

MINUTES of the meeting of the **COURT BUSHES Committee** held at 8.00 pm on Tuesday 1st October 2019 in the Court Bushes Community Hub, Willow Way, Hurstpierpoint.

Committee Members Present

Malcolm Llewellyn (Chairman)
Peter Griffiths

Claire Majsai
Duncan Ranger

Also Present:

Lorna Cooksey (Assistant Clerk)
Nick Sinclair (Facilities Manager)

CB19/022. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest: The following apologies were received before the meeting and accepted: John Lowman. There were no declarations of interest.

CB19/023. Minutes of the meeting of the Court Bushes Hub Committee 30th July 2019: A Member raised that para 7 of minute CB19/013 was not clear and the following clarification was made by the Facilities Manager: If the alarm is activated, a call centre is notified of the activation. The call centre operator will then notify Beacon Security as the 3rd party keyholder of a potential safety breach, who will in turn dispatch an operator directly to site. This removes the need for Parish Council Staff to attend.

The minutes were received and accepted, and then signed by the Chairman
(REF: Minutes of the meeting of the Court Bushes Committee 30th July 2019 ATTACHED)

CB19/024. Financial control: The Committee considered the following:

1) Budget 2019/20: The Committee noted the current year budget, as approved by Council 28 February 2019. The Parish Office updated as follows:

- A check was raised with the VOA 31st July 2019 – asking to make minor amendments to the internal dimensions and external terraces and to change the Special Category and Code to Village Halls, 293.
- The VOA reduced the Rateable Value from £13,250 to £12,000 per annum, based on the changes to the terraces and internal dimensions. They then closed the check without amending the Special Category and Code.
- The Parish Council Office submitted a Challenge against the Check decision, with supporting evidence and statement 4th September 2019.
- The Parish Council Office remain confident that the Rateable Value will be reduced to around £8,300 once the Challenge has been completed. Giving a rates payable of c.£4,075 per annum.
- The Parish Council can only receive Small Business Rate Relief on one property. The rates payable for the Cemetery would be £1650 per annum, with this cost being met from the Court Bushes Community Hub Budget.

The Committee heard that the Parish Council had been invoiced for Rates Starting from 12th May 2019, when in fact the lease was not signed until 17th May 2019. It was noted that this has been raised with MSDC to resolve. The MSDC Revenue Support grant was also discussed, with the Chairman updating that this would be paid against the overhead costs incurred by the Parish Council, in line with the budget submitted to MSDC.

The Committee then discussed the Small Business Rates Relief (SBRR) available to the Parish Council in respect to Court Bushes Community Hub and South Avenue Cemetery, they resolved to make the following recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee:

RESOLVED: A recommendation is made to the Finance and Governance Committee to apply for Small Business Rates Relief at Court Bushes Community Hub and re-allocate up to £1,650 from the revenue budget at Court Bushes Community Hub to pay for the rates bill now incurred at South Avenue Cemetery.

Two documents detailing the Income and Expenditure against budget, up to 24th September 2019 were tabled at the meeting. Version v11 of the income/expenditure document showed the figures in line with Budget version v6 adopted by Council 28th February 2019. Version v12 of the income/expenditure document showed proposed changes, with the figures now back in line with budget v3 as approved by Council 6th December 2018 for the financial year 2019/20.

The Chairman proposed, with a Member seconding the motion that £3,744 is removed from the Caretaking budget, aligning the overall Court Bushes budget back in-line with v3 as adopted by Council for 2019/20.

RESOLVED: The Committee agreed to remove £3,744 from the Revenue Expenditure caretaking line in order to move back in-line with V3 of the Court Bushes budget.

The Chairman proposed, with a Member seconding the motion that £4,175.67 is re-allocated from the rates line under Revenue Expenditure to CAPEX, in order to support spending requirements identified elsewhere on the agenda.
(REF: Court Bushes Budget 2019 20 v6 19 Feb 2019; Court Bushes 3 year budget v3 28 Nov 2018 ATTACHED)

RESOLVED: The Committee agreed to re-allocate £4,175.67 of Revenue Expenditure in respect of rates, to CAPEX

2) Income/expenditure 2019/20: The Committee noted the income/expenditure against budget under minute CB19/024.1 of this meeting as the Chairman brought the matter forward.

**CB19/025. Award of Contracts
CAPEX**

- (1) **Lighting** – The Committee acknowledged that the original intention was to install 2 standard streetlights along the track between the entrance gates and the Court Bushes Community Hub Building. The Facilities Manager updated that quotes had been received for this work in the region of £4,500 - £5,500 + VAT, however MSDC planners had informed that a full planning application would be required and that approval would not likely be given due to loss of amenity to the nearby residents. It was further noted that the original contract MSDC let for the refurbishment and the approved planning application had provision for lighting bollards to be installed alongside the track, to replace every 4th bollard. The Facilities Manager clarified that this specification had been passed on to contractors, with subsequent quotes being obtained for 15 x lighting bollards, time clock and associated wiring and ducting for the 90m trenching works.

