

KINGSNORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the budget and precept meeting held on Thursday, 23rd November, 2006,
at Kingsnorth Sports Pavilion

PRESENT: Mrs. A. Hicks (Chairman); Mr M. Ciccone; Mr. J. Debonnaire; Dr. H. Moorby;
Mr. T. Horsman; Mr. G. Parr; Mrs. C. Vavasour; Cllr. J. Holland.

1. **Apologies:** Mrs. L. Ross (on holiday); Cllr. J. Wedgbury (working); Cllr. P. Davison.
2. To discuss and approve estimates of recurrent expenditure proposed for remainder of 2006/7 and for 2007/8
 - (a) *Salaries* A review of salaries from 1st April 2007 will be carried out by the Staffing Committee in January and their recommendations will be put to the January PC meeting. The current year's rates had been used for calculations in the draft budget for 2007/8.

It had been suggested at the last PC meeting that provision should be made for street cleaning unadopted roads and it was agreed to include a budget for 6 hours a week in 2007/8. The Clerk had asked Mr. Fry of ABC for a list of unadopted roads, but this had not yet been received. When this information was available, consideration could be given to drawing up terms of reference and advertising the job. JH said that it might be necessary to pay for a one-off litter pick in Millbank Road and Britannia Lane in the near future.

- (b) *Section 137*

PCC churchyard maintenance. Last year it was agreed that as the churchyard was a village amenity, the PC should continue to give a grant towards its maintenance. The PCC was asked to send copy invoices for costs as they arose which the PC would reimburse up to a total of £1,000 during the financial year. Invoices for 2006/7 were still awaited. It was agreed to budget the same sum for 2007/8.

Senior Citizens outing The coach this year had cost £240. It was agreed to budget £300 for 2007/8.

Other donations £5,000 was allocated for 2006/7, but so far nothing has been spent. It was agreed to reduce this to £2,500 for 2007/8.
- (c) *General administration*

Audit The Clerk thought that the cost of £350 would remain the same for 2007/8.

Internal audit Mr. Wilson is willing to continue. His fee will be £85 next year.

Petty cash This is mainly for postage and stationery. Savings may be made on this year's allocation of £275 and the Clerk had reduced next year's budget to £250.

Clerk's telephone rental This should remain the same.

Travel (cllrs) It is unlikely that the full allocation of £150 would be used and the Clerk had reduced next year's figure to £100

Cllrs. basic parish allowance The amounts claimed last year were AH £250, JH £150, HM £150 and GP £200. The maximum Chairman's allowance is £500 and Cllrs. £200. The same total figure had been budgeted for 2007/8 but if there are new members after the election, the number of Cllrs. claiming the allowance next year may change.

Chairman's allowance This allowance can be provided under Section 15(5) of the Local Govt. Act 1972 to "defray the expenses of office", i.e. to cover any costs arising from the Chairman's duties not only from the ordinary business of the Council but in his/her public relations role. It was different to the basic allowance but had not been included in previous years' budgets. However, it might be required to pay for expenses such as refreshments at an event to celebrate the erection of the Village Sign. It was agreed to budget a sum of £250 in case it was required.

Hall hire £50 had been included just in case a hall was hired for a public meeting.

Annual Parish Meeting £500 was included this year for publicity, but it was unused. It was agreed to reduce this to £100 next year.

Information Booklet It was agreed that an up-dated version of the Parish Council information booklet was needed for distribution to new residents. £1,000 was included in the 2007/8 budget for this.

Website maintenance The charge will increase by £20 in 2007/8 to £450.

Stationery (not from Petty Cash) £8 was budgeted for 2007/8 to cover stationery such as A3 paper which had to be paid for by cheque rather than petty cash.

Copier rental This will be unchanged in 2007/8.

Copy charges and network support The Clerk had added 5% for 2007/8 to cover any increases. A proportion of the copy charges are reimbursed by Mersham & Sevington PC.

(d) *Insurance, subscriptions, non-137 donations*

Insurance The Clerk had added 5% to last year's premium to cover any increase.

KAPC Subscription information for 2007/8 had been given in the KAPC AGM papers.

Other subscriptions These were unlikely to alter much in 2007/8.

BTCV £100 was budgeted in case support was continued for the Pond Warden Scheme.

Neighbourhood Watch signs Nothing had been spent from the 2006/7 allocation of £160. The sum was reduced to £100 for 2007/8.

Recreation Centre The PC had agreed to donate £15,000 up to the end of the current financial year. It was not possible to get a revised estimate of running costs for 2007/8 until Ms Wood's assessment of the situation early in the New Year. AH had suggested including £30,000 in the budget for 2007/8 as this was the amount estimated by ABC as being required when the 18-month subsidy period was assessed. Further subsidies from ABC are in doubt, but changes to the lease have yet to be discussed. There might also be an increase in rental revenue although there was as yet a low uptake on renewal of personal subscriptions to the gym. MC confirmed that Kingsnorth residents would still get concessionary hiring rates. The Recreation Centre was an asset to the Parish and provided facilities that would be even more necessary as the Parish expanded further. It was agreed that £30,000 should be put in the budget to cover any donation to the Recreation Centre Trustees required in 2007/8 towards management costs.

