

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY 7 JANUARY 2021**.

The meeting began at 19.00 hours.

Parish Councillors:	Mr. S. Henton (Chairman)	Mr. M. Leach
	Mr. W. Blunden	Mr. R. Pickett
	Mrs. L. Grace	Mrs. V. Upton*
	Mrs. M. Hersey	

(*) Denotes absence

In attendance:	Mr. A. Funnell (Parish Clerk)
	Mrs T. Ely (RFO)

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed those present.

221. TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.

221.1 An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs. V. Upton and their reason accepted.

222. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF ANY ITEM ON THE AGENDA.

222.1 There were no declarations of interest from members in respect of any items on the Agenda.

223. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

223.1 There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

224. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 10 DECEMBER 2020.

224.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Thursday, 10 December 2020.

These were **AGREED** and the Chairman will **SIGN** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting as soon as it is possible to do so in a safe manner.

225. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

225.1 The Chairman wished everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year.

226. ACTION LIST.

226.1 The Chairman referred to the Action List, which had been circulated with the Agenda and this was **NOTED**.

227. GRANTS AND DONATIONS.

227.1 i) To Note Available Funds and Any Issues Relating to Issued Grants. It was **NOTED** that funds of £1,005.00 were available to spend. This balance could reduce to £505.00 allowing for the council's commitment towards potential monies being donated to the HHTC Emergency Food Bank.

The Chairman referred to a letter that had been received from Lindfield Bonfire Society Limited dated 15 December 2020. Gratitude had been expressed towards the Council grant that had been awarded in support of their fundraising Bonfire Night event that was due to take place on 5 November 2020. The event had to be cancelled in view of COVID-19 restrictions, which had resulted in a fundraising shortfall and operating costs still needing to be met such as insurance. A request had been received to retain the grant. After having given the matter full consideration it was **AGREED** that Lindfield Bonfire Society Limited should retain the grant as a contribution towards insurance costs.

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

ii) To consider Grant requests.

Councillor Blunden reported on behalf of the Grants Panel and advised that no grant requests had been received.

iii) Letters of Thanks Received.

No letters of thanks had been received.

228. BUDGET 2020/21.

228.1 A Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading Report and Expenditure from Earmarked Reserves Report to 30 November 2020 had been circulated by the RFO prior to the meeting. Budget progress was **NOTED** as follows:

i) Finance and General Purposes Committee: a total of £94,189 had been spent from the budget of £161,500.

ii) Overall Council Budget 2020/21: a total of £119,176 had been spent from the budget of £218,700 of which £18,661 had been spent from the Environment and Amenities Committee's budget of £50,200. £1,007 had been spent from the Allotments budget of £2,500. There had been expenditure of £1,500 from the Planning & Traffic Committee budget of £4,500. A total of £1,199.75 had been spent from Earmarked Reserves in relation to maintenance of the Wilderness Field from Section 106 Monies.

iii) General Reserve Expenditure: a total of £3,819 had been spent from General Reserves. £500 being COVID support towards the Haywards Heath Food Bank charity and £3,319 for replacement of air conditioning units on the first floor of Clock Tower House.

iv) To Approve the Use of the Debit Card or Any Other Miscellaneous Expenditure: there were no items of expenditure requiring approval to be paid by Debit Card.

228.2 It was **NOTED** that payments totalling £15,067 had been made from the Barclays Bank Current Account between 1 and 30 November 2020.