The Committee discussed a number of different contract options and decided to award the contract to a different company than recommended. The Facilities Manager confirmed that the contractors Public Liability Insurance and compliance with 'Part P' legislation would be obtained prior to the works commencing.

(REF: BH Fencing Quotation 24th September 2019; DP Goodwin Quotation 25th September 2019 ATTACHED)

RESOLVED: (1) The Committee awarded BH Fencing and Landscaping the groundworks contract for a total cost of £2,300 with no VAT payable. (2) The Committee awarded MVG Electrical Services the contract for the installation of 15 x light bollards and associated electrical work for a total cost of £2,195.00 with no VAT payable.

- (2) **Nursery Steps** – the Committee discussed the external steps from the Nursery Area and the fact that when they were installed, they were made from poured concrete and have no handrails, guards or protective edgings. It was explained that Ofsted had informed the Nursery Provider that they would like to see handrails to both steps, warning tape/paint to the main steps and rubber edging to the steps from the Kitchen. The Facilities Manager updated on the quotations for the railings from The Metal Store, warning tape and rubber edging to be installed by a contractor. Some discussion was held over the use of warning tape over painting warning lines, to which no specification was agreed.

(REF: BH Fencing Quotation 13th September 2019; The Metal Store Quotation 9th September 2019 ATTACHED)

RESOLVED: (1) The Committee approved the purchase of the railings, edging and warning tape for a total cost of £308.19 + VAT. (2) The Committee awarded BH Fencing and Landscaping the contract to install the required safety items for a total cost of £560.00 with no VAT payable.

- (3) **Signage** – The Committee discussed the proposed signage designs, sizes and quantity. The Chairman referenced that the Parish Council do not currently have an approved format for the corporate look and feel of the Council, but that this was being developed through the Community Engagement Committee website project. The Chairman went on to explain that the design for the signs is consistent with those installed at Hurst Meadows and elsewhere in the Parish. It was agreed that the following signs are purchased:

1 x Sign for the area adjacent to the height restrictor at the junction with Willow Way (1220 x 914mm)
£395.00 + VAT

1 x Sign for the grassed area adjacent to the Parish Council gates at the entrance the Community Hub curtilage (1524 x 1100mm) £515.00 + VAT.

3 x Signs for the 3 entrances to the facility (A3) £84.00 + VAT

Cost to install the above £450 + VAT.

(REF: Court Bushes Signage design; Sussex Sign Centre Quotation 24th September 2019 ATTACHED)

The total cost of these signs exceeds the total amount of CAPEX available, so the Committee agreed to transfer a further £60.00 from the Revenue Expenditure in respect of rates, to CAPEX

RESOLVED: The Committee agreed to purchase 5 signs from Sussex Sign Centre, including installation for a total cost of £1,444.00 + VAT, with £60 being re-allocated from the Revenue Expenditure in respect of rates to CAPEX.

- (4) **Mosaic** – The Committee highlighted that following the construction of 'The Hub' Mosaic at the Court Bushes Open day 1st June 2019, the Parish Office have had limited resource to erect the sign in its proposed location on the wall to the right of the Main Entrance. The Committee agreed that whilst on site carrying out a number of other tasks, this work would be awarded to a contractor.

(REF: BH Fencing Quotation 13th September 2019 ATTACHED)

RESOLVED: The Committee agreed to award BH Fencing and Landscaping the contract to install 'The Hub' Mosaic for a total cost of £160.00 with no VAT payable.

- (5) **Purchase of assorted equipment** – The Committee heard that following the agreement of the Committee via email, the Parish Office have ordered an assortment of crockery and cutlery, entrance matting and two baby changing tables following feedback from key user groups. The total cost of these items was £555.23 + VAT. A member raised

that the correct baby changing signage should be installed on both Accessible toilet doors with the costs coming from the relevant line in revenue costs.

Revenue Expenditure

- (6) **Fire Alarm and Emergency Lighting Service** – It was agreed that The Parish Office will be awarding the 6-monthly servicing contract for the Fire Alarm and Emergency Lighting systems to Coastline Fire Protection for an annual fee of £264.00 + VAT. A Member questioned the 6-monthly testing as opposed to yearly, with the Facilities Manager confirming that 6 monthly testing is a legal requirement under British Standards

RESOLVED: The Committee agreed that the Fire Alarm testing contract is awarded to Coastline Fire Protection for £264.00 + VAT.