Village Hall disabled entrance The architect's fees of £700 had been paid by the PC out of the budget for restoration of the area outside the VH after the sycamore had been felled. The VH Committee had received estimates for the new entrance and it was not yet known whether adequate grants could be obtained to cover the cost. It was agreed to allocate a budget of £5,000 in case the VH Committee requested match-funding for this project.

Other non-137 donations The allocation in 2006/7 was £1,500 and it was agreed that this should remain the same for 2007/8.

(e) *Repairs/maintenance*

Bus shelters The PC is responsible for the shelters at Smithfield Crossroads and Stubbs Cross. So far this year £25 had been spent clearing vegetation from the Stubbs Cross bus shelter. AH thought that this shelter may need painting next year. It was agreed to leave the allocation at £200 for 2007/8.

Street cleaning supplies For black sacks and litter picking equipment. The 2006/7 budget is likely to be exceeded slightly. Next year's figure was raised to £75.

Pond warden's initiative This year £300 was included in case the PC wished to subsidise any initiative carried out by the Pond Warden to clear or re-vegetate ponds in the parish. Last year water plants were purchased costing this amount, but ABC refunded it all. It was

agreed that Cllrs. should look at the Park Farm ponds to see what work was required.

A sum of £100 was allocated for 2007/8.

Playground check A small increase had been added to next year's budget.

Playground maintenance This was increased to £1,000 this year from £500. So far it has been exceeded by £60 (new swing seat at £110; surfacing repairs £950). It was agreed to raise the budget for 2007/8 to £2,000.

Tree/hedge maintenance on playing field This item was also over budget this year because of tree surgery and extra hedge-cutting. It was increased to £1,000 for 2007/8.

Weedkilling along playing field path A small increase had been budgeted for next year.

Pavilion grass/path strimming The number of cuts varies depending on the weather. The allocation was increased to £500 for next year.

Playing field Fortunately, it was possible to re-seed rather than re-turf the goal mouths this year, which resulted in a budget saving of £1,420. Marking out the pitch, fertilising and slitting will be over budget, but as it was decided not to do any weedkilling, £375 was saved and vertidrainage will also cost less than estimated. A small amount had been added to this year's costs to allow for any increase in prices next year. The Clerk had assumed re-seeding would be carried out next year but had included £1,000 in the budget in case the area to be covered is larger.

Goalpost repairs/nets Mr. Blackmer thought that the goalposts themselves are sound but the joints between the support stays and the main framework need reinforcing and that he could probably do something about this. The nets belong to Singleton Barn FC although Mr. Easton had agreed that the other clubs could keep using them. The Clerk had put £250 into the 2007/8 budget for the cost of any repairs or towards the cost of new nets or posts in the future.

Tiltgate repairs/container locks £150 had been budgeted for 2007/8 in case repairs or new padlocks were required.

(f) *Other*

Clerk's travel A mileage allowance based on the current NJC rates was budgeted for travel around the notice boards with the agendas and to see the Auditor. The amount was left the same for 2007/8.

Mr. Cleave's travel Travel to tip twice every 4 weeks; mileage allowance based on NJC rates; the amount was unchanged for 2007/8.

Parish news/Local Council Review KAPC charges for these with the subscription at the beginning of the year. Small increases had been budgeted for 2007/8.

Publications Although this year's budget appeared to have been exceeded, Mersham & Sevington PC had refunded half the cost of 'Local Council Administration'.

KAPC AGM lunches Two at £7.50. A small increase had been allowed for next year.

KAPC Training days The fee for the Finance Day which AH could not attend had been refunded. This year's allocation may not be used. However, there may be a requirement for any new Cllrs. to undertake training next year and a budget of £200 was included which should cover 4 training days.

Planning application fees So far, £132.50 of the allocation had been used for the Village Sign application. If an application for the football field is submitted this year, the 2006/7 budget may be exceeded. The budget for 2007/8 was left at £200.

Solicitors' fees The 2006/7 allocation was £500. Mrs. Lansdowne's preliminary estimate for advice on the Custodian Trusteeship of the Rec. Centre is £350, but may be more. A solicitor would be needed to go through a sub-lease for the new football field and also for any alterations to the lease for the Recreation Centre. £1,000 was budgeted for 2007/8.

(g) *Pavilion*

Services Gas and electricity charges have been rising. The Clerk had increased the budgets accordingly. It might be possible to save money by switching supplier.

Caretaker's salary Awaiting the Staffing Committee review

Caretaker's expenses This was to cover telephone calls and any mileage. None claimed so far in 2006/7, but the same budget was included for 2007/8.

Cleaner's salary Awaiting the Staffing Committee review.

