



PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Working together for a better future

Swan View, Lower Street
Pulborough
West Sussex RH20 2BF
Telephone: 01798 873532
Email: clerk@pulboroughparishcouncil.gov.uk

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE HELD VIRTUALLY USING MICROSOFT TEAMS ON THURSDAY 25TH MARCH 2021

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings (England and Wales) regulations 2020 (“the Regulations”) came into force on 4th April 2020. The Regulations enable local councils to hold remote meetings (including by video and telephone conferencing) for a specified period until 7th May 2021.

PRESENT: Cllrs: Clarke (Chairman), Court, Hare, Henly and Kipp

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs H Knight (Clerk and RFO)
Cllr E Hunt (observing – part of meeting)

The meeting opened at 7.32pm

176. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were noted, and reason approved, from Cllr J Esdaile, who had a prior commitment.

177. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND CHANGES TO REGISTER OF INTERESTS

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

178. MINUTES

The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the Minutes of the online Meeting held on Thursday 25th February 2021 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings, and that the Committee Chairman would sign them.

Clerk's Report

Min.165, Clerk's Report - Covid-19 Grants: The Council had been awarded an additional grant of £2,096 from HDC to cover the extended period of 16th February to 31st March 2021. A total of £19,000 of Business Support had now been received to help alleviate the impact of lost income.

Min. 164, Clerk's Report - Buildings Insurance: The Clerk had liaised with Came & Co, who had now confirmed in writing that the insurer was satisfied with the Council's approach in regular attendance at the pavilion to check its condition, carry out maintenance/service work etc. and that the premises remained fully covered by insurance.

179. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no public speakers.

180. PARISH COUNCIL FINANCES

Members had received bank reconciliations for Cashbook 1 as at 31st January and 28th February 2021 and Cashbook 3 as at 31st January and 28th February 2021. No queries were raised and the Committee Chairman would arrange to compare reconciliations to bank statements, which would be duly signed if no issues identified.

Members had received a summary of Income and Expenditure compared to budget to 18th March 2021. The Clerk clarified some items where expenditure was below or above budget level. Members had also received the latest available report of Ear Marked Reserves.

It was **AGREED** that Cllr Kipp would visit the office at a pre-arranged time to conduct the Q4 internal control inspection to 31st March 2021.

The Clerk reported that there were no creditor invoices over £30 outstanding, other than the arrears already under discussion under separate item for the Social Club.

181. EARMARKED FUNDS

Using the reports circulated under the previous item, Members considered unused budgets and discussed movement of funds for the year end. The Clerk had also emailed the committee recently received details of urgent maintenance / replacement work required to playground equipment following the latest Playground Inspection Report. Costs for Priority 1s were in excess of £20,000.

It had also become apparent that additional maintenance of the Council's mowing machinery, in the region of £4,500, needed to be budgeted for in the next annual service. Additionally, Members were reminded that the Council's tractor was now some 8 years old and thought needed to be given to growing the Ear Marked Reserve for a replacement. Members were asked to consider urgently how this unbudgeted work should be funded.

Following detailed discussion, the following was **RESOLVED**::-

- £8,000 to be transferred from the HDC Business Support Grant balance (code 1078) to the MSF Resurfacing/Playground Equipment EMR;
- £5,000 to be transferred from the Neighbourhood Plan EMR to the MSF Resurfacing/Playground Equipment EMR;
- £2,000 to be transferred from the unspent Grants & Donations balance (code 4091) to the MSF Resurfacing/Playground Equipment EMR.

This would help to build up the MSF Resurfacing/Playground Equipment EMR to offset the replacement equipment costs, combined with any balance remaining in that EMR (currently £13,367.89, some of which was potentially to be used for new MSF facility).

It was **RESOLVED** that after payment of the current service invoice, the unspent Tractors & Equipment balance (code 4393) of £3,951 would be transferred to the New Tractor/Machinery EMR.

182. S106/CIL MONIES

Members noted that the quarterly HDC report was discussed at the previous meeting and no further discussion took place.

183. SPORTS PAVILION DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The Clerk reported that the architect had forwarded the Biodiversity/Environmental Report and the Energy Statement that will accompany the full application, once the remaining two reports were forthcoming. It was **AGREED** that these would be forwarded electronically to all Cllrs for the next appropriate Council meeting.

