



PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Working together for a better future

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER 2019 AT THE SPORTS PAVILION

PRESENT: Cllrs: Clarke (Chairman), Kipp, Henly and Qusted

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs H Knight (Clerk and RFO)
1 Councillor in public gallery

The meeting opened at 7.34pm

17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Court (prior commitment), Hare (prior commitment) and Wallace (personal) and the absences approved by the Committee.

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND CHANGES TO REGISTER OF INTERESTS

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

19. MINUTES

The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th June 2019 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings. The Committee Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

Clerk's Report

Min. 107, 25.04.19 (Minutes, Clerk's Report) – LCRS Risk Register: The Deputy Clerk had now finished populating the templates, which had been a long task. The Clerk now had to review all entries before the system could be fully implemented, after which Council would receive the final information for review.

Min. 7, 27.06.19 – Internal Audit Report: The Internal Auditor would be conducting the 2019/20 interim internal audit on 14th November 2019. Members were reminded of some of the queries raised during the previous year audit (as detailed in Min. 7), particularly with regard to review of Expenditure, review of Precept Determination/Budgetary Control and review of Assessment/Management of Risk.

20. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no public speakers.

21. PARISH COUNCIL FINANCES

Members received bank reconciliations for Cashbooks 1 as at 30th June, 31st July and 31st August 2019 and Cashbook 3 as at 30th June, 31st July and 31st August 2019. Agreement to bank statements was confirmed, which were duly signed by the Committee Chairman.

Members noted the quarterly comparison of Income and Expenditure to budget as at 30th June 2019 (Q1). Following a query regarding up to date figures, the Clerk reported on some contracted maintenance spending in July / August that would be noted in the next quarter I&E comparisons.

Members received a statement of Earmarked Reserve funds as at 1st August 2019.

The Clerk reported that there was one creditor invoice of over 30 days outstanding. This was £66 due from Horsham District Council since 8th August 2019 for the Neighbourhood Warden portion of the fee for the PPC Village Market stand (as previously offered by HDC).

It was noted that as per the Internal Control policy, Cllr Clarke had carried out the internal control inspection for quarter 1 to 30th June 2019. It was **AGREED** that Cllr Kipp would carry out the internal control inspection for quarter 2 to 30th September 2019. Members noted that a varied rota of Committee Members would be asked to take turns to ensure best practice and avoid complacency, as per previous discussions

22. AUTHORISATION OF BACS PAYMENTS

A second Councillor needed to be appointed to carry out the online NatWest Bank Bankline payment authorisations, as Cllr Quedsted no longer wished to undertake this function. It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Kipp to this role, in addition to Cllr Clarke.

23. S106/CIL

Members were pleased to note the confirmation from SDNPA that CIL monies were due to the Parish Council. A payment of £250 would be transferred in October 2019, with further payments potentially to follow. Monies accrued would be paid twice yearly, and all CIL funding must be used within 5 years. Members agreed that it would be sensible to allocate this funding to the sports pavilion development project, as CIL monies could be spent on sports halls.

It was noted that HDC had not yet processed any CIL payments relating to Pulborough.

24. ACTION IN RURAL SUSSEX: VILLAGE HALLS & COMMUNITY BUILDINGS CONFERENCE, THURSDAY 7TH NOVEMBER 2019, 9.30AM-2.00PM, THAKEHAM VILLAGE HALL

Members discussed this workshop, at a cost of £25 (inc VAT) per delegate. It was agreed this may be useful in relation to the Sports Pavilion development project as the programme includes items on learning lessons from renovations/newbuild; securing funding; maximising energy efficiency.

Cllrs Quedsted and Clarke were unable to attend. Cllr Kipp may be able to. It was **RESOLVED** to approve that either Cllr Kipp, Cllr Hare (to be asked) or the Clerk would attend, and the Clerk would liaise regarding availability.

25. SALC LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE WORKSHOP FOR COUNCILLORS

This useful training, various dates/venues in November, was noted, at a cost of £70 + VAT per delegate. No Cllrs present wished to attend. However, it was **RESOLVED**

to approve attendance by Cllrs Court, Hare or Wallace if they wished to, and the Clerk would liaise their availability.

26. **SPORTS PAVILION DEVELOPMENT PROJECT: BUSINESS CASE**

At the last meeting, it had been decided that the Committee Chairman would begin drawing up financial details to inform the necessary business plan for committee discussion. The Committee Chairman had started work on some initial calculations for running costs/maintenance of the sports pavilion. Cllr Quested also already had some work completed towards the design element.

As had been reported to full Council, the structural survey report of the building and suitability for an over-roofing system had recently been received: The report had concluded that an over-roofing system would be viable. Quotes would now be sought from specialist providers, as recommended by the structural surveyor. These would be considered if possible by a meeting of the Sports Pavilion Project Working Group before going before full Council.

Members discussed briefly the financial implications and likely position of the Council in the forthcoming 2020/21 budget setting process. A deficit budget had been set for the current financial year with c£6,000 to be met from general reserves: With the full cost of the Neighbourhood Warden scheme salaries to cover, together with lower than recommended general reserves, the Council would need to be realistic in setting the precept required if the Sports Pavilion project was to proceed. Rental income to the Council would need to be reviewed. It was **AGREED** that the Committee Chairman and Cllr Quested would work together in producing a business plan.

