

**CROXLEY GREEN PARISH COUNCIL**

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
**FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**  
ON THURSDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2014

Present: Cllr Mitchell – In the Chair  
David Allison – Clerk to the Council  
Amanda Taft – Administrative Officer

Cllrs Bennett, Edmunds, Seeley and Shafe

Voting Members: 5

In Attendance: Cllr Brand

FA963/14 Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr Jordan.

FA964/14 Declaration of Interests

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

FA965/14 Representations from the Public

There were no members of the public present.

FA966/14 Minutes

**Resolved:**

- That the Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 9 January 2014 be approved and be signed by the Chairman.

FA967/14 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

FA968/14 Monthly Accounts

The Clerk drew to Members attention the Schedule of Payments which is a requirement of the new Financial Regulations. It was pointed out that the figures shown on the schedule (see attached) are inclusive of VAT but the expenditure on the monthly accounts show the net expenditure. It was noted that cheque number 103319 is listed correctly against Canon (UK) Ltd for the photocopier but where it is listed again next to BWT UK Ltd it should read 103331. It was also noted that while cheque numbers 103315 to 103318 appear to be missing from the sequence, this is due to the fact that these cheques have been previously signed and do not come under month 10. The Clerk said that in time, he hopes to improve the detail on the schedule.

There was an adjournment to allow Cllrs the time to peruse the accounts for month 10 (January).

The Clerk brought to Members attention:

4001/101 and 4001/103 (Salaries and Wages) – the figure for month 10 is showing as £0 due to the fact that the cheque has not been cashed.

4020/101 (Miscellaneous Establishment Costs) – this sum is for the water dispenser.

4023/101 (Stationery, Printing and Postage) – the amount of £135 is for the photocopier.

4036/101 (Property Maintenance) – the Clerk advised that this relates to the service of the fire extinguishers including those in the depot and the Land Rover.

4048/203 (Plants, Shrubs & Trees) - £399 is for the cost of the replacement Queen's Diamond Jubilee Oak tree.

4605/211 (Events – Christmas Lights) – the sum of £1,707 was for the stress testing of the lamp posts and also the remaining 25% of the cost of the installation, maintenance and removal of the Christmas decorations.

4610/211 (Events – Fireworks on The Green) – of the £4418, £4000 was for the fireworks and the remainder was for the sound system.

It was pointed out that none of the £1,300 budget for Cost Centre 301 (Roads & Street Furniture) had been spent.

The Clerk was asked when the money collected at the Wassail would show on the accounts and he advised that this will be seen in the accounts shortly.

**Resolved:**

- That the Management Accounts for month 10 (January) be approved and be signed by the Chairman.

FA969/14

Revision of Council's Financial Regulations and Associated Standing Orders

The Chairman introduced this item and the Clerk advised that the draft Regulations were based on the NALC model Standing Orders but he had customised it to suit our requirements. Following discussion by this Committee, the revision would be recommended to Council for ratification. The Clerk also advised that the supporting paper for the Council agenda would need four signatures due to the fact that Standing Orders may have to be changed.

The Chairman went through the Draft Financial Regulations item by item and the following points were highlighted by the Clerk:

2.1 – the Clerk had changed the date from December to the end of November in order that the December Council meeting could be used for final scrutiny to agree the budget. He added that Standing Order 24.2 would need to be changed to reflect this.

3.1 – the Clerk drew attention to this as it sets out very clearly once the budget has been approved by Council, expenditure up to the budget may be incurred.

4.5 – (item 2) the Clerk pointed out that our internal auditor reports to Council both half-yearly and yearly but he would prefer that the Regulation reads 'a minimum of one annual written report'.

5.4 – the Clerk referred Members to the earlier schedule of payments which is attached at the end of these Minutes.

6.7 – the Clerk stated that in practice, the Parish Council approves variable direct debits annually at the AGM.

6.9 – the Clerk said that although we do not use BACS or CHAPS payment methods, we do so remotely via Northgate for salaries.

6.11 – the Clerk was asked who has the PIN number for the bank account to which he replied that as yet this facility for authorising payments to suppliers (rather than issuing cheques) is not currently in operation.

6.13 – the Clerk was asked about Members accessing the Council's financial business and he advised that this related to potential future arrangements for authorising payments to suppliers and links in with 6.11.

6.17 – the Clerk clarified that this regulation regarding debit card is as per the previously agreed Council resolution

6.18 – the Clerk informed Members that the only trade cards we have are for Shell and B&Q.

7.3 – the Clerk pointed out that BACS payment of salaries is carried out remotely via Northgate.

10.1 – Purchase Order set limits - the Clerk pointed out that this is the first time it has been set in writing.

11.2 (i) – (iv) the Clerk clarified that for expenditure over £25,000 at least three tenders would be required, for expenditure of £5,000 - £25,000 three quotes would be required and for expenditure of £2,000 - £5,000 staff would strive to get three estimates.

The Clerk reminded Members that in all cases, Regulation 10.3 states that staff are responsible for obtaining best value for money.

16.1 – the Clerk advised that he is in the process of drafting a Risk Management Policy.