Cleaning materials/consumables The figure was left at £100 for 2007/8.

Salt water softener £131 as for 2006/7.

Maintenance/repairs The budget had been exceeded as there had been unexpected pump repairs this year and the edges of the manhole covers had been concreted. Paint and rollers had also been purchased. The budget would be kept at £1,000 for 2007/8.

Minor equipment In case replacement was required, £50 was included for 2007/8.

Electrical checks and servicing of boiler, fire extinguishers, etc. Some of these checks are due at the end of the year and early in the New Year. In the past charges had been lower than the budgeted figures and the same figures were included for 2007/8.

Sewage pumps service It was hoped that the figure of £225 budgeted for this year would not be required in view of the repairs carried out. £250 was included for 2007/8.

Vacuum repairs This may not be used in 2006/7; £100 was budgeted for 2007/8.

Pavilion valuation This was carried out in 2006, the next one was due in 2009.

Alarm monitoring A small increase was estimated for next year.

Alarm repairs None so far. £100 was budgeted again for next year.

Keyholding Swifts' charge had increased substantially this year and it was hoped that any increase next year will be less. A sum of £327 was budgeted.

Swift call out There had been two so far. A budget of £90 was included for 2007/8.

Swift security patrols The price is now £8.10 per visit with two visits on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights. £3,000 was budgeted for 2007/8.

3. Capital expenditure (a) to review capital expenditure for the remainder of 2006/7

Notice boards It seemed unlikely that the sum estimated for this year will be spent as there are no proposals yet for notice boards in other areas of the parish.

Dog bins Two have been bought so far this year and approval is likely to be given for two more on Washford Farm. A vandalised bin at the Moat needs to be replaced. This year's budget of £1,000 may be exceeded slightly.

Seats/picnic tables Some seats may be required on the new open space but this is unlikely to be before the new financial year.

Pavilion name board This was now unlikely to be commissioned and the budgeted sum was deleted from this year's budget.

Play equipment The only expenditure foreseen this year so far is for the goalpost for Court Lodge. JH reported that Mrs. Davies was looking at another possible site since the ground at Court Lodge became waterlogged during wet weather and could not be used. The estimate for this (without any wings or fencing) was £2,975 + VAT. This year's allocation had been reduced to £3,000 to cover this since any further expenditure on play equipment would likely to be in 2007/8.

Youth schemes/courses The Shuttle Bus was fully booked and could not visit the parish in the summer. No spending on this heading was therefore anticipated until 2007/8.

Future sports facilities £20,000 had been earmarked towards a possible kick-about area which is unlikely to happen in this financial year; the sum was transferred to 2007/8.

New football pitch The Clerk was awaiting advice from Mr. Mills in ABC Planning on what should be included in a planning application. The sum of £17,500 was transferred to the 2007/8 budget.

Anti-speeding It was agreed to delete this item from the budget.

Village Sign Planning permission has been applied for and the costings for manufacture and installation are likely to be around half the budget of £10,000.

(b) To consider capital expenditure for 2007/8

Noticeboards £1,000 was transferred from the 2006/7 budget.

Dog bins £1,000 was allocated, which should pay for 4 lockable bins at the current prices.

Seats/picnic tables £1,000 was transferred from 2006/7.

Recreation Centre name board As there was a name change from Park Farm to Kingsnorth Recreation Centre, the sign at the front of the Centre should be changed. It was agreed to include £1,000 in the 2007/8 budget for this.

Play equipment £5,000 was included for 2007/8 in case a new item of equipment, such as a roundabout suitable for disabled users, was added to the play area. A football kick-around wall had also been suggested. There was also a developer's contribution of £15,000 which ABC may allocate for play equipment in the area of the playing field or buffer zone. A site meeting had been requested with Mrs. Davies to discuss this.

Youth Schemes/courses £500 was transferred from 2006/7. It would be essential to book the Shuttle Bus early in the year for visits to the parish from May to July.

Future sports facilities £20,000 was transferred from 2006/7. Discussions were still needed with ABC about a possible kick-around area.

New football pitch £18,500 was transferred from 2006/7.

4. To decide the precept to be requested for the 2007/8 financial year

The Clerk had circulated figures showing the estimated minimum balance to be carried forward and income for 2007/8 based on the current year's precept figure. The income for 2007/8 had been calculated using the current year's precept figure, as the local tax base figure for next year was not yet available. Using the draft budget before amendment at this meeting, the Clerk had predicted a possible deficit. However, as there was likely to be under-spending on budget figures for the remainder of 2006/7, it was likely that the balance would be larger and would cancel out the deficit.

The Band D precept figure had remained the same at £10.80 since 2000/01. There was a discussion about the level of precept for 2007/8 and whether it should remain the same in view of the large balance likely to be carried forward. It was agreed that this should be decided at the PC's meeting on 30.11. after the Clerk had incorporated the amendments agreed to the draft budget and recalculated the sum needed for 2007/8.

The meeting ended at 10 p.m.

Chairman