



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 23RD JUNE 2022
AT THE VILLAGE HALL**

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs H Knight (Clerk)

The meeting opened at 7.30pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received, and reasons approved, from Cllrs Hunt (prior event) and Court (ill health).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND CHANGES TO REGISTER OF INTERESTS

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

3. MINUTES

The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 28th April 2022 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings, and that the Committee Chairman sign them. There was no Clerk's report.

4. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no public speakers.

5. PARISH COUNCIL FINANCES

Members received bank reconciliations for Cashbook 2 as at 31st March 2022 and for Cashbook 1 as at 30th April 2022. These were **AGREED** when compared to the bank statements and the Committee Chairman duly signed the bank statements.

Members received the summary of Income & Expenditure compared to budget up to 30th April 2022 and the Clerk clarified some queries: The audit fees are an accrual as usually arrive in the new financial year but relate to the previous year ending 31st March; No expenditure appeared on staff costs in April due to invoicing timing. The Clerk reported that the Highways maintenance and energy invoice arrives annually, and is on the payments list, Members having previously queried why that cost centre had not reduced quarterly.

The Committee Chairman commented that the budget allocation for staffing costs (salaries) may not have been sufficient, given rising inflation and cost of living, and asked members to begin thinking ahead to potential salary increases. The Clerk

highlighted that annual salary reviews were yet to take place and would be arranged as soon as possible through the F&P Staffing Sub-committee.

Members received and noted the summary of Earmarked Reserves. A query was raised as to the difference in transfer figure between the Rialtas printout and the internal spreadsheet. *[NB: The Clerk subsequently clarified that this is due to the spreadsheet showing interest added, while the Rialtas printout shows net transfer.]*

The Clerk advised that there was one invoice of £77 and one of £11 outstanding from May hire of the MSF, which were being followed up. Additionally, there was the invoice relating to sports club rent, which was the subject of a separate agenda item.

6. **SPORTS PAVILION DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

It was noted that HDC had granted, via the architect, an extension to 1st August 2022 for submission of PPC water neutrality statement. The appointed provider, Envision, had contacted the clerk seeking specific data for the site, viz number of current and expected employees, number of current and expected visitors, current and expected hours of operation. The Clerk would contact the sports clubs and Sports & Social Club for this information. She had provided Envision with water bills for the past few years and they had also asked for this as a spreadsheet.

Members discussed a suggestion of adjusting the plan proposals to accommodate rainwater harvesting, which would have a cost impact of possibly circa £10k but would make the facility more sustainable in the longer term. It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk advise the architect of the council's updated view and seek his professional opinion on whether rainwater harvesting can be incorporated into the groundworks, so that roof water could be utilised for toilet flushing, outside tap, boot washing etc.

7. **PARISH OFFICE LOCATION**

The Clerk reported that the Village Hall had advised that the Brooks Hall space would be available to rent from August, should the Council wish to re-locate there. The advantages would be more accessible office for public, more storage space and better kitchen/toilet space. However, the rent was likely to be around £3,000 more than current rent. It was noted that there was already a prospective new tenant interested in the rooms. Given the need for financial prudence and that there was not a direct need to move, it was decided that this would not be followed up.

8. **LEASES – PULBOROUGH BOWLING CLUB**

Owing to the sensitive nature of this item, it was **RESOLVED** that press and public be excluded from the meeting for this item (SO 3d refers)

Cllrs Clarke, Hare and Kipp reported on the informal meeting held at Pulborough Bowling Club on 8th June (confidential meeting notes previously circulated). Outcomes of that meeting and views and requests of the Bowling Club were discussed.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk would advise Pulborough Bowling Club that the Council was in principle in agreement with their requests, details as discussed in the confidential report and set out below, subject to any subsequent legal advice received from the Council's solicitor. These requests related to Schedule 3, Operational Covenants, Nos 1, 2, 3 and 5 in the current lease, specifically public access to a rink, use of premises for bowling only and by external hirers, and opening hours of the club.

- The Council is in agreement with amendment of the lease to allow that the Bowling Club may obtain income from room hire during the day time for business meetings or similar activity, but excluding large gatherings or parties

such as wedding, hen or stag events (current lease Schedule 3, Operational Covenants Nos 1 and 2 refer);

- The Council is in agreement with amendment of the public provision clause so that public wishing to use a rink would need to book through the club, in order to resolve keyholder security issue (current lease Schedule 3, Operational Covenant No. 3 refers);
- The Council is in agreement with amendment of the use of the premises for any purpose from the hours of 07.00 and 22.00 to be extended to 23.00 hrs (current lease Schedule 3, Operational Covenant No. 7 refers [*incorrectly numbered 5*]);
- The Council is in agreement with granting permission for club advertising /sponsorship banners to be placed on the perimeter fencing;
- The Council seeks that the Bowling Club will be responsible for all water bills arising on issue of the new lease;
- The Council seeks that the Bowling Club will contribute 50% of the legal fees arising from drawing up of the new lease, the Parish Council being responsible for the other 50%;
- The Council seeks that the Bowling Club will pay an annual nominal rent of £100pa under the new lease.

9. RENT – PULBOROUGH CRICKET CLUB

Owing to the sensitive nature of this item, it was **RESOLVED** that press and public be excluded from the meeting for this item (SO 3d refers)

Members considered the request from the club regarding annual rent arrangements, together with details of the club's current position and plans to address matters. Members confirmed that the arrangements agreed for the previous year's annual rent were applicable to the 2021-22 period only. Following considerable discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the annual rent would be reduced to 50% of the new amount for the 2022-23 rental period. Members also agreed that the matter could be looked at again for 2023-24 but they would expect to see evidence that the club had actively campaigned to attract new members. The Clerk was asked to convey this and also a reminder that the 2022-23 Grant Aid application process would shortly be open if the club wished to apply for funding to support some of its activities.

10. CORRESPONDENCE

Members received and noted the Correspondence List, as below.

WSSC

Email 16.06.22 with Parish Maintenance and Energy invoice 1st April 2022-31st March 2023: Advising next Maintenance and Energy Invoice due in April 2023 but to note that the significant increase in RPIx in January (8%) means the price per unit for 22/23 will be £45.13 (from £41.79). Additionally the market forecasts that the energy costs for period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 will see a continuing upward pressure that has seen energy prices almost double.

NatWest Bank

- Letter April 2022 advising higher rate on their deposit accounts.
- Letter April 2022 advising changes to client banking charges and terms.

Business Stream

Letter April 2022 advising changes to 2022/23 charges, resulting in a small uplift in retail charge being added to the wholesale charge to cover the services provided.

11. 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.

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WSCC Streetlighting Maintenance/ Energy 2021/22	6,703.09
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The meeting closed at 8.58pm.

.....Chairman

.....Date

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