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|   | PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL*Working together for a better future* |

 PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Swan View, Lower Street

Pulborough

West Sussex RH20 2BF

Telephone: 01798 873532

Email: hquenault@pulboroughparishcouncil.gov.uk

MINUTES OF A FINANCE & POLICY MEETING OF PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

**HELD** **ON THURSDAY 16th November 2023 AT THE SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs: Hands (Chair), Clarke, Ellis-Brown, Lee, Hunt & Mote

**IN ATTENDANCE**: Mr H Quenault (Clerk)

***The meeting opened at 7.29pm.***

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence and reasons were received from:

Cllr Wallace (Personal Commitment)

Cllr Court (Illness)

1. **Declarations of Interest and Changes to Register of Interests**

 There were no changes to Councillor’s register of interests.

There were no changes to the declarations of interests.

1. **Minutes**

 The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the Minutes of the Meeting Thursday 26th October 2023 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings, and that the Committee Chairman sign them.

1. **Public Speaking**

 There were no public speakers present, therefore the Chair moved onto the next item on the agenda.

1. **Parish Council Finances**

The Clerk delivered a financial update to the committee, highlighting various different points. He mentioned the overspend in the member expenses, audit fees (due to multiple audits being factored into this year) and the overspend in insurance that had already been ratified in the previous finance meeting. 4020 was presented as having a coded error which would be investigated, the Clerk was aware of this. The ‘other grants’ account showed had not yet been through the accounting system and needed to be transferred to other income. The interest on the accounts was highlighted as still being high, it was mentioned that the additional bank account switch would reduce income in this area, however not significantly. The Clerk explained there was new ad-hoc hiring of the MUGA which had seem that budget code increase. It was mentioned that the whole of staff costs was under budgeted in the previous year. The committee noted the income for the Christmas lights was significant. Refuse collection seemed high to the Clerk, especially at this point in the year. Allotment tenancies had reached a good level once again thanks in whole to the Deputy Clerk and the Rec & Open Spaces Committee. Other pavilion spend to be investigated by Clerk who may look to move to a more appropriate budget code (repairs). The only lack of income was currently from the revised Cricket Club invoice and the lack of payment from the Football Club who were currently questioning the bill. The Clerk did mention that the Pocket Park was over budget but explained that the bridge project was needed due to serious damaged caused by travellers last year and further vandalism this year.

Given the notable interest rates currently being accrued in the accounts, there was a consideration regarding potential adjustments due to the budget, given the possibility of an overestimation. It was clarified that the interest rates were still a reasonable estimation given the global economic behaviour. Furthermore, queries arose about the Christmas lighting expenditure, specifically regarding the quantity and the eco-friendliness of the lights employed.

Members **NOTED** bank reconciliations for Cashbook 1 & Cashbook 3, a summary of income & expenditure and the statement of earmarked reserves as at 31st October 2023.

1. **Budget Review – 3rd Draft**

The Clerk introduced the 3rd draft.

All recommended budget lines that were changed were reviewed. This was accepted by committee. A more accurate figure of the salaries did make a change to the overall budget.

It was asked whether it would be appropriate to include a further amount to the grants distributed budget, to help support local community groups and charities. A further point was raised regarding the street cleansing grant that was offered by Horsham District Council and the amount that had been put in the budget. Currently it was budgeted for £6100, whereas, in actuality £6875 had been granted this year. It was clarified by a District Councillor, that this amount was unlikely to decrease. Therefore, the additional money that had been afforded could be used to further increase the grant pot that the parish council use to distribute.

It was **RESOLVED** that an extra £775 was to be added to the street cleansing grant income and to add in an extra £775 into the grant distribution expenditure leaving a net zero change in the budget.

The clerk then ran through the precept banding calculation and explained the purpose of the document. This highlighted the figure at 5.03% of a rise due to the extra Band D properties within Pulborough .

It was **RESOLVED** that this increase be accepted by this committee and recommended that this be submitted to Full Council on November 23rd, with a 5.03% rise on the precept and a total amount of £292,460.

1. **Local Government Services Pay Agreement 2023**

Members **NOTED** the National Salary Award has been agreed for 2023-24.

1. **Payments**

There were no payments, so the Chair closed the meeting.

***The meeting closed at 8.15pm.***

 ……………………………………..Chair

 ………………………………………Date