Finally the Clerk pointed out that the page numbers show 'draft page number' because once they have been finalised they will be included in Standing Orders and the numbers will run on consecutively.

**Resolved:**

- That the draft revision of Council's Financial Regulations and associated Standing Orders are put to Council for ratification.

FA970/14

Internal Audit Report (Interim) for the year ending 31 March 2014

The Chairman introduced this item and the Clerk referred Members to the Council resolution of 19 December 2013 (CC1299/13) which states 'that Cllrs noted the audit report and that the response to the auditor is that the recommendations R1 and R2 will be addressed at a future Finance & Administration Committee meeting.' (R1 stated 'In order to demonstrate the completion of an effective and independent scrutiny of accounting records in order to fully meet its fiduciary responsibilities, a nominated Cllr should undertake routine evidenced reviews of the accounting records'. R2 stated 'The Clerk and Council should ensure that the cashbook and bank reconciliation records contain commensurate detail on the closing balances and that the process is properly managed'.

The Clerk asked Cllrs who would like to fulfil this role and how frequently they would like to undertake reviews for the Clerk's protection. Cllrs discussed these recommendations once again but felt that this was the auditor's role. They asked that the Clerk reports back to the auditors to say that Cllrs discussed the matter but were happy with the current arrangements.

FA971/14

S137 Grant Application from Little Green Residents' Association

The Chairman introduced this matter and reminded Cllrs that £1,000 had been put into next year's E&A budget for ponds and the Clerk reminded Cllrs that this year's budget for S137 grants had been exceeded in that there was £1,000 in this year's budget and £500 had been given to the Residents' Association, £3,750 to the Guild of Sport and £500 to the Croxley Mummers making an overspend of £3,750. It was noted that the necessary virement of funds had been authorised.

The Clerk said he had tried to establish ownership of the pond which definitely falls within the Croxley Green boundary but the pond is not owned by Herts County Council or TRDC and the owner is unknown although it could possibly be owned by a local reputable commoner. One Cllr believed the land to be owned by Standard Life and leased to the commoner.

Cllrs discussed the pond including the doubt over land ownership as well as the safety aspects and it was noted that the Little Green Residents' Association wanted the Parish Council to accept Public Liability for the pond in future. It was also noted that the application form asked for £1,000 but the accompanying letter asked for £2,000 and that the applicant was aware that Council had agreed to a £1,000 budget for ponds. There was also concern over the accuracy of the estimates.

It was pointed out that the pond is in a rather isolated spot and not many residents would benefit from Council expenditure in this location and perhaps the pond outside Killingdown Farm would be a better investment as it has newts. Cllrs also discussed the history of the pond which has in the past received investment from the Parish Council and is always wet in winter and dry in summer. It was also thought that the Little Green Residents' Association could involve the Chiltern Conservation Board.

**Resolved:**

- That this matter is of interest to the Parish Council but as we have a project proposed for next year, this matter would be referred to Council to delegate to the Environment and Amenity Committee.

FA972/14

Closure

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.19pm.

## Schedule of Payments for January 2014 (Month 10)

Cheque No.	Transaction Detail	Date Paid	Amount Gross (£)	Payee Name
DDR475	2935 Fuel	15/01/2014	1.20	Shell U.K Oil Products Ltd
DDR474	Rates	15/01/2014	297.00	TRDC
DDR476	2921 01923 710250	16/01/2014	279.36	British Telecom PLC
DDR477	2928 77268A - 83067A	21/01/2014	946.98	E-ON
DDR478	2922 BT Statement	21/01/2014	69.60	British Telecom PLC
DDR479	290114/2941/Peninsula Business	28/01/2014	264.00	Peninsula Business Services Lt
DDR480	2936 Fuel	30/01/2014	84.86	Shell U.K Oil Products Ltd
103319	2925 Photocopier	31/01/2014	162.16	Canon (UK) Ltd
103320	2926 Service	31/01/2014	132.84	Complete Fire Protection Limit
103321	2923 Water	31/01/2014	28.27	BWT UK Limited
103322	2927 NYE Firework Sound System	31/01/2014	501.15	DJC SOUND SYSTEMS
103323	2929 PCSO Oct - Dec 2013	31/01/2014	7,125.00	Hertfordshire Constabulary
103324	2930 30,000 dog waste bags	31/01/2014	321.96	JRB Enterprise Ltd
103325	2931 stress test light columns	31/01/2014	2,048.63	Lamps & Tubes Illuminations Li
103326	2933 Replacement Oak	31/01/2014	478.79	Majestic Trees
103327	2934 Friday bus January 2014	31/01/2014	650.00	Mullanys Coaches Limited
103328	2937 Cleaning x2 Jan 14	31/01/2014	60.00	SuperClean Commercial Limited
103329	2938 Dog waste service Dec 13	31/01/2014	1,376.64	TBS Hygiene Limited
103330	2940 Firework Display	31/01/2014	4,000.00	Whizzz Bang Fireworks
103319	2924 Water	31/01/2014	0.84	BWT UK Limited
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103314	Staff Expenses Jan 14	16/01/2014	26.20	
<b>Total for Month</b>			<b>18,855.48</b>	

Signed:

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1