

CROXLEY GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
ON THURSDAY 12 DECEMBER 2013**

Present: Cllr Mitchell – In the Chair David Allison – Clerk to the Council

Cllrs Bennett, Edmunds, Jordan and Seeley

Voting Members: 5

Members of the Public: 1

FA945/13 Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr Shafe.

FA946/13 Declaration of Interests

The Chairman recommended that any declarations of interest be made, if necessary, throughout the meeting.

FA947/13 Representations from the Public

Representation was made by a representative of the Croxley Green Mummings. He stated that the Croxley Green Mummings was re-established in 1994 to provide free family pre Christmas entertainment at a number of venues within Croxley Green on the Sunday prior to Christmas each year. The Croxley Green Mummings have submitted an S137 Grant application for consideration to assist in the repair and refurbishment of the costumes used.

It was stated that in the last 20 years the Mummings have been running over £5,300 has been donated to the Peace Hospice. It was added that one or two of the costumes or parts of the costumes have been refurbished over the years at the expense of the various performers who have undertaken the roles but now the majority of the costumes have come to the end of their useful life so replacements are now required – examples were shown.

In conclusion, it was stated that although the Grant Application was for £500, any money that the Council felt able to provide to the group would considerably help them continue with the excellent and unique Christmas tradition.

The Chairman thanked the representative for his comments and proposed to the meeting that Agenda item FA951/13 S137 Grant Application from Croxley Green Mummings be moved up the Agenda under Standing Order 9.1.6. The proposal was agreed.

FA951/13 S137 Grant Application from Croxley Green Mummings

The Chairman introduced this item and referred those present to the S137 Grant Application for £500 and invited Members to comment.

Members stated that they considered that the mini community play that the Croxley Green Mummings perform at the various different locations around Croxley provided residents with an entertaining event which was very much enjoyed by those who attended and that the Grant should be supported.

The Clerk brought to Members attention that the Council's budget for S137 Grants was £1,000 of which £500 had been already been granted and a further £3,750 had been agreed with the necessary virement of funds by Council. The Clerk continued that should Members be inclined to support the current application for £500 further virement of funds would need to be agreed.

Resolved:

- That an S137 Grant of £500 be given to the Croxley Green Mummers;
- That the necessary virement of funds be made;
- That the matter is put before Council.

FA948/13

Minutes

Resolved:

- That the Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 14 November 2013 be approved and be signed by the Chairman.

FA949/13

Matters Arising

FA938/13 Representations from the Public (Croxley Green Community Association). The Chairman advised Members that he had had an unofficial meeting with the Association who had indicated to him their willingness to continue with an arrangement with the Parish Council regarding village hall facilities but with new terms which would also likely to be more financially favourable to the Council.

FA950/13

Monthly Accounts

There was an adjournment to allow Cllrs the time to peruse the accounts for month 8 (November).

The Clerk brought to Members attention:

4001/101 and 4001/103 Salaries (£0) – it was noted that the Council's payment to Watford Borough Council for the Parish Council's staff salaries had not been cashed and would show as a cashed payment in Month 9.

4036/103 Property Maintenance (£692) – it was noted that this related to £300 for the arrangement with the Alarm Response company, £60 to M25 Alarm for recoding the alarm system for the alarm response company and installation of a new electric water heater that had failed in the office (£331.70).

4024/102 Subscriptions & Publications (£56) – it was noted that this related to the purchase of a NALC publication.

4615/211 External Xmas Tree, Library (£593) – it was noted that this related to the purchase of the external Christmas tree at the library (£220), 8 x 10m coloured lights £304, and a step down electricity transformer £69.

The following matters were also raised:

4024/102 Subscriptions & Donations – it was pointed out that the subscription payment to the Croxley Green Society appeared not be showing in the accounts either under the Current Month Column or Actual Year to Date. The Clerk said that he would look into this matter.

Resolved:

- That the Management Accounts for months 8 (November) be approved and be signed by the Chairman.

[Post Meeting Note: the cheque for the £5,500 subscription for the Croxley Green Society was presented to the bank on 20 November 2013 and it appears that the month 8 accounts were closed prior to the payment of £5,500 being entered. The situation will correct itself in Month 9].

FA952/13

Budgets 2014/15

The Chairman introduced this item and asked the Clerk to elaborate. The Clerk gave a visual presentation of the budget schedule v4 dated 4 December 2013 which without a Grant from Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) for the tax benefit changes as per last year showed a draft Precept at this time of £282,049, a 13% increase on the current year.

The Clerk advised that as yet there had not been any detailed information from TRDC as to whether a Grant will be forthcoming for the next budget year but indications were that if such a grant was forthcoming it was likely to be some 15% less than last year i.e. in the order of £11,900 versus the £14,000 in the current year. The Clerk showed the effect that if a grant of £11,900 was received then the draft Precept at this time would be £270,179 an increase of about 8% over the current years.

However, the Clerk added that the date of the v4 Budget Schedule, namely 4 December, was prior to the final submission date of budget proposals which was the 6 December so not all budget proposals were included. The Clerk advised that given this situation, Members should note the current position and that a more detailed discussion be undertaken at the Council meeting when v5 of the Budget schedule would be available.

A general discussion ensued in which Members pointed out that in considering the budget and Precept it was important to consider what is needed for the benefit of the residents, their wellbeing and for the environment. It was commented that any potential increase in the Precept that might arise as a result of the tax benefit changes after more full discussion on the detail would need to be very clearly explained to residents.

FA953/13

Closure

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.10pm.