

STREET PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee held in Room 6, Crispin Community Centre, Leigh Road, Street on 5 September 2023 at 6pm

PRESENT: Councillor P. Goater
Councillors: S.Carswell, N Howiantz, N Kellett, B.Knickerbocker, T.Napper, H.Shearer, N.Smith and L Wolfers

IN ATTENDANCE: Z. Leach - Acting Clerk/RFO
D. Price – Acting Deputy Clerk
Cllr A. Leafe
Principal of Strode College
YMCA Director of Youth and Community

APOLOGIES: Councillors: P. Birch– reason accepted.

25. QUORUM:
The Chair confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

26. MINUTES
The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 25 July 2023 and the Extraordinary Meeting of the Committee held on 1 August 2023 which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

27. MATTERS ARISING
The Clerk had circulated with the agenda the bi-annual risk assessment incorporating suggested amendments from the last committee meeting, the child protection policy with guidelines and an exemplar policy from SALC and copy Emprint RAMS.

RESOLVED:

- A that the BI-Annual Risk Assessment be approved
- B that the SALC Safeguarding Policy be adopted, subject to revisions appropriate to Street Parish Council
- C that the Clerk arrange online safeguarding training for Council and Members are asked to sign to confirm that they undertaken the training
- D that the Clerk will respond to EmPrint and question why the wearing of hard hats is not included on their RAMS documentation.

28. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS
In accordance with the Code of Conduct Councillor Carswell declared an other interest under Appendix B in any matters relating to the Somerset Council and stated that he would keep an open mind when considering issues at County or Parish level

Councillor Carswell declared an other interest under Appendix B in any matters relating to Merriman Park as he is Chair of the Merriman Park Community Group.

Councillors P. Goater and Shearer declared an other interest under Appendix B in any matters relating to Houndwood Community Group and abstained from voting on the Houndwood Community Group grant application.

Councillor Howiantz declared an other interest under Appendix B in any matters relating to Hindhayes School as he is soon to be appointed as a governor and abstained from voting on the Hindhayes School Grant Application.

Councillor Kellett declared an other interest under Appendix B in any matters relating to Hindhayes School and abstained from voting on the Hindhayes School Grant Application.

Councillor Knickerbocker declared an other interest under Appendix B in any matters relating to the Mendip Community Transport as he is a Trustee.

Councillor Napper declared an other interest under Appendix B in any matters relating to Glastonbury Town Council.

Councillor Smith declared an other interest under Appendix B in any matters relating to Glastonbury FM as she is a member of the Board. Councillor Smith attends meetings of the Merriman Park Community Group and Greenbank Swimming Pool Management Committee in a non-voting capacity.

Councillor Wolfers declared a pecuniary interest in any matters relating to Street and Glastonbury Chamber of Commerce as she is a board member. Councillor Wolfers attends meetings of the Greenbank Swimming Pool Management Committee in a non-voting capacity.

29 GRANT APPLICATIONS

The Acting Deputy Clerk submitted a report and documents which had been circulated.

Members considered the grant applications submitted and heard from the Principal of Strode College in support of the Grant application for Strode Theatre and from Councillor A Leafe who was attending in his role as YMCA Champion with the YMCA Director or Youth and Community to provide further information on the YMCA Youth Club grant application and vision document previously submitted to Council.

Strode Theatre have been receiving a Covid recovery grant but this has ceased this year. They have also witnessed a reduction in footfall to the Theatre due to a changing demographic. Strode College has been supporting the Theatre in paying heating costs and lighting etc -there has been an element of student usage. The deficit for the previous year is approximate £25-30k. The projected deficit for next year, if there is no change in the habits of people coming to the Theatre, is approximately £79K. There is no intent to reduce the community access to the Theatre nor to cease the Theatre's existence, but it cannot exist in the current format.

There is currently no strategic plan for the Theatre and the Principal of Strode College is looking to set up a task and finish group to look at a strategy between now and Christmas and work with key stakeholders to implement that strategy. He is requesting financial assistance from the Parish Council, Clarks Foundation, the Friends of Strode Theatre, Glastonbury Town Council, Shepton Mallet Town Council and Wells City Council to support the Theatre in its current format for the academic year whilst getting a strategy in place to get it financially stable and viable.

