



**Report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee**  
**Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2023 at 7:30pm**

**PRESENT** Cllr. J Britt Chairman presiding.  
 Cllrs. D Garland, N Osborne, D Turner, K Hammond & A Walmsley  
 J Bate (RFO)

**Public Participation:**

No members of the public present.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies received and accepted from Cllrs. S Heeley & A Ratcliffe and L Westcott (clerk).

**2. NOMINATIONS FOR SUBSTITUTIONS**

There were none.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON THE AGENDA**

No declarations received.

**4. MINUTES FROM F&GP 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

The minutes of the F&GP meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023 were agreed as being accurate.

**5. FINANCIAL REPORT (by RFO J Bate)**

a. Review payment list for October for recommendation to full council:

Name	Frequency	Description	Date	Amount
Mazars	Annual	External Audit Services	17/10/2023	756.00
Streetlights	Bi-Annual	2nd Maintenance Contract payment	09/10/2023	403.20
EDF	Bi-Annual	WCs Electricity standing charge	06/10/2023	31.23
Carpet Giant	One off	Flooring for new WC in 1a High Street		142.00
DWN Property Maintenance	Monthly Ad-Hoc	Handyman invoice for WC gate repair (new gate made)	12/10/2023	470.47
Nathan Beale	Monthly	General Waste Management plus Watering Planters	30/09/2023	792.00
Express Cleaning Supplies	Add-Hoc	Lisa - Bin Bags for Nathan	09/10/2023	107.59
Post Office	Add Hoc	Lisa - Postage - Paul McCreery	19/10/2023	4.19
Safeplay	Ad-hoc	Repairs and Renewals for Play Equipment	22/09/2023	2,058.00
Capital Fire Protection	Ad-hoc	Inspection and Maintenances of fire equipment	09/10/2023	177.16
Safeplay Playground Services	Bi-Monthly	Bi-Monthly Playground Inspections	13/10/2023	176.40

**Action it was agreed to recommend payments of £ 5,118.24 plus a cheque to of £3.30 to A Barr, in respect of rent for the Ham Lane playpark**

Separately to the above:

1. It was agreed that the £500 grant payment to the Lenham Lights Committee would continue to be deferred until a certificate of public liability insurance was produced.
2. A cheque for £3.30 was raised in respect of the rent for the Ham Lane playpark (3 years rent at 1 guinea pa). A Barr to be asked if he could supply a copy of the lease.

It was agreed that a small Budget Planning Committee would be set up to present a skeleton draft for circulation at the LPC November meeting. F&GP would then devote most of its November meeting to flesh out the detail. The RFO also noted that a Government recommendation was that all levels of Government should detail all equipment manufactured in China. He said that this would cover computers and CCTV cameras.

**6. INVESTMENT OPTIONS AND DRAFT POLICY**

A draft policy document based on a NALC template had been circulated for further comment. Generally this was considered as perfectly acceptable though comment was made about only having short term investments given that in future interest rates were likely to fall.

Cllr. Osborne stated that prior to any investments being made we should obtain professional advice even if this would generate costs. He was of the opinion that this would generate less criticism than a poor investment choice on our own part. This was agreed and Cllr. J Britt said that he would contact the financial contact at NALC to obtain advice.

**Action J Britt – to establish dialogue with a Financial advisor via NALC contacts.**

**7. DIGITAL FILING CLOUD STORAGE**

J Bate has produced a guide to the use of one-drive cloud storage which will be circulated to F&GP who will test out the system for any issues prior to adoption by the LPC.

The basic premise is that finalised documents in PDF format will be kept on a central set of folders available to all and that in addition each Parish Councillor will have a separate folder which only they plus the RFO and Clerk will be able to access – this being for working documentation.

The intention is that all documentation held on individual PC's will be uploaded as separate folders to the central one-drive thus allowing both interrogation and archiving by all as required.

**Action J Bate / L Westcott - to circulate a link to those members of F&GP present at the meeting for a “dummy run”**

**8. UPDATE ON SECTION 106 & CIL MONIES DUE / APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDS MADE**

Nothing reported.

**9. UPDATE ON SALE OF LAND AT WPF**

Cllr. Britt reported the latest situation – he stated that the first phase of the Countryside development would proceed early next year and that 50% of the moneys due to the LPC would be paid probably in January 2024 with the balance being paid in December 2024.

**10. TO CONSIDER PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO THE ENTRANCE TO THE PICNIC SITE**

Cllr. N Osborne presented quotes for approximately £1800 for the repair of the gate at the picnic site. It was agreed that he should proceed on the basis of which contractor could do the work soonest.

**Action - This to be forwarded to LPC as a recommendation. It was agreed that, for reasons of safety and security, the contract would go to the company which could carry out the repairs at the earliest opportunity.**

**11. TO CONSIDER QUOTES FOR WINTER PLANTS**

Cllr. D Garland provided quotes for the supply of winter pansies for the Village planters.

