Batheaston Parish Council

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING 9/2/2021
Report

1. **Minutes.** Draft 6.1.1 was changed to correct that the interim audit report does not create an additional workload. Rather the report maintains the high workload of updating and implementing governance policies and procedures that meet the needs of Batheaston Parish Council.

   Council: to note amendment.

2. **Budget.** Committee members confirmed the 4 narratives deducted from councillors' inputs into the budget and added a 5th combination option.

   Council: to note discussion and to select a lead narrative for detailed budgeting at 23/2 meeting.

3. **New finance system: AdvantEdge.** Committee members reviewed their initial impressions of the system, with some expressing concerns it seems to offer little workflow capabilities. This could hinder meeting certain internal audit recommendations. Due to lack of materials re installation and security, formal approval for go live was deferred to the March FinCo.

   Council: to note (1) reservations, (2) possible audit implications and (3) delay in formal go live approval.

4. **Grants.** The committee noted that the full 20/21 grant pot was now "used" by paid, committed and expected grant applications. FinCo approved a grant of £500 to GrowBatheaston. It reviewed the grant situation of the Youth Club and whether to call back £2000 paid earlier in the financial year given the Youth Club's success in finding alternative funding and building reserves of c£23k. The vote of clawback vs let retain was split 2/2 and the chair casting vote was not used. The decision is therefore put to Full Council.

   Council: to (1) note that the 21/22 grant pot is fully used, (2) to confirm a grant of £500 to GrowBatheaston and (3) to resolve the clawback decision re the Youth Club.

5. **Transactions.** No monthly transaction report was submitted and the item was deferred.

   Council: to note deferral

6. Financial administration. FinCo reviewed and approved a contract with BANES to take over maintenance of PROWs for £40/km p.a. and the engagement of the internal auditor for the year-end review. FinCo noted the Section 137 (allowed expenditure on matters outside statutory remit) 21/22 limits.

   Council: to confirm approval of BANES PWOW contract and internal auditor engagement.

7. **Risk Management.** Risk management is a general governance requirement and specific audit recommendation. FinCo to note of the NALC Risk Management Strategy paper but determine it was too holistic to meet our immediate purposes. Instead FinCo decided to work pragmatically and

practically through on a rolling top 10 list of risks and the Clerk was asked to compile a first top 10 risk list.

Council: to note and confirm risk management approach.

8. **Clerk Report.** No Clerk Report was submitted.

9. **Update of Staff Contracts (closed session).** FinCo reviewed the reasons for the current exclusion of range / scale references per the 2004 National Agreement on Salaries and Conditions of Service of Local Council Clerks in England and Wales in the Clerk's contract, and like references in our other staff contract. It agreed this was an omission. It also agreed to make annual scale increments subject to an annual appraisal. New contracts will be executed with these changes.

   Council: to confirm new contractual arrangements for execution and to note their financial impact of creating a quasi-automatic inflator of the annual precept of 1-2% (compounding).