

**Grundisburgh & Culpho Parish Council**  
**Minutes of a meeting of the Finance Sub-Committee held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2014**  
**at Ceanchor House, Otley Road, Grundisburgh**

Present: Messrs. D.Crowe (in the chair), G.Hartfall, D.Higgins, R.Youngman, Mrs.J.Bignell.

The Chairman in opening the meeting said that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss policy and strategy and to get a better understanding of the financial issues facing the council.

**1. Apologies for absence** All members attended.

**2. Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on the 6th February, 2014.** There were no matters arising.

**3. Review of Standing Orders** These were reviewed and amended at the October 2013 Committee Meeting. No further amendments were recommended.

**4. Income & Expenditure to date** The budget report for the financial year to date was reviewed. Both income and expenditure was found to be in line with budget.

**5. Financial position as at 13th October, 2014**

Business Tracker Account	£62.22
Current Account	£11,140.08
National Savings Investment account	£20,372.68
VAT to claim	<u>£344.61</u>
TOTAL	£31,919.59

**6. Insurance**

The Clerk reported that it was agreed at the October 2013 Finance Committee Meeting that when the current arrangement with Suffolk ACRE ended other quotations should be obtained. At that time NALC had lobbied AON UK Ltd and this resulted in 30% off its standard local council's insurance premium until 31 March 2014 plus an additional 5% for Quality councils and 5% for a three year long term agreement.

Community Action Suffolk (Suffolk ACRE) offered for 2014/15 a three or five year long undertaking at £271.97 which is about 50% less than the previous charge for 2013/4 £557.81 This offer has been accepted.

The current policy provides the following cover. Changes in the 2014/5 policy in "**bold**"

**Standard Cover**

**Business interruption** Loss of date – reconstitution of computer records. Sum insured £500

**All risks** - Office Contents sum insured **£2,500 - last year £1,000** - Clerks home only - Excess £100

**Additional items** £37,001 Garden equipment and tools £116

**Money** Loss of Non-Negotiable money limit any one loss £250,000.

**Public Liability** **£6m - last year £5m**

**Employers Liability** £10m - Cover is restricted to Clerk only

**Libel & Slander** £250,000

**Personal Accident** Cover is limited to £500,000 any one person and £2m any one incident. Capital sum £20,000. Death or loss of limbs or eyes £20,000. Permanent/partial disability up to £20,000. Temporary total disablement £25 per week up to maximum of 104 weeks. Covers Council Members & Clerk for duties connected with Parish Council only.

**Employee Dishonest (Previously known as Fidelity Guarantee)** Sum guaranteed £25,000 - protects misappropriation by Clerk or Council Members

**Legal Expenses** Limit of Indemnity £100,000

**Hirer's liability** **£2m. This is a free "add on", not available previously, which does not apply to the council.**

***Insurance cont...***

**Property all Risks**

	<u>2013/4</u>
War Memorial	£12,654
Bus Shelters	£13,438
Village Sign	£3,000
Seats	£3,291
Five Bar Gate	£207
Notice Boards	£1,180
Sand Boxes	£1,016
Village Green Bulls Eye Sign	£218
Fido Bins	£724
Litter Bins	£173
Football Posts & Net	£1,100
<i>Other property all risks</i>	
Mowers	<u>£116</u>
	£37,117

**7. Investments** It was agreed that the interest rate of 0.75% earned in the National Savings Investment Account was acceptable

**8. Precept/Budget**

The Clerk reported that until 2013, the Government set the rules nationally for those who are eligible for Council Tax benefits and funded the full cost of those payments. However the Government introduced in April 2013 a new Localised Council Tax Support scheme (LCTS).

The changes affected towns and parishes because it affects their Council Tax base, the number of households in their area that are used to calculate what the Council Tax charge should be.

By reducing the number of households (the households make up the tax base) who pay full Council Tax, residents could end up paying more even if the district and our parish council did not increase their overall charges (precept etc). This increase per household could be a problem if the Government introduces automatic precept referendum for 'excessive increases' for parish and town councils in future years. So far it has not. For the financial year 2013/2014 the Government gave district councils a grant to compensate parish and town councils for the amount equivalent to the additional sum that households will be charged because of the changes.

The effect on Grundisburgh & Culpho Parish Council was that our tax base was reduced to 565.76 Band D equivalents so if our precept remained at £17,100 the charge for a Band D Property would be £30.23. For 2012/2013 the number of Band D equivalents was 634.19 and the charge for a Band D property £26.96. So under the new scheme, if the precept was maintained at £17,100 a Band D property would pay an additional £3.27.

However the parish council agreed that the 2013/2014 precept should be increased by £300 to £17,400 and to apply for the government grant, Council Tax Support Grant (CTSG), £1,847 which was paid via the District Council. This resulted in parishioners paying roughly the same amount in their Parish Council Tax Charge as the previous year.

The same principle was followed for the financial year 2014/2015. The precept was set at £16,100 plus the CTSG of £1,389. The Parish Council Tax Charge increased from the previous year by only 77p.

The CTSG will be steadily reduced over the next three years until it disappears altogether. In the meantime the Parish Council agreed that it would increase the precept annually to recoup this loss. Consequently the Parish Council must budget for no increase in income for the next 3 years.