The costs of running the YMCA youth centre are £31,975 and the Parish Council has contributed an annual grant of £10,000 previously. YMCA costs have risen, recruitment has proven difficult due to the short-term funding commitment at a time of austerity and increasing issues being raised. School safeguarding teams welcome the link. The Champions have recommended that the annual grant is increased from £10K to £15K and that the best way forward is to combine the annual grant with the Street vision into a service level agreement.

Councillor Knickerbocker abstained from voting on the St Margarets Hospice grant application due to a personal interest.

Councillors Shearer and P Goater left the room at 7pm for the discussion and vote on the Houndwood Community Group grant application due to a declared interest. As vice-chair, Councillor Kellett chaired the meeting in Councillor P Goater's absence. Councillors Shearer and P Goater rejoined the meeting at 7.06pm.

Councillors Kellett and Howiantz declared an other interest in Hindhayes School and abstained from voting on their grant application form.

RESOLVED

- A that Friends of Street Library are awarded a grant of £507
- B that St Margarets Hospice is awarded a grant of £2000
- C that the Houndwood Community Group is awarded a grant of £600
- D that the grant application from Street Parochial Church is refused on the grounds that the Council only has limited funds at its disposal and considers other needs greater. The Acting Clerk to send a letter to the Church.
- E that Street Striders are awarded a grant of £600 subject to receipt of acceptable accounts and bank statements
- F that the committee are minded to support the grant application for £500 from Street Neighbourhood Watch Association but would first like sight of the accounts - the Acting Clerk to request the accounts and explain that the Council is keen to see the revitalisation of the association. The Grant to be taken from the community safety budget.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

- A that Strode Theatre be awarded a grant application of £40,000 which will support the theatre in the current format for the academic year whilst the Theatre sets up a task and finish group to put a new structure in place.

- B that the YMCA are awarded a 3-year contract, with an option of 2 further years in the form of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) for £32,000 a year to incorporate Street Youth Club and the content outlined in the vision document. The champions and YMCA will liaise to draft an SLA to go before Full Council for approval. £15,000 to be taken from the annual grants budget and £17,000 from the issues for street/vulnerable budget.
- C that Family Counselling Trust Somerset are awarded a grant of £3000
- D that Green Door Families are awarded a grant of £9000, from the issues for street/vulnerable budget.
- E that the Alfred Gillett Trust is awarded £35,000 on the condition that if the project does not go ahead £35,000 will be returned to the Parish Council
- F that the grant application from Hindhayes School for £20,000 is refused and feedback provided with regards to the amount requested and concerns over funding a salary
- G that the Crispin Community Centres three applications - Volunteer Driver Service, Soup Kitchen and annual grant are all combined into a SLA over a 3-year period.

30. POLICIES

The Clerk submitted a draft Health and Safety Policy, Fire Emergency Plan, Fire Safety Policy and Streaming and Recording of Meetings Policy which had been circulated.

RESOLVED:

- A that the Health and Safety Policy be approved
- B that the Fire Emergency Plan be approved.
- C that the Fire Safety Policy be approved.
- D that the Streaming and Recording of Meetings Policy is held until the next Policy & Finance Committee Meeting for approval as it has been further amended from the copy circulated.

31 FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

The clerk submitted a report and papers which had been circulated.

RESOLVED

- A that the report be noted
- B that the external door into the service yard is not classified as a fire exit in terms of the fire evacuation procedure and all signage and relevant documentation/policies are updated by the Acting Clerk accordingly.
- C that it is not necessary for the Acting Clerk to carry out a COSHH assessment – cleaning equipment managed by exception
- D that the committee authorise the expenditure of £450 for Officer training in the use of the Evac+Chair
- E that the annual Parish Rooms Risk Assessment be approved.

32. PERIODIC REPORTS AND INSPECTIONS

Internal control checks have been carried out by Councillors Carswell, P.Goater and Sparkes on the Bankline system and by Councillor P.Goater and Sparkes in the office at each month end period with the Clerk present to answer any queries.

RESOLVED

that the report be noted.

Meeting closed at 8.10pm.

Chair _____