184. COVID-19 FINANCIAL IMPACTS – TENANT RENT REVIEW REQUEST

Members noted the email from the Sports & Social Club advising of Government grants they had received and others which they intended to apply for. It was noted that the Treasurer had stated the intention to forward cheque payment for the outstanding November and December invoices shortly and to clear all outstanding debts as soon as possible pending obtaining the new Government Restart the Economy grant. Members noted that the Social Club had had a circa 25% annual rent reduction by crediting April-July 2020 invoices.

185. PULBOROUGH CRICKET CLUB LICENCE RENEWAL - 2021-22 RENT REVIEW REQUEST

Due to the following part of this item being commercially sensitive, it was treated as exempt business and not in the public domain. No members of the press or public were present, therefore no resolution to exclude them was taken. However, the detailed content of the resolution made is the subject of a separate, confidential minute. *(SO 3d (confidential) refers).*

185.1 Members had received the request from the club to review the rent invoice for the May 2021 annual period, in light of the impending end of the licence agreement on 31st March 2021 and new agreement to be negotiated. Following discussion it was **RESOLVED** to amend the invoicing for 2021-22 with detailed conditions specified, as set out in a separate Confidential Minute.

185.2 Members noted receipt of the club secretary's update on the club's plans in line with the Sussex Cricket League to start the new season on 8th May, under Covid-19 regulations/conditions. This had also been reported to the last R&OS Committee.

186. PPC OFFICE PHOTOCOPIER – CONTRACT RENEWAL

Members had received the quotation from Ricoh for contract renewal and a replacement photocopier for a further 5 years on expiry of the current contract on 31st May 2021. The Clerk had not had time to obtain other quotations but considered that the consortium arrangement was likely to be good value. The quotation illustrated a likely small saving (subject to daily copy usage) of £4.62 per quarter.

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to approve that the Clerk accept the quotation and sign a new 5 year contract with Ricoh.

187. STAFFING

The Clerk reported that staff appraisals had all now taken place. Some matters arising from these were as follows:

- A small step-ladder needed to be purchased for use by staff in the pavilion to access areas above head height. The expected cost would be in the region of £40.
- It was noted that the Government had now released the new National Living Wage with effect from 1st April 2021, and two members of staff would have their hourly rate adjusted as a result.
- Cllr Clarke had agreed to be the 2nd named key-holder for the tractor shed alarm system, which the Clerk had taken on temporarily recently, the Groundsman being the 1st contact. The Clerk and/or Groundsman would

arrange to meet Cllr Clarke to hand over keys and demonstrate the alarm system activate/deactivate procedure.

188. CORRESPONDENCE

Members received the Correspondence List, as below.

HDC

Letter 24.02.21 to Chairman from Cabinet Member for Finance, Economic Development and Parking: Raising awareness of availability of various tranches of Government grants for businesses to help alleviate financial effects of the pandemic, seeking assistance of parish councils in publicising to local businesses. Grant details can be found at

<https://www.horsham.gov.uk/coronavirus/coronavirus-business-support-grants>

Hymans Robertson

Email 16.03.21 enclosing Lega and General's 2020 Statement of Costs for PPC for Ill Health Liability Insurance (IHLI).

West Sussex Pension Fund

Email 11.02.21 from Hants Pensions Services detailing 2021/22 employee contribution bands.

CCLA

Email 02.03.21 from Client Services outlining potential changes to the Public Sector Deposit Fund should the Bank of England introduce a negative interest rate: CCLA has developed plans to implement Accumulation share classes, in the event of market conditions resulting in low yield or negative yield Fund investments (*copied to C'ttee*).

Email 05.03.21 from Jamie Charters with FAQ regarding negative yields and their impact on the PSDF (Public Sector Deposit Fund) (*copied to C'ttee*).

Daisy Communications

Letter 24.02.21: Price increases of 4.5% after 31.03.21 in the monthly service price.

189. PAYMENTS

Members had received the list of Payments for Authorisation. It was **RESOLVED** to approve these, detailed below, and the payments list and invoices would be signed by the required two signatories at the earliest opportunity.

£	
Therm Energy Ltd (from Sports Pavilion EMR)	792.00
Legal & General	1,289.39
Fire Risk UK	227.98
Arun Mowers	2,119.01
National Westminster Bank	2.10

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

.....Chairman

.....Date