27. **INSURANCE RENEWAL AND REVIEW**

The Clerk reported on the renewal due for the 2019/20 insurance policy cover with Inspire, at a cost of £4,516.86. This was part of the three-year Long Term Agreement (LTA) agreed and commenced in 2018. There had been a small mid-term adjustment increase to premium due to the addition of the three new bus shelters.

During the recent high winds/ stormy weather, two trees at Rivermead had fallen. No major impact had resulted, although a resident's fence had sustained some minor damage, requiring repair. Although no insurance claims had arisen, advice had been sought from the insurance broker regarding the Council's cover for trees, gates, fences and surfaces. These could be insured if the Council wished, at an approximate level of around £50 annual additional premium per £10,000 sum insured.

It was noted that the Council was covered under its Public Liability Insurance and that the insurers were satisfied that the Council was proactive in its approach to its responsibilities regarding tree safety. It was felt unnecessary to seek additional cover at this time.

28. **GRANT AID 2019**

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllrs Henly, Clarke and Court (if willing) to the Grant Aid Working Party. The Clerk would liaise a date after the 30th September 2019 application deadline and before the next committee meeting so the Working Group could review applications and make recommendations to the Committee.

The Committee noted 'end of project' reports received from Horsham District Age UK and Pulborough Cricket Club as part of grant aid application conditions. The Clerk reminded the Committee that under the policy the Council adopted in 2018, all successful grant aid applicants were expected to submit a report at the conclusion of their project as evidence that the grant was used as intended and how this had benefited the organisation/community it served. This had been put in place as part

of due diligence in issuing grants. The Clerk would be following up on any non-compliant applications from last year and this would also be part of the review of applicants re-applying this year.

29. REMEMBRANCE COMMEMORATIONS 2019

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the purchase of a standard 17" poppy wreath for a suggested donation of £17. This would be laid on behalf of the Council at the annual Armistice Day church service. The Clerk would check the availability of the Chairman of Council or arrange an alternative representative. (*Power to donate to charities: LGA 1972, s.137*)

The Clerk advised that last year she had received two separate comments from residents who felt that the Council should install temporary lamp post poppies, as other rural villages had done. These could be purchased from the Royal British Legion for a donation of £3 per poppy. Members considered the merits or otherwise of this. There was concern that these plastic poppies could seem an attractive way of marking the period but also could quickly become tatty. Secured by cable ties, it required a co-ordinated approach to install and remove them in areas with very narrow footpaths close to the highway. On balance, members did not feel these poppies were suitable for Pulborough.

Instead, Members felt that an additional wreath should be purchased for installation at the Memorial Garden during the remembrance period. It was **RESOLVED** that an additional donation of £17 would be made for the purchase of a second wreath for this purpose. Cllrs Queded offered to assist the Groundsman and Memorial Garden volunteers in securing the wreath appropriately to avoid disturbance / loss. The Committee also **RESOLVED** to approve that the Clerk would again arrange for the Council's two RBL Tommy silhouettes and the Silent Soldier silhouettes to be placed as last year in the village.

30. BILLINGSHURST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Committee had received notice of the Billingshurst Neighbourhood Plan Reg.14 public consultation, the deadline for comments being 30th September 2019. This had only been received with two week's left of the consultation, unfortunately. It was noted that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had not raised any comments. Following brief discussion, it was decided to make no formal representation from Pulborough Parish Council.

31. ITEMS FOR NEXT F&P AGENDA

- Cllr Queded wished to make a proposal regarding the introduction of a Parish or Chairman's Award to clubs rather than awarding grant aid routinely, and would furnish the Clerk with a clear proposal.
- Draft budget
- Sports Pavilion Business Case

32. CORRESPONDENCE

Members noted the correspondence as below (list previously circulated).

WSCC/WSPF

- Copy of draft Funding Strategy Statement from West Sussex Pension Fund, following Employer Forums sessions in May, for consultation/comment (deadline was 16th July 2019 so PPC unable to submit comment)
- WSPF AGM and Actuarial Meetings: Copy slides that supported the Pension Fund's Annual Meeting in late July 2019; The Pension Fund's annual report has now been finalised and is available at:
https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/media/13122/lgps_annual_report_2018-19.pdf

The External Auditor's opinion has also been published at:
https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/media/13158/2018_19_audit_certificate.pdf
 A key item discussed at the AGM was the Valuation. The Actuary will be in a position to provide employer results in October / November.

LEGAL & GENERAL

Notice of 'Sweep up' account for the period 01/04/2018 to 31/03/2019 which now results in a credit to the Council of £138, due to reduction in lives insured.

LASER ENERGY

Details of VAT and CCL for multi-meter premises, and potential impact on de-minimis (*copied to Committee*)

ENERGY PRICES DIRECT

Reduced prices for general and non-profit organisations: Energy Prices Direct offer a service to arrange reduced prices for utility bills without switching supplier.

33. PAYMENTS

Following consideration, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the following payments and these were duly authorized:

£	
WSCC	8,451.74
Mrs E Kipp	11.70
Wightman & Parrish Ltd	22.76

The meeting closed at 8.51pm

.....Chairman

.....Date