as the Clerk's Gratuity Account so as to obtain a better return.
- The Council include in its annual review of risks the need for a business continuity plan including the regular backup of systems and data with one copy stored remotely.

The Committee discussed the report. Some matters had or were planned to be dealt with.

The following matters were agreed:

- New Standing Orders had been adopted buy the Parish Council in June 2010.
- The clerk would check the financial regulations with regard to a regulation about the effectiveness of the Internal Audit. (Clerks Note: Regulation 1.4 of the Financial Regulations refers and cover this point)
- The Committee considered the need to invest surplus funds and felt that there was no requirement as the surplus funds may need to be obtained at short notice and it was anticipated that interest rates would rise during the forthcoming year.
- Arrangements had been made for a remote save of all the data from the Parish Council's IT systems, on a remote storage hard disk held by the Chairman. It was agreed that the Chairman should also trial a site on the Internet specifically designed for remote saving of information.

### **12. To consider the Standing Order relating to the Media and a Media Policy.**

The clerk had produced notes on this subject and a proposed policy. After reading through the proposed document changes were agreed and the clerk was charged with amending the document, circulating it to Finance and General Purposes Committee members and then placing the item on the first possible full Council agenda for adoption.

### **13. To check, confirm and sign the latest Bank Reconciliation**

The bank reconciliation was checked, confirmed, and signed.