



# PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

*Working together for a better future*

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE HELD VIRTUALLY USING MICROSOFT TEAMS ON THURSDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> JULY 2021**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs: Clarke (Chairman), Court, Ellis-Brown, Hare, Henly and Kipp

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs H Knight (Clerk and RFO)

*The meeting opened at 7.30pm*

### **203. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence had been received.

### **204. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND CHANGES TO REGISTER OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest or changes to register of interests made.

### **205. MINUTES**

The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the Minutes of the online Meeting held on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings, and that the Committee Chairman sign them.

#### Clerk's Report

Min. 194 Parish Council Finances: The Clerk advised that the reason for the negative status of £110 overspend on 4340 Contracted Maintenance was that the service was received in the financial year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 but invoiced in the new financial year. This therefore had to be an accrual so that the finances were correctly allocated to the correct year.

### **206. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING**

There were no public speakers.

### **207. PARISH COUNCIL FINANCES**

Members had received bank reconciliations for Cashbook 1 as at 30<sup>th</sup> April, 31<sup>st</sup> May and 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and Cashbook 3 as at 30<sup>th</sup> April, 31<sup>st</sup> May and 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021. These were **AGREED** when compared to the bank statements and the Committee Chairman duly signed the bank statements.

Members had received a summary of Income and Expenditure compared to budget to year end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

Members had received the latest available report of Earmarked Reserves.

The Clerk reported that there were no creditor invoices over £30 outstanding.

**208. S106/CIL MONIES**

Members had received the latest HDC quarterly report of unspent and potential S106 or CIL monies. As a point of general information, the Clerk was asked to check with HDC on the status regarding installation of the correct footpath at the Brookfields development by the developer, a previously unimplemented S106 condition.

**209. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2020-21 (FINAL)**

Members had received the Internal Audit Report 2020-21 (Final) from the internal auditor. Members were pleased to note the positive report and that there were no issues arising in any areas of inspection warranting formal comment or recommendation. Thanks were recorded to the Clerk and Deputy Clerk. The Clerk reported that she had queried one of the statements under the Review of Corporate Governance section dealing with the Council not meeting criteria to adopt and use the General Power of Competence, which only cited being CiLCA qualified as a criterion: The Clerk clarified that an additional criterion not met was that the Council currently did not comprise a minimum of two thirds elected members. It was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** the adoption of the report to full Council.

**210. SPORTS PAVILION DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

There was nothing further to update. Communications had been received from HDC and the architect explaining that there were significant delays to the HDC validation process mainly due to resourcing issues, for which HDC apologises and is endeavouring to address.

**211. COVID-19 FINANCIAL IMPACTS – SNOOKER CLUB**

Members noted the request from Pulborough Snooker club regarding the forthcoming annual rent invoice, due September 2021. Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to approve that the September 2021-22 annual rent would be reduced by 7 months to reflect the club's periods of inactivity due to the pandemic lockdowns in 2020-21, for which the club had paid its annual rent in full in advance. It was noted that the club had voluntarily paid for some carpet and equipment repair work during previous episodes of roof leaks, at no cost to the Council. It was further **RESOLVED** that the Snooker Club would be asked to provide their latest financial accounts and asked whether any other grants had been applied for/received by the club.

**212. INSURANCE RENEWAL**

Members considered quotations received from Pen Underwriting Ltd and Hiscox via the current broker, Came & Company. Due to the present climate, a 3 year long term agreement was not available from either and malicious damage excess and broker administration fees had increased. The Clerk reported that she had also sought quotations from two other large brokers/providers (Zurich and BHIB) but both had advised that they were unable to provide a competitive quote, based on current cover and premium paid. This was primarily due to the sports pavilion being 'non-standard construction' /flat roof, and the fact that the Council had made recent claims (playground equipment vandalism / bus shelter damage) which attracted a 'loading' to premiums as well as the insurance climate generally which reflected an increase in claims, particularly for malicious damage, over the past year.

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to renew the Council's insurance via Came & Company and to accept the quotation from Pen Underwriting Ltd at a premium of £5,266.05 (inclusive of IPT) plus £75 administration fee for the year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022. This was a total increase of £686.51 on the previous year.

**213. CODE OF CONDUCT**

Members had received the new model (LGA) Code of Conduct for Local Authorities, which Horsham District Council had recommended be adopted by all parishes. The

Clerk advised that SLCC and NALC/county association advice supported this and she would also recommend its adoption without amendment. It was noted that the revised code still did not contain clear sanctions on councillor behaviour but did place greater emphasis on standards and use of social media. The basic principles of good conduct and adherence to the Nolan principles remained.

Following brief discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Council that the new Code of Conduct be adopted, without amendment.

#### 214. MEETING VENUES AND LIFTING OF SOCIAL RESTRICTIONS

Following the lifting of social restrictions from 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021 and potential rise of infection rate, the Clerk had sought views from all Councillors on whether to resume committee meetings at the Sports Pavilion or continue with all meetings taking place at the Village Hall. September meetings had already been booked in the Rother Hall (the larger Arun Hall being unavailable now). Most cllrs responding had agreed with the Clerk that it would be sensible to continue using the Village Hall, although the pavilion would be cost free. The Clerk reported that the approximate annual cost of meeting room hire at the Village Hall would be £1,526.40, which would likely be approximately £600 overspend on the budget cost centre for office rent/room hire. Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to approve that meetings for the remainder of 2021 would be held at the Village Hall but that consideration of 2022 meetings would be reviewed at the September Committee meeting in case of any change in the national situation.

#### 215. CORRESPONDENCE

Members received and noted the Correspondence List, as below.

##### WSCC

- Email 20.05.21 from Principal Pensions Consultant - Early Retirement Strain Costs: Confirmation that the Fund will be reverting to its local actuarial strain cost factors for early retirement estimates with immediate effect (*copied to C'ttee*).
- Email 08.07.21 from Finance Manager (Pension Fund Governance) – Annual General Meeting for Employers: Advising that the traditional AGM will be in the form of a recorded presentation from Fund officers and advisors, available in late July, and seeking specific items employers would like covered. Topics currently proposed are: Funding and Actuarial Update; Administration and Scheme Management Update; Investment Update; Plan for the year ahead.

#### 216. PAYMENTS

Members had received the list of Payments for Authorisation. It was **RESOLVED** to approve these, and the payments list and invoices were duly signed.

£	
Studio 5 (London) Design Ltd (From Pav Refurb & Tractor Shed)	1,000.00
Mrs E Kipp	38.93
SCYP	3,595.68
National Westminster	1.75
HDC	49.60
HDC	39.90

***The meeting closed at 8.25pm.***

.....Chairman

.....Date