**Action - It was agreed to recommend to LPC that we proceed with the Coolings quote.**

**12. TO CONSIDER PROPOSAL FOR INSTALLATION OF FLOORING AT £142 IN WASHROOM IN OFFICE**

A quote to fit the flooring in the new office WC was presented.

**Action - it was recommended that LPC be advised to accept.**

### **13. TREES**

Cllr. Britt reported that he had received a response to our objection to the TPO on the Churchyard Thuja tree stating that we had improperly submitted it and that we would also be required to submit the arborical report before 9<sup>th</sup> November. He agreed to resubmit our objection as had been requested. Cllr Garland agreed to attempt to generate the arborical report from his arboriculture contact prior to the 9<sup>th</sup> November.

**Actions Cllr. Britt to brief L Westcott on her return from leave & Cllr. Garland to organise the required survey report on the Thuja tree in the church graveyard.**

Cllr. Garland also circulated a quote from Invicta Arboriculture to undertake the Lenham Parish Council Health and Safety tree inspection for the sum of £2400.

**Action - it was agreed that this should be recommended for agreement by LPC.**

I was noted that the list of trees did not include the Lime Trees in the Square and that in future these should be added to the list.

**Action – Cllr Garland to get a separate quote for pollarding the lime trees in the Square**

The ownership of the strip of land adjoining Royton Avenue was questioned with most Councillors of the opinion that it belonged to the Parish.

**Action L Westwood to check the land registry.**

### **14. TO CONSIDER THE QUOTE FOR CUTTING CHURCHYARD GRASS AT £380**

**Action - It was agreed that the quote for £380 to carry out the final cut of the year should be accepted. F&GP to recommend this to LPC.**

### **15. TO CONSIDER REQUEST FOR PLACEMENT OF A MEMORIAL BENCH AT ROYTON AVENUE**

Correspondence had been received requesting the siting of a memorial bench at Royton Avenue.

**Action - It was agreed that if this has not already been done the memorial bench requirements would be circulated to the Parishioner.**

### **16. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS, TREE AND EVENT – UPDATE FROM MEETING**

Cllrs Osborne and Turner reported that a meeting between the original lights committee and the new volunteers had been successful with the original team happy to provide a “hand over” to the new team who seemed to be keen. Cllr. Osborne did however express worry that third party insurance had never been obtained and he considered that this would be essential. (see Clause 5.1).

### **17. PROJECTS UPDATE**

Cllr. Walmsley reported a conversation with the owners of the Russells, who following a meeting with Councillors had obtained a quote for the repair of their fence and for some clearance of branches “caused by our tree work over the summer”. They were requesting a contribution of £408 towards the clearance. It was suggested that the Council could provide something towards the request but that Cllr. Walmsley should suggest £246 leaving the residents with a round £1500.

Cllr Walmsley also reported that he would meet with the ground contractor with a view to obtaining optional quotes for consideration by LPC.

**Action Cllr. Walmsley to obtain quotes and liaise with the Russells.**

### **18. CORRESPONDENCE**

It was reported that a speedwatch volunteer had come forwards. Cllrs. considered that if speedwatch was to proceed it should be led by a Councillor. This issue was to be raised at the LPC.

Cllr. Turner stated that she had not yet received a response from Golding Homes regarding the hedging that required trimming – she will continue to chase.

### **19. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS TO FULL COUNCIL**

- **payments of £ 5,118.24 plus a cheque to of £3.30 to A Barr, in respect of rent for the Ham Lane playpark**
- **J Britt – to establish dialogue with a Financial advisor via NALC contacts**
- **J Bate / L Westcott - to circulate a link to those members of F&GP present at the meeting for a “dummy run” of the cloud-based storage**

- **Proposed modifications to the entrance at the picnic site: It was agreed that, for reasons of safety and security, the contract would go to the company which could carry out the repairs at the earliest opportunity.**
- **A recommendation to accept the £140 fee for installing flooring in the new first floor toilet at the Parish Office**
- **Tree issues Cllr. Britt to brief L Westcott on her return from leave & Cllr. Garland to organise the required survey report on the Thuja tree in the church graveyard**
- **Accept a quote from Invicta Arboriculture to undertake the Lenham Parish Council Health and Safety tree inspection for the sum of £2400**
- **Accept the quote for cutting churchyard grass at £380**
- **Memorial bench at Royton Avenue: It was agreed that if this has not already been done the memorial bench requirements would be circulated to the Parishioner**
- **Maidstone Rd / Ham Lane footpath: It was agreed that Cllr Walmsley would offer a contribution of £256 to the landowners in part payment for the additional works to the fencing**

**The meeting closed at 22:00**

Signed as a true record on this day 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023.....

Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee