

Minutes of the **FINANCE & HR COMMITTEE** meeting held virtually on **Monday 25 January 2021** at 2:00pm.



Councillors Present:

Cllr K Brooks (Chair)
Cllr A Partridge

Cllr N Stratton (Vice-Chair)

Apologies:

There were none

Also in attendance:

Helen Munro (Clerk)

F20/47. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.** There were none.

F20/48. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.** There were none.

F20/49. **MINUTES.** The minutes from the committee meeting held on 23 November 2020 were duly approved and the Chair would sign a physical copy as an accurate record at the next opportunity.

F20/50. **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.** There were none.

F20/51. **CLERK'S REPORT.** The following report was **noted**:

- a. Fee Estimate for legal costs to register land at the Coppice and Old Coach Road – The solicitors have confirmed that registration was undertaken.
- b. Council Insurance – the 3-year agreement with Came and Company will expire in March 2021. Quotes are being sought and will be presented to Full Council at their March meeting.

F20/52. **OPEN SESSION.** There were no members of the public present.

F20/53. **GOVERNANCE.** The following policies were reviewed, and it was **RESOLVED** that minor amendments would be made as discussed and then be adopted.

- a. Publication Scheme
- b. Investment Strategy
- c. Press Policy
- d. Complaints Policy

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend the following protocol be recommended to Full Council for adoption:

e. Remote Meeting Protocol.

F20/54. **RISK ASSESSMENT.** The Council's risk assessment was reviewed, and minor amendments made. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend the amended Risk Assessment to Full Council for approval.

F20/55. **SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL.** The risk assessment of financial and non-financial internal audit controls was reviewed, and some minor amendments made. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council that the system of Internal Control was effective.

F20/56. **TERMS OF REFERENCE.** The following Terms of Reference for Committees were reviewed, and minor amendments suggested. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend them to Full Council at their Annual Parish Council Meeting in May:

- a. Communications & Events Committee
- b. Finance & HR Committee
- c. Planning & Highways Committee

F20/57. **PAVILION JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE.**

- a. Outstanding business rates bills – an update was received. Exemptions were being investigated and a report would be added to the next Full Council meeting.
- b. TWBC grant application – this would not be progressed until clarification was received on the business rates liability.
- c. Charitable status – it was unclear whether it would be advantageous to apply for charitable status at present. An organisation with charitable aims would also be eligible for exemptions from business rates without the need to be a charity. This would be reconsidered in due course.

F20/58. **FINANCIAL INFORMATION.** Reports to 31 December 2020 were reviewed. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend them to Full Council:

- a. Budget monitoring report.
- b. No vires were required at this time.
- c. Reserves.
- d. Bank reconciliation and bank statements.

It was **RESOLVED** that the layout of the budget monitoring report would be amended to show a forecast to the end of the financial year.

- F20/59. **INVESTMENTS & BANKING.**
- a. The meeting with CCLA on 13 January 2021 and subsequent research was discussed. It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Pearce be asked to give his view on the investment before proceeding any further.
 - b. Consideration of investing in a fixed notice savings account was discussed. It was **RESOLVED** that further advice be sought from the Internal Auditor before proceeding further. This would be added to the next committee meeting agenda.
- F20/60. **VIRTUAL MEETINGS.** The annual subscription to Zoom would expire on 23 April 2021. After discussion about whether to use Zoom or Microsoft Teams in future, it was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council trial the use of Teams before deciding on the best course of action.
- F20/61. **STANDARD EVENT REQUEST PROCESS.** The process for third parties to request the use of Council land to hold their events was considered. Suggested forms were circulated prior to the meeting and discussed. After minor amendments were agreed, it was **RESOLVED** that they be recommended to Full Council for approval.
- F20/62. **SEASONAL GROUNDSMAN.** Proposed terms and conditions were considered, and it was **RESOLVED** that the terms be approved. The Clerk would prepare the necessary paperwork.
- F20/63. **RISKS.** The risk of the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks agreeing to a pay freeze was not yet known. The 2021-22 budget did not include any increase. It was **RESOLVED** that if any deficit occurred, it should be funded from general reserves.
- F20/64. **QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS OR AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS.** There was none.
- F20/65. **NEXT MEETING DATE.** 26 April 2021. The time of the meeting is to be agreed by email.

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 the public and press were excluded from the meeting for the next items of business on the grounds that it will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information at 15:44.

- F20/66. **SALARY INCREASES.** The salary increases for 2021/22, in line with the NALC/SLCC pay scales were discussed. It was **RESOLVED** to make a recommendation to Full Council.

F20/67. **HOMEWORKING ALLOWANCE.** Details of the allowance for office staff working from home due to the Covid-19 restrictions was reported.

The Clerk left the meeting at 15:54.

Payment of an allowance was discussed and would be added to the Full Council agenda for discussion at the next meeting.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 16:08.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Chair