

**REPORT OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD ON 9 JANUARY 2018 IN OLD MILL HALL, GROVE**

**Present:** Cllr J M Stock (Chairman) Cllr T Fraser  
Cllr W R Ackers Cllr K Jones  
Cllr S K Dexter Cllr J E Nunn-Price  
Cllr W Evans Cllr F D Parnell

**In attendance:** Cllr R T Pollock and Cllr D Rolfe, Mr Jeremy Flawn (Bluestone Planning) and Ms Louise Rawlings (Vale of White Horse District Council) – Regarding Item 5 only

**Clerk:** Mr G M Mundy

**1 Apologies for absence**

All committee members were present.

**2 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations were given at this time.

**3 To sign the report of the previous meeting held on 21 November 2017**

It was **MOVED** the Chairman and **RESOLVED** unanimously

**“that the report be signed as a true record of the meeting”**

**4 Matters arising from the report**

- (a) Minute 4(a) – Banking arrangements. The Clerk informed the committee that he has made progress on this issue, but is not yet in a position to make a report. It is hoped that a report will be forthcoming in time for the next meeting.
- (b) Minute 4(c) – Land surrounding Old Mill Hall. The Clerk informed the committee he has written to the Vale Academy Trust regarding the land surrounding Old Mill Hall and has been informed that the Vale Academy Trust is meeting to discuss the proposal. A report will be made to the committee un due course.
- (c) Minute 4(e) – Future of the Old Mill Hall Management Committee. The Clerk informed the committee that this matter will be further discussed under item 6(a) on the agenda.
- (d) Minute 8 – DRAFT budget for this committee for the 2018-19 financial year. The Clerk informed the committee that the DRAFT budget was agreed at Full Council on 5 December 2018.

**5 Mr Jeremy Flawn and Ms Louise Rawlings regarding Neighbourhood Planning**

The Chairman welcomed Mr Flawn and Ms Rawlings to the committee meeting to discuss Neighbourhood Planning.

Mr Flawn Introduced himself as a partner of Bluestone Planning – A planning consultancy firm and Ms Rawlings introduced herself as a Community Engagement Officer working for the Vale of White Horse District Council.

Ms Rawlings informed the committee and said that she has been working within the planning system for the last 5 years and that part of her role is to identify community involvement by trying to empower local communities to have a say in the planning process.

Cllr Fraser asked what benefits the village would have if it completed a neighbourhood plan?

Cllr Nunn-Price that that in her opinion the only way to do it was 'to leap-frog' 10-20 years and what the village wanted.

Mr Flawn informed the committee that a Neighbourhood Plan 'sits' under the District Council's own Local Plan and is valid for the period of that Local Plan, however can be rolled forward. He added that some of the benefits of a neighbourhood plan include;

- Do not have to allocate housing sites
- It is not limited in time
- It is not necessarily for every community
- Communities with a Neighbourhood Plan will receive up to 25% in Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), those without only receive 15%

Cllr Dexter said that at a recent Annual Parish Meeting a straw poll was taken and out of an audience of 45 only 1 resident was in favour in seeking a Neighbourhood Plan, but the majority of those attending were against.

He said that Thame had spent in excess of £100k. He asked what can be included because something substantial needed to be included to encourage residents to take part.

Cllr Dexter then cited Morpeth Town Council who had completed a neighbourhood plan only for it to be ignored by the local District/Borough Council.

Mr Flawn said that it is not a long-term solution to develop large sites without upgrading infrastructure and facilities.

Cllr Dexter asked what Ms Rawlings would do to interact with the local community. Ms Rawlings responded and said that she couldn't tell the community what to include or to do.

She said that the neighbourhood planning group would need to work with the community, especially the younger element. She cited St Helen Without who had engaged with their younger community who were the driving force behind a survey and questionnaire. She added that Lewknor neighbourhood planning group were driven by the local community and not the Parish Council. Mr Flawn said that grants are available of £10k for larger villages and a further £9k from a community fund.

Cllr Parnell asked if there are costs involved if the Plan was to be rolled forward and would the community have to be subject to another referendum. Mr Flawn responded and confirmed that there were costs involved, but it depended if the local plan was out of date. He added that, potentially, there would have to be another referendum.

Following a further discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk send out a note to all Councillors asking if they wanted to be involved in a further meeting with Louise Rawlings regarding community involvement in the Neighbourhood Planning process.

Clerk

The Chairman thanked Mr Flawn and Ms Rawlings for attending the meeting.

## **6 Old Mill Hall matters**

- (a) Old Mill Hall Management Committee report of the meeting held on 28 November 2017. The report was noted.

The committee asked what progress had been made regarding the AV equipment. The Clerk responded and said that progress has been made and that Chris Osland has finished the majority of the wiring, testing and labelling. There are in total 24 microphone circuits and 8 loudspeaker circuits ready for use.

He added that a user guide for the circuits is in the process of being written by Mr Osland, documenting where they all are and what they do.

The Clerk added that the box on the balcony railings still has to be fitted and there are still a few circuits that still need to be installed as some of the original circuits were incorrectly installed and the projection equipment.

The committee felt that not enough progress had been made in the total period of time given and following a discussion, it was **MOVED** Cllr Dexter **SECONDED** Cllr Stock and **RESOLVED** unanimously

Clerk

**“to give Mr Osland until the end of the month (31 January 2018) to finish the project”**

(b) Future of the Old Mill Hall sub-committee. The Clerk informed the committee that he had only received 2 responses from 20 regular hall hirers. Neither responses seemed that bothered about the future of the Old Mill Hall sub-committee.

Following a very brief discussion, it was **MOVED** Cllr Dexter, **SECONDED** Cllr Ackers and **RESOLVED** unanimously

Clerk

**“to disband the Old Mill Hall sub-committee with effect 1 April 2018 and for the Finance and General Purposes Committee to take on the management and administration via the Clerk and Hall Manager”**

**7 Health and Safety Officers report (HSO)**

There was nothing to report.

**8 Chairman’s Urgent Communications**

There were no urgent communications.

**9 Confidential matters**

It was **MOVED** the Chairman and **AGREED** in accordance with Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972

**“that the press and public be excluded from the meeting to permit the committee to consider the confidential items.”**

The meeting closed at 8.55pm

Confirmed: 20 February 2018

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Chairman