

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY 31 MARCH 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.

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

318.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. L. Grace, Mrs. M. Hersey and Mrs. V. Upton and their reasons were accepted.

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

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

320. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

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

321. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 16 DECEMBER 2021.

321.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Thursday, 16 December 2021.

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

322. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

322.1 The Chairman made no announcements.

323. ACTION LIST.

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

324. GRANTS AND DONATIONS.

324.1 i) To Note Available Funds. It was **NOTED** that £1,500 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 confirmed that consideration had been given towards the following grant request:

a) Lindfield Bonfire Society Ltd.

A letter of request had been received from Lindfield Bonfire Society Limited dated 17 February 2022 seeking a grant of £500.00 towards the cost of providing medical services in support of the annual Lindfield village Bonfire Night celebration. The aim was for the event to be held in 2022 and they had been working with local authorities and services in planning this. It had been identified that there was a need to increase the numbers of marshals and security personnel, resulting in increased costs. They were a limited company for insurance purposes but were

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run as a non-profit making organisation with all members being volunteers. Council members were mindful that the event was offered free of charge to the public and that it was considered to be a significant annual village event. It had been recommended that a grant of £500.00 be considered.

RESOLVED: to award a grant of £500.00 to the Lindfield Bonfire Society Limited under the powers granted by Section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972 to contribute towards expenses related to the Bonfire Night celebration.

It was **AGREED** that this grant would be monitored in accordance with the Council's Grants and Donations Policy.

It was **FURTHER AGREED** that this grant would be met from the 2022-2023 Budget.

iii) To Note Letters of Thanks Received. It was **NOTED** that no letters of thanks had been received.

325. BUDGET 2021/22: TO NOTE BUDGET PROGRESS REPORTS TO 28 FEBRUARY 2022.

325.1 A detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading Report and Expenditure from Earmarked Reserves Report to 28 February 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 £110,516 had been spent from the budget of £163,900.

ii) Overall Council Budget. a total of £154,067 had been spent from the budget of £226,300 of which £31,551 had been spent from the Environment and Amenities Committee's budget of £49,400. £1,619 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 £5,738 had been spent from Earmarked Reserves.

iii) General Reserve Expenditure. a total of £7,007 had been spent from General Reserves.

326. FINANCIAL MONITORING: TO NOTE THE ACCOUNT RECORDS TO 28 FEBRUARY 2022.

326.1 i) Cash and Investment Reconciliation and To Note Deposits and Investment Held.

It was **NOTED** that the total bank cash and investment reconciliation to 28 February 2022 was £223,535.44 represented by:

	£	
Barclays Bank Business Current Account	14,888.10	
Barclays Bank Business Premium Account	115,529.48	
Nationwide Building Society	93,000.03	
Petty Cash	114.26	223,531.87
Receipts Not on Bank Statement	3.57	<u>3.57</u>
		223,535.44

ii) Payment Analysis.

It was **NOTED** that payments totalling £11,905.76 net of VAT had been made from the Barclays Bank Current Account between 1 and 28 February 2022.

327. DIRECT DEBITS: TO NOTE NEW DIRECT DEBITS AND AMENDMENTS.

327.1 The Chairman referred to a report that had been circulated with the Agenda dated 24 March 2022. Members had been asked to note new agreements and changes to existing direct debit mandates.

Members **NOTED** the new agreements and changes to existing direct debit mandates as confirmed in the report.

328. VAT REFUND: TO NOTE REFUND OF £4,516.45 FOR THE PERIOD OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2021.

328.1 It was **NOTED** that a claim for VAT refund of £4,516.45 had been received on 9 February 2022.

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329. ANNUAL REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL AUDIT AND INTERNAL CONTROLS 2021/22.

- 329.1 Councillor R. Pickett had kindly offered to undertake an annual review of the effectiveness of the internal audit and of the internal control system for the financial year 2021-2022. Copies of his reports dated 21 February 2022 had been circulated with the Agenda. It had been concluded that the Council had in place effective risk management, and that control and governance processes were in place taking into account public sector auditing standards. In addition it had been concluded that there was an adequate and effective system of internal control in place.

Members **NOTED** the two reports.

330. PROPOSED PUBLIC TOILETS ON THE COMMON: UPDATE.

- 330.1 The Clerk reported that the S38 Application had been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate and correspondence had subsequently been received from the solicitor. The Open Spaces Society had raised a query regarding the requirement to submit a S38 Application. In addition it had asked if the Council would agree to include a condition that the application be restricted to provide public toilets only.

The above was **NOTED**.

331. WELCOME BACK FUND: UPDATE.

- 331.1 A meeting had taken place whilst the Clerk had been on holiday leave. A survey had been carried out and a recommendation was currently awaited from the Deputy Clerk.

The above was **NOTED**.

332. ASSET REGISTER: DISPOSAL OF ASSET (S).

- 332.1 Members had been asked to approve disposal of the old laptop. This had been purchased in June 2017 and had now been replaced. Whilst still working it was surplus to requirements.

It was **AGREED** to wipe the laptop and to offer it to a charity or community interest company for reuse. The asset register would be updated accordingly.

333. ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE: TO RATIFY 3 YEAR YEAR END LOYALTY SCHEME CONTRACT.

- 333.1 Members had been presented with a copy of the 2022 Year End Loyalty Scheme three year contract that had been offered by Rialtas Business Solutions (RBS) in October 2021. This provided a year end service, support and maintenance contract for Rialtas accounts commencing 2022, which included a 7% discount off of the published fee for 2022. Preferential access to year end closedown dates would be offered as well as there being discounts for future years if membership of the loyalty scheme was extended. This offer was available for a limited period of time and approval to accept the offer had been agreed by the Clerk and RFO in conjunction with the Chairman of F&GP, accordingly members were now being asked to ratify the contract.

It was **AGREED** to **RATIFY** the RBS 2022 Year End Loyalty Scheme three year contract.

334. CLERK AND RFO REPORTS.

- 334.1 Clerk's Report.

The RFO advised as follows:

- a. The air conditioning units had been serviced in November 2021. Batteries were required to be replaced in the handset used on the first floor of CTH.
- b. The six monthly fire alarm service had been carried out in February 2022.

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- c. An annual service of the intruder alarm had been carried out on 3 March 2022. One emergency light fitting had failed and arrangements were in hand to replace this.
- d. The existing telephone system was currently being reviewed by the Clerk and Deputy Clerk and a report would be shared in due course.

The above was **NOTED**.

334.2 RFO's Report.

The RFO advised as follows:

- a. Notification had been received from the external auditor that Lindfield Parish Council was required to submit the AGAR for 2021/2022 by 30 June 2022.
- b. RBS would carry out the year end closedown of accounts for 2021/2022 on 9 May 2022.
- c. The internal auditor had been contacted to agree to a date on which to complete the internal audit for 2021/2022.

The above was **NOTED**.

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

- 335.1 The Clerk reported that an F&GP policy was currently being considered and further details would be presented in due course.

The above was **NOTED**.

336. **RISK MANAGEMENT: TO CONSIDER REPORT.**

- 336.1 The Chairman referred to a report that had been prepared by the Clerk and circulated with the Agenda, reminding members that the Council had agreed to the following in March 2021:

1. To hold a suite of risk assessments in respect of all of its activities in accordance with Financial Regulations (s17).
2. An update of progress on the annual review for each risk assessment policy would be reported quarterly (or nearest meeting thereto) to F&GP.
3. A policy would be drafted to provide guidelines as to the appropriate approach to risk management policy statements and the underlying risk assessment required.

Two new risk assessments had since been undertaken relating to the Wilderness Field and Covid/Clock Tower House. The Spring Clean risk assessment had been expanded to include the Autumn Clean event and the two separate risk assessments for the Denmans Lane allotments had been merged into one document.

Members were asked to confirm that the Council had a suite of risk assessments in place incorporating all of its activities in accordance with Financial Regulations (s17) for the current financial year. In addition they were asked to confirm agreement to existing risk management procedures.

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

- a. That the Council has a suite of risk assessments in respect of all of its activities in accordance with its Financial Regulations (s17).
- b. The Council confirms its agreement to existing risk management procedures.

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337. TO CONFIRM ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING / CONFERENCE EVENTS, AND RECEIVE ANY ATTENDANCE REPORTS.

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

Clerk	23 March 2022 - SLCC Climate Change Summit
Clerk & Cllr. C. Wood	29 March 2022 - Local Councils Network Climate Change
Cllr. L. Grace	29 March 2022 - MSVA Wellbeing & Training Session
Cllr. L. Grace	30 March 2022 - Charity Commission & SAFE by CST Safe Society Seminar
Cllr V. Upton	31 March 2022 - Well Being Course

338. 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.

338.1 There were no matters arising.

The public part of the meeting ended at 20.30 hours.

339. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [AND PRESS]: TO CONSIDER WHETHER A RESOLUTION SHOULD BE MOVED UNDER STANDING ORDER NO. 3(D) AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PUBLIC BODIES ADMISSION TO MEETINGS ACT 1960 SECTION 1(2), TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC AND PRESS FROM THE FOLLOWING PART OF THE MEETING, BY REASON OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED OR FOR OTHER SPECIAL REASONS (STAFFING MATTERS).

339.1 Members considered a confidential report relating to bank staff and staff salaries and **AGREED** to the report recommendations.

The meeting concluded at 20.33 hours.