

Minutes of Finance Committee & Interviews with Grant Applicants **Thursday November 4th 7.30pm at The Clip**

Present

Cllr T Woodward Chairman

Cllrs Nicholas Jago, Gates, Carberry Manifold and Jordan

It was felt at the previous Finance Committee meeting that further clarification of certain grant applicant accounts and requests should be sought prior to the Committee finalising the budget to be put forward to the Parish Council for final approval. Therefore representatives from the Playing Field Committee, Martham Bowls Club Steering Group and St Mary's Church were invited to attend at various times to discuss their applications.

At 8.00pm Mr Ray Dickinson attended to discuss the way forward for the Bowls Club steering Group. He explained that a decision was pending from the Foundation for Sports and Art regarding a grant towards the building of an 8 lane drained bowls area on the playing field. If this application was successful no further grant would be needed from the Parish Council.

He explained that the new club would be open to all for a small fee and it was hoped that, once up and running, the club would be self funding with a rental fee payable to the Playing Field Committee. The steering group had been in discussion with the local schools and had drawn up a Child Protection statement which had been accepted and a constitution. This was all in the hope of encouraging younger people into the sport. He explained the need for a separate changing area to the one already available at the social club on the Playing Field.

Plans had been drawn up for discussion but nothing had been decided, a quote had been received for £60,000 from Mr R Willimott this would be without connection to services and without a pavilion/changing area. The members of the steering group had estimated that if the work was carried out by themselves it would cost them £25,000 to £30,000.

Funds held at present were:-

Current account:- £13444

Borough Council Grant promised £5000

NCC Sports Dev council promised £5000

Norfolk Playing Field Association £1000 promised

In addition to these monies it was anticipated that there would be approx £1000 left from the winding up of the Hall Road bowls club plus the equipment from there.

The Committee thanked Mr Dickinson for his hard work and commitment. He then left.

It was decided not to award a grant in the year 2005/06 but to continue to offer the Steering Group support by making the final Planning Application in the Parish Council's name and to help with recovery of VAT. They would be invited to make another grant application for the year 2006/07 when hopefully, work had begun on the project.

At 8.30pm Mr Bircham, Treasurer to St Mary's Church, attended. He was asked to clarify how many bank accounts the church had in operation and confirmed that in total there were 4 accounts, however the Parish Council had only been supplied with the Churchyard account information as the grant request was for churchyard cutting. Two other accounts held money for specified items the other was a general account. Mr Bircham verbally confirmed that this account did not have a large balance.

The committee thanked Mr Bircham for his attendance, he then left.

It was decided that a grant of £1200 be paid to St Mary's church for grass cutting in the 2005/06 season but that in future copies of all accounts should be given to the Clerk with the grant application so that a complete picture of monies held by the church is known by the Parish Council.

At 9.00 Mr Ransome and Mr Roofe of the Playing Field Committee attended and were asked to clarify where the income from the Social Club was shown in the accounts done by them. They explained that the Social Club was run as a separate entity and therefore no income was included for that interest. The Committee asked why a set of accounts from the Social Club was not in the Playing Field Committee possession? Mr Roofe and Mr Ransome agreed that this should be the case, however they were dealing with an inherited situation and were trying to bring about changes gradually. They were in the process of reviewing the field maintenance charges. They were both thanked for the dedication shown to the Playing Field in what was labelled by all as a "thankless task". They then left.

It was decided that communication between the Playing Field Committee and Parish Council should be improved as many problems discussed were not known by the Committee. It was proposed that at the next Parish Council meeting the Charity Working Party be asked to liaise with the Playing Field Committee and the Social Club to sort the accounts situation out. A grant of £7500 to include litter picking to be organised by the Playing Field Committee themselves was approved.

The Chairman went on to explain that following a Personnel Working Party meeting and subsequent interview with the Clerk he would propose that from April 2005 the Clerk be salaried at 17 hours per week. This was based on the average hours she was working at present. It had also been agreed that the Clerk would be in the office each Tuesday and Thursday from 10.00am until 12.00noon effective from the end of November. This was to improve communication between Councillors, the Clerk and the Public. Based on these hours £9000 was approved for the budget for 2005/06.

It was proposed by Cllr Jordan, seconded Cllr Manifold that the attached budget be put forward to the Parish Council for approval at the next meeting, all were in agreement.