

Springfield Parish Council

Minutes of the Premises Committee

The committee met at 7pm on Tuesday 28th May 2024 in the Library, Springfield Parish Centre, St Augustine's Way, Springfield, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 6GX.

Cllr N Dudley was elected to chair the meeting in the absence of the Committee Chair, Cllr R Lee. Proposed by Cllr I Fuller and seconded by Cllr S Byrne-Lagrué.

Present - Cllrs N Dudley, I Fuller and S Byrne-Lagrué.

In attendance- Clerk to the Council, Premises Manager and the Administration and Committee Clerk Assistant.

001/24. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted for Cllrs B Chadwick and R Lee.

002/24. Declarations of interest

As a member of Chelmer Village Council, Cllr S Byrne-Lagrué declared an interest in item 13, Chelmer Village Hall Charges. However, as the committee would not be quorate when the item was discussed the Clerk granted a dispensation.

003/24. Minutes

The minutes for the meeting held on the 18th of March 2024 were agreed and signed.

004/24. Public Question Time

No members of the public were present at the meeting.

005/24. Premises Manager Updates

1. Risk Assessments – There were no significant risks to report to the committee for either the grounds or premises.
2. 5 Year testing – The testing is now complete, and any faults identified have been rectified.
3. Washing Machine – The new washing machine has now been installed and is being used.
4. Glass washer – the new glass washer behind the bar has been installed and is being used.
5. Bookings Update – The Premises Manager shared a report produced by the Bookings Clerk which showed an increase in bookings and how she was marketing the venue. The Premises Manager thanked the Bookings Clerk for her hard work.

006/24. Financial Matters

The Premises Manager had previously circulated a budget report showing all income and expenditure for the year to date for each individual budget cost centre. It was agreed the Clerk would produce a comparison report between last year and this for the next meeting.

007/24. SPC Heating

The Premises Manager advised that the radiators in the nursery were coming to the end of their life span and would need replacing in the not too distant future. He

advised that he was told there was a contingency of £4,000 set aside for the work. However, the Clerk advised that this was not the case. Therefore, the Premises Manager asked the committee to allocated £4000 from the general reserves. This was agreed for recommendation to the Finance and Policy Committee. Proposed by Cllr S Byrne-Lagrué, seconded by Cllr N Dudley and agreed unanimously.

008/24. Car Park Bollards

The Premises Manager circulated pictures of how users of the car park parked and asked to purchase 12 new self-righting bollards to place along the pavement kerbs to stop cars from parking on them. A discussion took place, and it was agreed to purchase and install the bollards. Proposed by Cllr S Byrne-Lagrué, seconded by Cllr I Fuller and agreed unanimously. Funding for this was to come from the general maintenance budget.

009/24. Energy Contracts to be renewed

The Premises Manager circulated the list of quotes for new energy suppliers from the broker. As there was no quote from the current provider, United Gas and Power, it was agreed the Premises Manager would call them directly to see if they can offer a more competitive quote than the renewal price given in their letter. It was noted that the current contract finishes at the end of June 2024 and so a decision for a new supplier was urgently needed. It was agreed to put the renewal on the next Finance and Policy Committee agenda on 3rd of June 2024 for decision.

010/24. Bowers Hall Stage Curtains

The Premises Manager explained that the curtains in the Bowers Hall needed cleaning and re-fireproofing, as they had not been cleaned for many years. He asked for the cost of the service to come out of the general reserves. It was agreed to accept the quote from Cameo at a cost of £920.00 and to recommend to the Finance and Policy Committee to use reserves. Proposed by Cllr S Byrne-Lagrué, seconded by Cllr N Dudley and agreed unanimously.

There was also a discussion regarding the speakers in Bowers Hall needing cleaning and repairing as one of the speakers had blown. As the cost for this was very expensive it was agreed the Premises Manager would look into the cost of purchasing new speakers and attain additional quotes for the repair work. It was also suggested that he contact Chelmsford theatre to see if they could help and give advice. This item will be brought back to the next Premises meeting for further discussion on 15th of July 2024.

011/24. August Holidays - Hirer Enquiry

The Premises Manager spoke about the rent payable by the Café during the month of August 2024. The committee agreed that due to the fact it is an exceptionally quite time and business turnover in previous years has been extremely low, the Café owner would not be required to pay rent. Proposed by Cllr N Dudley, seconded by Cllr S Byrne-Lagrué and agreed unanimously. This will be reviewed annually.

012/24. Springfield Parish Centre 25 Year Anniversary July 2024

The Premises Manager advised the committee that the Parish Centre's 25th anniversary will be coming up on the 10th of July 2024. After a discussion it was agreed to organise a Tea Party to honour the anniversary in the centre's café. The Bookings Clerk will look into hall availability on that day, and Councillors will assist with compiling a list of guests to invite including, previous Councillors, regular hirers and the Mayor of Chelmsford.

013/24. Chelmer Village Hall Charges

The Clerk advised that at the Premises meeting on 24th July 2023 the committee agreed the admin charges for Chelmer Village Hall re officer support provided by Springfield Parish Council be set at £5,750. The Clerk advised that these charges no longer applied as Chelmer Village Council was already being charged a proportion of the Clerks, Premises Managers and the Handypersons time for any work they undertake for the Council and the Village Hall itself. Therefore, these charges will not be reclaimed.

014/24. Rolling Forward Planning

The Premises Manager had circulated the beginning of a rolling programme to start saving for various items in regard to the centre and its grounds. This will help to inform the precept each year and will increase the earmarked reserves. It was agreed to look at this on a 6 monthly basis. Once when agreeing the budget for premises to be recommended to the Finance and Policy Committee and then again in March. The Premises Manager will continue to work on this.

015/24. Members to be informed of roofing issues

The Premises Manager advised that the flat roof over the Boleyn Room had been leaking and that he had engaged a roofer, who the Council had previously used, to lay a rubber covering over the area. It is hoped this would help prevent any further leaks for at least the next year.

The committee discussed the situation including how much it would cost for full replacement. The Premises Manager advised this could be in the region of £15,000. Unfortunately, the insurance company would not cover this due to the fact they were unaware the building actually had a flat roof.

This has now been rectified with the renewal of the insurance. However, the roof will still not be covered due to its age and that no regular maintenance/survey has been carried out re their terms and conditions. The Premises Manager is now aware of this and will make sure a survey is carried out each year.

The committee felt that if the library roof failed and as this too would not be covered, under the terms of the lease the library would have to help pay towards the cost. The Clerk advised she would check the lease agreement on this.

Saving for the new roof will be included in the rolling forward plan. There was also a discussion over the increase in hirer fees going up with the rate of inflation to help with all costs.

It was agreed to continue to monitor the roof in the hope that replacing it could be put back to next summer for inclusion in the precept for 2025/26.

016/24. Members to Discuss Bad Debt of hirer

There was no update on this item. The Clerk will provide this at the next Full Council meeting on 1st July 2024.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9pm.