228.3 It was **NOTED** that the total bank cash and investment reconciliation to 30 November 2020 was £266,287.96 represented by:

	£
Barclays Bank Business Current Account	15,003.82
Barclays Bank Business Premium Account	158,123.81
Nationwide Building Society	93,000.03
Petty Cash	160.30

229. BUDGET 2021/2022: TO NOTE FINAL APPROVAL OF BUDGET WILL BE SUBMITTED TO FULL COUNCIL ON 14 JANUARY 2021.

229.1 The Chairman advised members that the proposed Budgets for each committee had remained unchanged since the last Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held 10 December 2020. The overall budget calculations and precept calculation had remained the same. It had been calculated that a shortfall of £181,641.48 would need to be financed by precept as follows:

Anticipated Funds in Hand as at 31 March 2021:

	£	£
Cash Book balance brought forward as at 1 April 2020	211,613.37	
Add anticipated receipts to 31 March 2021	<u>192,903.00</u>	404,516.37
Less anticipated payments to 31 March 2021:		
Budget total as at 31 March 2021	198,324.92	
General and Designated Reserves	<u>9,780.00</u>	<u>208,104.92</u>
		<u>196,411.45</u>

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Shortfall to be financed by Precept:

Anticipated funds in hand as 31 March 2021	194,411.45	
Add Budgeted income for 2021/22	<u>11,807.00</u>	208,218.45
Less anticipated expenditure to 31 March 2022	226,300.00	
Including cash required to support Budget Reserves	<u>163,559.93</u>	389,859.93

	£
Shortfall to be financed by precept: Expenditure	389,859.93
Less Income	<u>-208,218.45</u>
	<u>181,641.48</u>

Members were mindful that in lowering the precept request to £172,000 this would give rise to a deficit of £9,641.48. It was recognised that not all projects were likely to be fully completed for reasons beyond the Council's control and consideration had been given towards concern of the potential financial impact that may be caused to members of the public by the COVID-19 pandemic.

A comparison of the 2020/21 and 2021/22 Tax Base and Band D calculation in relation to a precept of £172,000 had previously been reported demonstrating a potential reduction to Band D tax payers of -0.42%.

The above was **NOTED** and it was **AGREED** that a precept of £172,000 would support the proposed Budget of £226,300 for 2021/2022.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Blunden, **SECONDED** by Councillor Pickett and unanimously **AGREED** that a Budget of £226,300 as recommended at the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 7 January 2021, and a precept of £172,000 should be recommended to Full Council for approval.

- 229.2 It was **NOTED** that plans to mark Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee would be taking place in 2022. A four-day Bank Holiday weekend would celebrate the Queen's 70 year reign commencing Thursday 2 June. Lindfield Parish Council would welcome the opportunity to consider contributing towards the cost of a local public event to mark the occasion and additional expenditure in support of this would need to be allowed for in 2021/2022.

Expenditure in support of Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee would be considered when a review of unspent balances is carried out at year end.

230. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS.

- 230.1 The RFO reported that a request to change the bank mandate to add Councillor Grace as an authorised signatory and to remove Councillor Plass as an authorised signature was progressing. Councillor Pickett was in the process of contacting Barclays Bank to obtain online access.

The above was **NOTED**.

231. CLOCK TOWER HOUSE: EXPENDITURE (AIR CONDITIONING MAINTENANCE AND TOILET).

- 231.1 Air Conditioning Maintenance Annual Charges.

The Chairman referred to a report that had been circulated with the Agenda. The Clerk had invited members to consider a quote that had been obtained to provide an annual maintenance service in respect of 1 x Panasonic Wall Mounted unit in the main office, 2 x Panasonic Wall Mounted units in the first floor office and 1 x AC System on the first floor. This would include two visits per annum for a fixed fee of £676.51 plus VAT for year one. It is anticipated that a proportion of the fee may be recoverable under the terms of the Clock Tower House Service Agreement.

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

The above was **NOTED** and after consideration it was **AGREED** to proceed with the quote provided for an annual maintenance service of air conditioning units, one in the main office and two in the first floor office, including the AC System on the first floor, for a fixed fee of £676.51 plus VAT for year one.

231.2 First Floor Toilet Renovation: First Floor W.C and Flooring.

The report had also provided an estimate to renovate the first floor W.C, which had included replacing the existing W.C, basin, worktop, wall tiles, room heater and hot water heater. The existing light would be replaced with an LED light and the walls prepared and repainted as required. The supply of labour and materials would cost £3,526.00 plus VAT.