**Precept/Budget cont....**

**Tax Base**

1997/1998	539.93 band D equivalent	Precept £10,240 ÷ 539.93 = £18.96		
1998/1999	549.42 band D equivalents	Precept £10,240 ÷ 549.42 = £18.63		
1999/2000	559.90 band D equivalents	Precept £12,000 ÷ 559.90 = £21.43		
2000/2001	587.73 band D equivalents	Precept £12,000 ÷ 587.73 = £20.42		
2001/2002	606.20 band D equivalents	Precept £13,350 ÷ 606.20 = £22.02		
2002/2003	604.72 band D equivalents	Precept £14,000 ÷ 604.72 = £23.15		
2003/2004	615.74 band D equivalents	Precept £15,200 ÷ 615.74 = £24.68		
2004/2005	617.29 band D equivalents	Precept £15,200 ÷ 617.29 = £24.62		
2005/2006	617.16 band D equivalents	Precept £15,200 ÷ 617.16 = £24.63		
2006/2007	627.16 band D equivalents	Precept £15,650 ÷ 627.16 = £24.95		
2007/2008	635.15 band D equivalents	Precept £16,200 ÷ 635.15 = £25.50		
2008/2009	634.71 band D equivalents	Precept £16,600 ÷ 634.71 = £26.15		
2009/2010	638.43 band D equivalents	Precept £16,600 ÷ 638.43 = £26.00		
2010/2011	637.53 band D equivalents	Precept £16,600 ÷ 637.53 = £26.04		
2011/2012	631.77 band D equivalents	Precept £17,100 ÷ 631.77 = £27.06		
2012/2013	634.19 band D equivalents	Precept £17,100 ÷ 634.19 = £26.96	CTSG Total	
2013/2014	565.76 band D equivalents	Precept £15,553 ÷ 565.76 = £27.49	£1,847	£17,400
2014/2015	569.68 band D equivalents	Precept £16,100 ÷ 569.68 = £28.26	£1,389	£17,489

The charge for each other bands is calculated by multiplying the Band D charge by the appropriate scaling factor i.e. Band A - 6/9 B 7/9 C 8/9 E 11/9 F 13/9 G 15/9 H 18/9

**9. Review of Earmarked Reserves**

	Closing balance <u>at 31 March 2014</u>
Allotments	£1,255.63
Allotment holders fund	£244.67
Elections	£973.32
New Village Hall	£656.94
Bus Shelter Repairs	£1,002.27
Village Stream Wall	£4,000.00 *
War Memorial	£1,000.00
Total	£9,132.83

\* An estimate for the cost of the restoration of the Village Stream retaining wall for £3,380 has been received from Mr.Martin

The Committee agreed to recommend to full council that £1,000 should be reserved for the use by the Emergency Group for relief work for vulnerable villages in times of emergency e.g. power cuts, bad weather conditions, flooding etc.

The Committee also agreed in principle, subject to further clarification, to recommend that a sum of money be allocated to the Village Hall Management Committee to pay initial solicitors and architects fees in connection with the building of a new Village Hall. It is anticipated that the Committee will received £280,000 from the development in December. This facility is needed in case there is any delay in receiving this money. The Parish Council allocated £1,000 for expenses in 2005. So far £394 spent leaving a balance of £606 which may be insufficient to pay the initial professional charges.

**10. Grants**

**10.1 Applications for grants** Received from Citizens Advice Service, Red Cross, Starlight. It was agreed to recommend that these be considered by the Committee at its January/February Budget meeting.

**10.2 St.Mary's Church** An application has been received from St.Mary's PCC for the Parish Council to pay for the cost of servicing the church clock and restoring the clock face at a total cost of £3,350.00. It was agreed that the Clerk should ask the PCC whether other quotations and other sources of funding had been sought.

**Grants cont....**

**10.3 Scouts** The group has had £1,600 worth of archery equipment recently stolen. Some is covered by their own insurance and some by District Insurance. They will let the Clerk know if they suffer a loss. The Committee agreed, in principle, that the Council should consider financial help in these circumstances.

**10.4 Lunch & Lyttleton Clubs** The Committee agreed that the Parish Council is quite generous to the village's youth organisations but gives very little to organisations for the elderly. It recommended that when the budget is set for 2015/2016 some money be allocated for the village's organisations for the elderly. The clubs have a joint annual summer visit to Felixstowe for a fish & chip lunch and that this could be an event to which the Parish Council could contribute.

**11. Other matters**

**11.1 Play Space Contributions** The current cleared funds in the Play pot for Grundisburgh and Culpho is £10,862.33.

**11.2 Employees Pension** The Council has no employer duties in relation to their current Clerk. However the council has to register with the regulator within 4 months of their staging date (1st August, 2016) even if the council has no employer duties for their staff.

**11.3 Elections 7 May, 2015.**

An uncontested election will cost the parish council £100 - £150. The total cost of a contested election for a village our size will be approx £1,515. If there is a District Council Ward contest at the same time the cost will be split two ways. We have £973 as an Earmarked Reserve for Election Expenses.

**11.4 Risk Assessment** The Chairman and Mr.Doyle will review the Parish Council's Risk assessment .

**11.5 Village Green Ducks** It was agreed that wheat should be purchased ex farm. Approximately a ton in a year is used. The market price ex farm is about £100 per ton.

**11.6 Laser Printer** The Clerk reported that HP Laser Printer, purchased in 2005, suffered a mechanical failure and has been replaced by a Dell printer costing £173.

**11.7 Date of next meeting** Budget Meeting January/February 2015