

STRADBROKE PARISH COUNCIL – Finance Committee meeting 15.11.2018
Enquiries / observations of Stradbroke resident [REDACTED]

I was concerned to hear the statements made at the Parish Council meeting 12th November 2018 regarding the PC's financial position, and I would be grateful if councillors could answer the following queries:

1) PC meeting 08.01.2018 – When Stradisphere requested a donation of £800 towards running costs – why did the PC not request to see copies of the charity's accounts / running costs before it agreed a £300 donation? Stradisphere has since shut down with a statement that it suffered continuing losses over 5 years. Why did the PC not investigate in more depth before committing public money?

2) Could you clarify please what the PWLB loan was taken out for? Was it the play equipment?

3) Could you clarify what IT Support covers please – budgeted at £300?

4) Could you clarify if the rent from the doctors surgery was taken off the Precept figure, if not, why not?

5) **Bank Reconciliations:** Could you please identify at which PC meetings the following items were authorized:

30.04.18 – Legal advice Richard Buxton £1,950

31.10.18 – Referral fee RICS £425

6) It appeared at PC meeting 12.11.2018 that the PC would be financing the Clerk's phone and the Clerk appeared to be taking on extra work regarding cemetery records. Will the cost of the Clerk's phone be itemised separately on the accounts and will the extra work on cemetery records involve increased wages? At which meetings were these items authorized please?

Also, the Clerk's hours were increased at some stage to take into account extra work on the NP – does this situation still exist, or have the hours reduced down again please?

7) Looking at the PC half yearly accounts the following figures seem to particularly stand out as overspends:

Travelling expenses - £350

External expert advice and opinion - £3,400 - this is a very high overspend

Neighbourhood Plan - £4,000 (to be paid from reserves) – this is a very high overspend

Recreation - £800 (to be paid from reserves)

I would like to know why such high costs for external expert advice and the NP were sanctioned by the PC when they don't appear to have been budgeted for. Please can you tell me at which meetings these were authorized?

8) Looking at PC Reserves I notice the following:

Traffic calming £3,000 - what form will this take?

Playing field drainage £1,950 - I was under the impression that the playing field had undergone drainage work – is more needed?

To finish, I realise that all these queries are time consuming, but maybe a member of the Finance Committee could supply me with answers to save the Clerk some time. Thank you for your help in this matter – regards [REDACTED]