

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Members of the **FINANCE & HR COMMITTEE** held on **Monday 19 July 2021** at 2:00pm. All decisions are made under the temporary delegated authority of the Clerk.



**Councillors Present:**

Cllr N Stratton (Chair)  
Cllr A Partridge

Cllr K Brooks (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr J Pearce

**Apologies:**

There were none

**Also in attendance:**

Helen Munro (Clerk)

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.** There were none.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.** There were none.
3. **MINUTES.** The minutes from the committee meeting held on 26 April 2021 were noted and would be approved at the next formal committee meeting.

*Cllr Pearce entered the meeting at 14:04*

4. **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.** The Chair welcomed Cllr Pearce to the Committee.
5. **CLERK'S REPORT.** The following report was **noted:**
  - a. Pavilion Joint Management Committee – The Joint Management Committee have agreed to progress with becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and this recommendation has been approved by both the Parish Council and Pembury Youth Athletic Football Club. The forthcoming AGM minutes and accounts would be presented at the next Full Council meeting.
  - b. AGAR 2020-21 – The AGAR was approved at a Full Council meeting on 28 June 2021 and has now been submitted to the External Auditor for their review.
6. **OPEN SESSION.** There were no members of the public present.
7. **GOVERNANCE.** The following policies were reviewed, and minor amendments agreed.

- a. Safeguarding policy. It was also agreed to highlight key items of the policy prior to all Councillors at the next Full Council meeting. Key Councillors and staff would also be invited to attend online training.
  - b. Removable media policy.
  - c. Retention and Disposal policy.
  - d. Tree Management Policy. A further review of the policy would include management of hedgerows.
  - e. Beekeeping policy. The new application form would be added to the policy.
8. **HARDSHIP FUND.** It was reported that the funding could be used for general hardship within the village but there were no specific conditions restricting its use. The Community Larder did not currently require additional funding.

The Baptist Church had applied to the Parish Council for a share of the Community Grant for a fridge for a new Community Café. As the Community Grant had been oversubscribed, it was agreed to make a recommendation to Full Council that some of the hardship fund be used to fund the fridge as the project complied with the funding requirements. Additionally, a recommendation would be made to Full Council to contribute to Christmas hampers and gas and electricity costs to 60-70 residents in need. The total recommended donation from the Hardship Fund would be £1,200.

Due to the timing of the opening of the Community Café project it was agreed that the Clerk would email all councillors about the proposal for ratification at the September Full Council meeting.

9. **COMMUNITY GRANTS.** The applications received were discussed. One of the applicants had not provided all of the information required and the recommended funding would be dependent on this being received before a decision is made at the next Full Council meeting.
10. **RECOMMENDATION FROM PLANNING & HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE MEMBERS.** The request from the Planning & Highways Committee to allocate funds for speed surveys was discussed. It was agreed that a vire from the Christmas Lights budget for £1,000 be ratified by Full Council. Full Council would also be asked to suggest suitable locations for the speed surveys.
11. **ELECTRIC CHARGING POINTS.** A verbal report was noted. It was agreed that currently there was no Parish Council owned land suitable.

This would be reconsidered if additional parking was provided in the village in future.

12. **FINANCIAL INFORMATION.** Reports to 30 June 2021 were reviewed. It was agreed that they be recommended to Full Council:
  - a. Budget monitoring report.
  - b. Bank reconciliation and bank statements.
  - c. Reserves.
  
13. **INVESTMENTS & BANKING.**
  - a. After discussion, it was agreed that a long-term investment of an initial balance of £25,000 would be investigated.
  - b. The use of financial advisors was considered. It was agreed that 2 advisors be approached to discuss the option available.
  
14. **INTERNAL AUDIT 2021/22.** The re-appointment of David Buckett as Internal Auditor for 2021/22 was agreed.
  
15. **COUNCIL MEETING DOCUMENTS.** For consideration and recommendation to Full Council.
  - a. After discussion it was agreed that paper copies of meeting packs be kept to a minimum.
  - b. The office should continue to share separate pdf documents. This should be consistent across all committees. It was agreed that documents should be displayed at the meeting using the projector.
  
16. **OFFICE OPENING.** Concerns regarding the proposed office working arrangements were discussed. It was agreed that the trial be postponed pending discussion at the September Full Council meeting. A 3-month trial period would be recommended.

*Cllr Pearce left the meeting at 15:44.*
  
17. **RISKS.** There were none.
  
18. **QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS OR AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS.** There was none.
  
19. **NEXT MEETING DATE.** 22 November 2021 – 4pm in the Parish Office meeting room.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 15:46.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair