

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY 5 MAY 2022** at King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting began at 20.00 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.

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

340.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mr. M. Leach and their reason was accepted.

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

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

342. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

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

343. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 31 MARCH 2022.

343.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Thursday, 31 March 2022.

These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

344. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

344.1 The Chairman made no announcements.

345. ACTION LIST.

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

346. GRANTS AND DONATIONS.

346.1 i) To Note Available Funds. It was **NOTED** that £500 had been spent from a budget of £2,500.

ii) To Consider Grant Requests Received. Councillor Blunden reported on behalf of the Grants Panel and advised that no grant requests had been received.

iii) To Note Letters of Thanks Received. It was **NOTED** that an email of thanks had been received from the Lindfield Bonfire Society Limited.

347. BUDGET 2021/22: TO NOTE BUDGET PROGRESS REPORTS TO 31 MARCH 2022 (PRIOR TO YEAR-END ADJUSTMENTS).

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347.1 A detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading Report and Expenditure from Earmarked Reserves Report to 31 March 2022 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 £125,807 had been spent from the budget of £163,900.
- ii) Overall Council Budget. a total of £171,151 had been spent from the budget of £226,300 of which £33,295 had been spent from the Environment and Amenities Committee's budget of £49,400. £1,648 had been spent from the Allotments budget of £2,500. There had been expenditure of £3,375 from the Planning & Traffic Committee budget of £10,500. A total of £6,438 had been spent from Earmarked Reserves.
- iii) General Reserve Expenditure. a total of £7,027 had been spent from General Reserves.

348. FINANCIAL MONITORING: TO NOTE THE ACCOUNT RECORDS TO 31 MARCH 2022 (PRIOR TO YEAR-END ADJUSTMENTS).

348.1 i) Cash and Investment Reconciliation and To Note Deposits and Investment Held.
It was **NOTED** that the total bank cash and investment reconciliation to 31 March 2022 was £206,319.72 represented by:

	£	
Barclays Bank Business Current Account	15,000.00	
Barclays Bank Business Premium Account	98,201.48	
Nationwide Building Society	93,000.03	
Petty Cash	114.26	223,531.87
Receipts Not on Bank Statement	3.95	<u>3.95</u>
		206,319.72

ii) Payment Analysis.

It was **NOTED** that payments totalling £18,730.53 incl VAT had been made from the Barclays Bank Current Account between 1 and 31 March 2022.

349. ARRANGEMENTS FOR YEAR-END ADJUSTMENTS 2021/22.

349.1 The Chairman referred to a report that had been prepared by the RFO in conjunction with the Clerk, which had been circulated with the Agenda. Members had been asked to consider and confirm arrangements to identify and calculate year-end adjustments when completing the AGAR. A level of materiality for adjustments was required to be agreed in accordance with the NALC Practitioners Guide to Accountability & Governance for Local Councils.

Year-end adjustments had previously been made ensuring that regular annual payments including the insurance renewal premium had been included for each financial year. The RFO had explored what the accumulative impact might be year to year if more detailed adjustments were made.

Members **NOTED** the report and **AGREED** option one. To present accounts for 2021/22 with minimal year-end adjustments on the same basis as per 2020/21. Further consideration would be given towards presenting future accounts with more detailed adjustments with perhaps a limit of £100 per transaction. Materiality of the overall annual impact year to year would be further explored.

350. ASSET REGISTER: TO CONSIDER INCREASING THE VALUE OF RECORDED ASSETS FROM £50 to £100.

350.1 Members were advised that assets were currently being recorded in the Asset Register with a minimum value of £50 net of VAT. The Clerk had asked members to consider increasing the value of recorded assets to £100 net of VAT.

On further consideration it was **AGREED** to increase the value of recorded assets from £50 to £100 net of VAT.

351. TO CONSIDER REQUEST TO JOIN CENTRAL SUSSEX ROTARY'S COUNCILLORS FORUM.

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- 351.1 The Chairman referred to a letter that had been received from the president of Central Sussex Rotary dated 19 April 2022. A member of Lindfield Parish Council had been invited to become an honorary member through their newly established 'Councillors Forum' as one of the council's 'Representatives on Outside Bodies'. The committee supported the idea of the Councillors Forum but at present no members were able to commit to attending.

After full consideration, it was **AGREED** that the Clerk would write confirming support towards the work of Central Sussex Rotary but with regret, there were currently no members able to accept their invitation due to the existing workload. The Central Sussex Rotary would be invited to contact the Council again in 2023 after the local elections to see if the position had changed.

352. OFFICE PRINTER: TO AGREE ON ARRANGEMENTS FOR PROCUREMENT.

- 352.1 The Clerk advised members that the three-year lease agreement was due to expire at the end of September 2022. No problems had been experienced with the existing model. Printing requirements of the office had remained stable and it was anticipated there would be no significant change in the volume of printing. Consideration would need to be taken into account if a new model were to be explored given the restricted access to the office via the internal corridor.

The above was **NOTED**, and it was **AGREED** to delegate authority to the Clerk, in conjunction with the Chairman and Committee Chairman, to review renewal of the lease agreement.

353. BROADBAND CONTRACT: TO RATIFY CONTRACT AGREED BY CLERK IN CONJUNCTION WITH COMMITTEE CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR.

- 353.1 The Clerk reported that the existing contract had expired, and discussions had taken place with the current supplier to consider a new contract. In conjunction with the Committee Chair and Vice-chair, a new five-year contract had been agreed. In return for an annual cost of £599.40, compared to the previous cost of £637.44, advantage would be gained of the improved upload speed.

It was **AGREED** to ratify the contract that had been agreed by the Clerk in conjunction with the Committee Chair and Vice-Chair.

354. PROPOSED PUBLIC TOILETS ON THE COMMON: UPDATE.

- 354.1 The Clerk reported that the Planning Inspectorate had notified the Council's solicitor that they were now in receipt of all necessary documentation required to consider the S38 Application. Members were advised that whilst planning permission had expired, measures were in hand to submit a Planning Renewal application.

The above was **NOTED**.

355. PENSIONS DISCRETIONS POLICY REVIEW: TO CONFIRM ARRANGEMENTS.

- 355.1 The Chairman reported that it was a requirement for scheme employers to review their Discretions Policy annually and to notify the administrators of the pension scheme that this had been completed.

The above was **NOTED**, and it was **AGREED** to give delegated authority to the Clerk in conjunction with the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee to review the Discretions Policy. This would be subject to any amendments that were considered necessary being referred to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

356. CLERK AND RFO REPORTS.

- 356.1 Clerk's Report.

The Clerk advised as follows:

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- a. The three-year Mapping Software contract had expired in February. A discount would be received but not as generous compared to previous years. SSALC were no longer able to subsidise this product due to the structure and relationship with West Sussex ALC Ltd.

The above was **NOTED**.

356.2 RFO's Report.

The RFO advised as follows:

- a. A meeting had been arranged with the Internal Auditor on 23 May 2022 to assist with the year-end internal audit.
- b. The nominal code 4530 which related to the budget heading Village Orderly Equipment, would be renamed Village Orderly Equipment/Expenses. To include new items of expenditure relating to travel and mobile phone expenses. Expenses of this nature had not been incurred in 2021-2022 and would not therefore impact on financial reporting.

The above was **NOTED**.

357. **POLICY DOCUMENTS: TO CONSIDER ANY NEW OR UPDATED POLICIES.**

- 357.1 The Clerk referred to the copy draft Noticeboard Policy that had been circulated with the Agenda. The Council had received an increasing number of requests from commercial organisations and groups to display and print posters, many of whom were located outside the parish boundary. The current budget had not allowed for this class of expenditure. Members fully supported use of the noticeboard for the benefit of the local community.

The above was **NOTED**, and it was **AGREED** to adopt the Noticeboard Policy as presented.

358. **RISK MANAGEMENT: TO CONSIDER THE REPORT AND ANY RISK ASSESSMENTS.**

- 358.1 The Chairman referred to a report that had been prepared by the Clerk and circulated with the Agenda. Members had been asked to approve the draft Risk Management Policy Statement as presented in appendix one. Appendix two referenced Section 17 of the Council's current Financial Regulations and had included a copy of the Risk Register. A query had been raised regarding the definition of risk management and the impact on physical and financial harm to third parties.

The above was **NOTED**, and it was **AGREED** that further consideration would be given towards including reference to third party risks.

359. **TO CONFIRM ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING/CONFERENCE EVENTS AND RECEIVE ANY ATTENDANCE REPORTS.**

- 359.1 The Clerk advised that he would be seeking to attend a First Aid Course.

360. **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.**

- 360.1 There were no matters arising.

The meeting concluded at 20.40 hours.