

# FRAMFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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## FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE Minutes of the FGP Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, 22 September 2010, at 7.15 pm at the Memorial Hall, Framfield.

**Present:** Rob Newton, David Andrews, Peter Friend, Felicity Groves and Maria Naylor.

**In attendance:** Ann Newton (Parish Clerk).

### 1. Apologies

Jan Riddle.

### 2. Declarations of Interest

RN stated that he would declare a prejudicial interest and leave the room if there was any discussion on anything other than general employment/salary issues, the Clerk being his wife and also if there were any specific recommendations, which would affect the Memorial Hall, as, he is the Chairman.

### 3. Minutes of the Last meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2010 were approved as read.

### 4. Matters Arising.

- **New Internal Auditor – update.** The Clerk reported that she had met with John Roberts and given him an overview of the Council. He would most probably be contacting Jan Riddle shortly for a mid-year check on the accounts.
- **Review of policies/FOI etc.** The Clerk reported that she had discussed with John Roberts the problems which she was having in putting together a portfolio of policies for the Council and he said the problem was widespread. Many, even larger councils, struggle and indeed do not have all the policies detailed in the FOI publication. It was therefore agreed that the publication should be reissued with some policies crossed out – in line with other councils. AIRS/SALC had been approached to see whether they would consider putting together a dossier of generic policies which could be used by councils.

**The FGP Committee recommends to the full Parish Council that the FOI publication be updated as detailed in the above paragraph.**

- **Employment Handbook.** The Clerk reported that DEFRA had issued, free of charge, a useful booklet – 3 or 4 were available if anyone wished to peruse one.

### 5. Website.

The Clerk detailed that six parties had registered an interest in tendering for the work – four had submitted tenders. Selina Allen, Richard Brocklebank and Rob Newton had looked at the four tenders and unanimously agreed that the contract should be awarded to Barry Richardson who currently manages the Church website and typesets the Parish Magazine. The initial outlay including design, set up and provision of a domain name will be £700 and this includes hosting the website for a year. Hosting for subsequent years will £400.00 per annum. Income could be generated by the inclusion of adverts and links to local businesses from the website.

The FGP Committee further agreed that getting the website on line is a priority for the Council and that although not precepted for this financial year, that it could be implemented.

**The FGP Committee therefore recommends to the full Parish Council that the contract be awarded to Barry Richardson and that the cost can be found within this year's budget to enable the work to start immediately**

## **6. 'Donations' to Trust accounts.**

The Clerk explained that as both Trust accounts would in theory be covering the cost of minor invoices, could the Committee consider 'donating' a small lump sum across to cover these costs. Following discussion the following recommendation to Full Council was made:

**The FGP Committee resolved that £100.00 should be 'donated' to the Framfield Trust but nothing to Blackboys. The reason for this is that the allotment rents, some £570.00, will be transferred to the Trust and the charity dividends will also be paid straight into that account. In time, the Framfield Trust will have the benefit of the allotment rents if the charities are amalgamated.**

## **7. BACS payment of salaries.**

The Clerk asked that the Committee consider paying herself and Jan Riddle electronically, by BACS, as with the difficulty of sometimes obtaining signatures and then bank clearance times, cheques are not actually being cleared until well into the next month.

In theory a Parish Council should only pay invoices etc by way of two signatures, but as with the past monthly EDF invoices and BT accounts, which are both paid by Direct Debit, this has been done for a long time or particularly in the case of BT, an annual charge of £20.00 would be levied for using cheques.

The Committee agreed that a mechanism could be devised whereby the two signatures were still obtained and the payment authorised at a Council meeting. (JR/AN to email their timesheets to two members of the FGP Committee by an agreed date in the month. These can still be itemised on the Council monthly expenditure sheet and agreed at the meeting to enable an electronic payment to be made and funds cleared into each account by the last working day in each month. Jan will organise the electronic transfers).

**The FGP Committees asks that Full Council agree to the payment of JR/AN by the BACS method and that the procedure, as detailed above, be adopted.**

## **8. Any Other Business at the Discretion of the Chair.**

- **Internet costs.** The Clerk stated that the problem with the direct debit to Virgin Media for the internet connection seemed to have been sorted out but that as she had been covering the cost of the internet connection due to their error for some six months, she would need to reclaim the cost. This was agreed.

The meeting was closed at 8 pm.

Chairman..... Date .....