An additional quote to provide and fit Multipanel Click Flooring in Classic Finish had been provided totalling £561.00 plus VAT.

Agreement to carry out these works by the supplier had previously been approved by the Finance & General Purposes Committee. The Clerk was now requesting approval to accept quotes for the cost of the work.

The above was **NOTED** and it was **AGREED** to proceed with renovation of the first floor W.C as detailed in the report at a cost of £3,526.00 plus VAT. It was further **AGREED** to accept the quote to provide and fit Multipanel Click Flooring in Classic Finish totalling £561.00 plus VAT.

232. **WEST SUSSEX ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCIL'S VALUE FOR MONEY REVIEW OF SURREY & SUSSEX ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS: UPDATE AND TO CONSIDER ANY MATTER RELEVANT TO THE COUNCIL'S POSITION.**

232.1 It was reported by the Clerk that the WSALC AGM that was due to take place in December had been cancelled following receipt of legal advice. No further information had subsequently been shared. It had been proposed that a letter expressing dissatisfaction of the current position be forwarded to **NALC**.

The above was **NOTED** and it was **AGREED** that the Clerk would write to NALC expressing dissatisfaction regarding the current position relating to WSALC.

233. **CLERK AND RFO REPORT.**

233.1 Clerk's Report.

The Clerk reported that a fire equipment service had been undertaken 4 January 2021. One fire extinguisher had been replaced having reached its expiry date.

The above was **NOTED**.

233.2 RFO's Report.

The RFO advised members that a review of the effectiveness of the internal control system and internal audit control procedures for the current financial year was underway. This was required in preparation to complete the AGAR 2020/2021.

The above was **NOTED**.

234. **TOILETS ON LINDFIELD COMMON: UPDATE AND TO CONFIRM EXPENDITURE.**

234.1 The Chairman referred to a report that had been circulated with the Agenda. The draft heads of terms from Mid Sussex District Council had been received and had been considered by the toilets on the common working group. The stages for permission and application for funding for the proposed facilities were outlined. To apply for S38 Commons Act Consent members had been asked to consider and approve funding towards application legal fees of £1,000 and application publicity fees of £2,000. In support of an application for s.106 funding an update of building costs would also need to be obtained from the Quantity Surveyer for which estimated expenditure of up to £1,000 would be incurred.

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

The above was **NOTED** and the following expenditure **AGREED**:

Application legal fees £1,000
Application publicity fees £2,000
Review of building costs of up to £1,000

235. LINDFIELD PARISH DIRECTORY AND YEARBOOK 2021 EDITION: UPDATE.

- 235.1 It was reported by the Clerk that supply of the printed Directories had been received mid December and were now in the process of being delivered to residents upon request. Concern had been raised over the number of enquiries that had been received from residents of Lindfield Rural Parish Council, who had withdrawn their support for this initiative.

The above was **NOTED**.

236. TO CONFIRM ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING AND CONFERENCE EVENTS.

- 236.1 The Clerk confirmed attendance at the following training and conference events:

26 January 2021- SLCC Webinar (Dealing with Challenging People & Situations)
8 February 2021 - SSALC Clerks Virtual Networking
23-25 February 2021 - SLCC Practitioner's Virtual Course

A joint fire training session had been arranged to take place with Cuckfield Parish Council on 5 February 2021.

The above was **NOTED**.

- 236.2 It was **NOTED** that Councillor Grace had expressed interest in attending a SSALC course on GDPR.

237. RISK MANAGEMENT.

- 237.1 It was **NOTED** that there were no outstanding items.

238. MATTERS ARISING AFTER THE PREPARATION OF THIS AGENDA, WHICH THE CHAIRMAN AGREES TO TAKE AS URGENT. SUCH MATTERS WILL BE FOR NOTING OR DEFERRAL TO A FUTURE MEETING ONLY.

- 238.1 There were no matters arising.

The meeting concluded at 19.29 hours.