- (7) **CCTV** – The Chairman updated that the CCTV system was originally installed for the building contractor who was on site completing the refurbishment works at Court Bushes Community Hub. Whilst the system used to record, this function had now failed, and the unit no longer recognises the internal hard drive. The alarm system engineers have recommended that the Network Video Recorder unit is replaced with an updated version for a total cost of **£285.00 + VAT**. The Chairman made the point that footage should be stored off site where possible, with the Facilities Manager confirming that the new unit would allow remote access and that the storage of data would be explored. The costs for this replacement are to be taken from the relevant Revenue Maintenance line.

RESOLVED: The Committee agreed that a new Network Video Recorder unit is purchased for a total cost of £285.00 + VAT.

- (8) **Fence repairs** – The Committee discussed the damage to the western fenceline after a number of instances of vandalism. The original contractor has some off cuts from the original fence installation works that he will 'patch in' for a total cost of **£50.00** whilst they are on site carrying out other awarded works. The committee noted that the pedestrian gate is now left open along this alignment to allow people to retrieve lost balls etc., maintaining the function to be locked at any future date if the need arises.

RESOLVED: The Committee agreed that BH Fencing and Landscaping are awarded the contract to repair the fence line for a total cost of £50.00 with no VAT payable.

- (9) **Inspection Chamber Cover** – The Committee heard that following 2 failures of the cover to the inspection chamber adjacent to the Main Entrance, the Parish Office in agreement with the Chairman, had awarded the contract for its replacement with a D400 (25 ton) rated cast iron frame and cover. The original cover was only rated for pedestrian and cycle access at 1.5ton. The cover was replaced by VG Builders 26th September 2019 for a total cost of **£512.56 + VAT**.

CB19/026. Usage: The Assistant Clerk handed the Chairman an updated list detailing the utilisation of the Court Bushes facility to date. It was noted that utilisation is increasing weekly and that there are now 6 regular bookers and a variety of parties and meetings booked. The Committee heard that a total of £7,587.98 has been invoiced to date, with £5,378.98 coming from regular bookers and £2,209.00 coming from members of the public. It was noted that of this total £5,694.32 had been received, with £1,893.66 awaited. It was explained that all newsletters will now include information on how to book a room at Court Bushes and the relevant contact details. The Committee were informed that Hurst Festival had made good use of the building during September, but that the poor acoustics in the Function Room would make it difficult for them to use in the future if not addressed.

CB19/027. Property Management

- (1) **Meeting with MSDC** – The Committee noted the minutes circulated from from the Court Bushes Stakeholders meeting with MSDC 26th September 2019, with the Chairman updating in the key points as follows:

- A list of the items that the Parish Council has faced/addressed through the first quarter of operation was taken to the meeting. The Chairman of the District Council asked that a compiled list of all items picked up by the Parish Council, including all costings be forwarded on directly so that MSDC can establish which of these items should have been addressed by the District prior to handover. The Parish Council Facilities Manager will be compiling this alongside the Committee Chairman in due course.
 - The Parish Council must obtain more height restrictor keys due to the pressures this is putting on the Facilities Manager, coordinating all the comings and goings of delivery vehicles, refuse trucks and contractors etc.
 - The approved capacities are still awaited by MSDC Building Control, the absence of which is leaving the Parish Council legally exposed.
 - Since the meeting it has become clear that both the access ramps to the Nursery and Club Lounge areas are not compliant – a level decking area made of composite materials is currently being priced by MSDC, to which the Parish Council has expressed they must be consulted on.
 - The Parish Council Chairman is taking up the matter of 'brown signs' with WSCC Highways.
 - There is still no active phonline at the building and MSDC are now liaising with Openreach regarding 3 new support poles to get a line in. Openreach will cover the first £3,400 of the installation.
 - MSDC are ensuring that there is information on Court Bushes Community Hub listed on the MSDC website, with a link to the facility website.
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- The Committee discussed the Hurst Colts container and unanimously agreed that moving it to the grass area in the far corner of the recreation ground was not a suitable solution. The Committee agreed for the Chairman and Facilities Manager to conduct a meeting with the Colts to discuss keeping their storage container within the Court Bushes Community Hub grounds, so long as they contribute towards the facility in the same way as our other hirers. It was agreed that clear boundaries would need to be established in order to protect hirers using the building at the same time as football events. It was also noted that there is scope for the £4,500 currently set aside by MSDC for relocating the container, to be redirected to Court Bushes to further improve the facilities

RESOLVED: The Committee agreed for the Chairman and Facilities Manager to investigate the Hurst Colts container staying within the carpark in a suitable location, subject to:

- 1) **Discussion with MSDC regarding re-allocation of earmarked funds,**
- 2) **Agreement with the Hurst Colts over access arrangements and storage fees.**

(2) Building control – The Parish Council Facilities Manager updated on the progress with building control to date. During meetings with Building Control 12th and 13th September 2019 the Parish Council have handed over a list of all the issues that they hold concerns over, however definitive answers have not been forthcoming. The issues highlighted were all set out in the supporting documents circulated for the Court Bushes Stakeholder meeting as detailed under minute CB19/027.1.
(REF: Court Bushes Community Hub Q1 Review ATTACHED)

(3) Snagging – The Committee discussed the snagging list that was detailed in the supporting documents circulated for the Court Bushes Stakeholder meeting as detailed under minute CB19/027.1. The Facilities Manager explained that many of these items had been addressed already, with more work to be completed in due course.
(REF: Court Bushes Community Hub Q1 Review ATTACHED)

(4) Storage issues – The Chairman updated on the Storage Issues highlighted by the overwhelming requests received by users. It was noted that the Facilities Manager could find space for 3 x roll cages of 850 x 735mm and 1800mm in the Function Room Store. The Committee asked that prices be brought to a future meeting with a view that they are purchased by the Parish Council, with costs being recovered through the hire to user groups. This would ensure all cages are to the correct specification and a uniform design. A nominal charge of £8pcm per cage in addition to normal booking fees was confirmed as appropriate by the Committee. The Chairman raised the point that they would like to explore installing 2 x insulated and heated storage containers in the carpark to enhance the storage capabilities at the facility.

RESOLVED: The Committee agreed a monthly charge of £8 per roll cage and that the Facilities Manager would bring costings for the Parish Council to purchase the cages at a subsequent meeting.

(5) Acoustic Issues – The Chairman updated that several user groups have now highlighted the poor acoustic properties of the building, particularly in the Function Room. The issue is thought to be caused by having an expanse of open space and hard, flat surfaces to all the walls. The lack of soft furnishing is causing significant reverberation and makes holding conversations with more than 4-5 people in the room difficult. It was noted that with music clubs and Memory Moment Café's taking regular slots at the building, the hirers have expressed an urgent need to improve the acoustics. With the Facilities Manager explaining that they have contacted several acoustic solutions companies with one wanting a **£1,200** fee to attend site to carry out testing and the other quoting **£6,890 + VAT** to install 30 x acoustic panels. The Committee agreed that the Parish Office would now investigate installing window length, heavy duty curtains on a single long rail in order to break up the walls and provide absorbent materials to deaden the sound. Where curtains are not suitable the Parish Office are to explore roller blinds to cover windows and printed acoustic panels to break up the walls. The colours are to be kept basic and ideally in pastel shades. The Committee also asked the Parish Office to investigate that the acoustic panelling is printed with historical pictures and information about Hurstpierpoint, possibly including the Ex-Servicemen's Club. A member suggested that the Parish Council Office contact Action for Deafness who may be able to offer some help and support on a free or donation basis.

CB19/028. Other Matters

1) Advisory Group – The Chairman updated on the informal forum for prospective Advisory Group members that was held at Court Bushes Community Hub 11th September 2019. The Committee noted the enthusiasm displayed by the group and the offers to help with grant funding applications and how to improve the building. The Chairman detailed the issues faced with storage at the building as highlighted under minute CB19/026.4. A member of the Committee explained that they had raised the issue of how the Parish Council can engage and work with volunteer/user groups, with the matter to be taken further through the Strategic Policy and Resources Panel. The Committee discussed the possibility of a 'Friends of Court Bushes Community Hub' group, but some thought would need to be given as to who could organise this due to the current stretched resources of the Parish Council Office. The Chairman asked the Committee to note the new raised planters that had been installed as part of Hurst Festival, using funding from Sussex Police and Bell Group. It was then explained that the new planting would be looked after by the children in the Nursery.

2) Midwife update – The Assistant Clerk updated the meeting that following discussions with the Parish Office and with the Community Engagement Committee, the Midwifery team for the Hurstpierpoint area have now put in a grant application for £850 to the Parish Council for the purchase of a folding couch/bed, folding partition screening, subsidised costs of hire vs a clinic in Burgess Hill and associated storage costs. It was explained that the final approval would need to come from the Manager of the midwifery team for this area, however the Committee are hopeful to see this service returning to the village once again, preventing new/expectant mothers and families having to travel to Haywards Heath for appointments. The

Committee also approved the Club Lounge Bar Store area being reserved for the dedicated use of the Community Midwife team, for a fee of £10pcm.

RESOLVED: The Committee agreed to reserve the Club Lounge Bar Store for the Midwifery team, making a charge of £10pcm once sessions start.

3) Future Meetings – The Chairman updated that this was the last meeting of the Court Bushes Hub Committee, with future matters regarding Court Bushes Community Hub being brought to the new Estates and Facilities Management Committee as agreed by Council 26th September 2019. The Chairman took the opportunity to thank the Members for their help and support to the Committee, and also thanked the Assistant Clerk and the Facilities Manager for their hard work on the Court Bushes Community Hub Project to date.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 10.03 pm

Chairman

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