

## LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY 05 SEPTEMBER 2019** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting began at 20.00 hours.

<b>Parish Councillors:</b>	Mr. S. Henton (Chairman)	Mr. M. Leach (*)
	Mr. W. Blunden	Mr. R. Pickett
	Mrs. L. Grace	Mrs. V. Upton
	Mrs. M. Hearsey	

(\*) Denotes absence

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

The Chairman opened the meeting, welcomed those present, and announced the emergency procedure for the King Edward Hall.

### **42. TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.**

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

### **43. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF ANY ITEM ON THE AGENDA.**

43.1 Item 7. iii): To Note Letters and Emails of Thanks Received. Councillor Upton declared a personal interest in this item in view of their membership with this organisation.

### **44. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.**

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

### **45. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 4 JULY 2019.**

45.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Thursday 4 July 2019. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

### **46. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

46.1 The Chairman made no announcements.

### **47. ACTION LIST.**

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

### **48. GRANTS AND DONATIONS.**

48.1 i) Grants budget. It was **NOTED** that £1,700 had been spent from a budget of £2,800.

ii) To consider Grant requests.

Councillor Upton reported on behalf of the Grants Panel and consideration had been given towards the following grant request:

a. Victim Support (Sussex Area).

Victim Support (Sussex Area) were a registered charity and had submitted an application for a grant of £100 dated 30 July 2019. This would contribute towards the cost of recruiting, training and supervision of volunteers,

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who provided emotional and practical support, and facilities to victims and witnesses of crime in the Sussex area. It would cost approximately £700 per volunteer for one year.

**RESOLVED:** that in accordance with the recommendation of the Grants Panel and the Council's powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, the following expenditure should be incurred which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the area or its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure: a grant of £100 be made towards the work of Victim Support (Sussex Area).

iii) Letters of Thanks Received. Councillor Upton having declared a personal interest in this item, as stated in Minute 43.1, remained present. It was **NOTED** that a letter of thanks had been received from the Lindfield Branch of Royal British Legion.

iv) To Confirm Donation for Remembrance Sunday Wreath (Chairman's Fund). It was **AGREED** to make a donation of £75.00, and that this would be met from the Chairman's Fund.

### 49. BUDGET 2019/20

49.1 The budget progress reports to 31 July 2019 were **NOTED**:

i) Finance and General Purposes Committee: a total of £55,121.69 had been spent from the budget of £158,400.

ii) Analysis of Administration Budget: a total of £49,308.30 had been spent from the budget of £140,500.

iii) Overall Council Budget 2019/20: a total of £67,116.17 had been spent from the budget of £238,000 of which £11,994.48 had been spent from the Environment and Amenities Committee's budget of £79,400. There had been no expenditure from the Planning & Traffic Committee budget of £200. A total of £667.86 had been spent from Designated Reserves.

iv) General Reserve Expenditure: a total of £3,502.00 had been spent from General Reserve

v) To authorise use of the Debit Card for Expenditure: there were no items of expenditure requiring use of a debit card.

### 50. BUDGET 2020/2021: TO CONSIDER ARRANGEMENTS.

50.1 The Chairman reminded members of the need to receive a clear idea of expenditure requirements before the end of the year and invited committees to consider possible projects.

A suggestion had been made towards purchasing a small hybrid van for use by the Village Orderly, who was currently using their own vehicle. Consideration could also be given towards a charging point being installed outside the parish office.

The above was **NOTED** and it was **AGREED** to recommend to Full Council that members give thought now towards any new proposals they would like to be considered for next year's budget. The Clerk and/or Chairman of this committee to be advised accordingly.

It was further **AGREED** that the Clerk would explore the option of purchasing a hybrid van.

### 51. BARCLAYS BANK UPDATE.

51.1 The Chairman reported that progress was continuing to be made towards implementing online banking.

### 52. TO CONFIRM MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE POLICY WORKING GROUP.

52.1 The Chairman reminded members that the Committee had previously agreed to set up a working group to consider all of the Council's existing policies and regulations. In addition the group would consider if any additional policies were required.

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The following membership was **AGREED**:

- Chairman of F&GP Committee
- Councillor L. Grace
- Councillor V. Upton
- Clerk
- Deputy Clerk
- RFO

The following Terms of Reference was **AGREED**:

- To review all current Council policies and regulations
- To consider new policies for the Council
- To present draft policies to Council for approval (through F&GP first)
- Officers be permitted to change minor details in policy with out referring to Council, for example spelling mistake, change in personal, change in contact details

### **53. TO CONSIDER APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR.**

- 53.1 The Chairman advised members that the current internal auditor had been appointed for a number of years. Consideration was given towards the fact that a new financial software package had been installed and had not yet been fully implemented. Members shared the opinion that it was not appropriate to make a change at this time.

It was **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that Mr. Peter Frost should be re-appointed as the Council's Internal Auditor for the 2019/20 audit period, subject to receiving confirmation of his fees.

### **54. PROPOSED PUBLIC TOILETS ON THE COMMON: i) UPDATE AND ii) TO AGREE QUOTE FOR STATUTORY QUOTE.**

- 54.1 Councillor Blunden reported on behalf of the public toilets working group, and referred to the report that had been prepared by the Clerk and circulated with the Agenda. To progress the application for S38 Common Act consent, it would be necessary to display a statutory notice for two consecutive weeks in a local newspaper, for which a quote had been obtained for £1,152.40 plus VAT. A recommendation had been made to approve this expense and to authorise use of the debit card to make payment.

It was **AGREED** to approve the expense of £1,152.40 plus VAT and to authorise use of the debit card to make payment at the appropriate time.

### **55. VILLAGE DIRECTORY AND YEAR BOOK 2020: TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS RELATING TO THE PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.**

- 55.1 The Chairman referred to the report that had been prepared by the Clerk and circulated with the Agenda. Preparations for the 2020 edition of the Village Directory and Year Book were underway and a summary of progress made to date had been included in the report. There was a decline in the number of businesses wishing to place advertisements due to the Directory not being printed in colour and businesses having become established no longer having need to advertise. A quotation had been obtained for a professional company to deliver the product, £70.00 per 1000 copies, which would improve efficiency on staff time. Funds would be available to meet this cost.

Members were asked to consider whether they would like to continue with volunteers delivering copies of the Village Directory and Year Book putting in place an appropriate risk assessment for volunteer deliverers, or to accept the above quote to have the product delivered by a professional company.

It was **AGREED** to accept the quote to deliver the the Village Directory and Year Book 2020 Editon by a professional company for a cost of £70.00 per 1000 copies. In addition it was **AGREED** that the delivery volunteers would receive an explanation of the reasons why their services were no longer required.

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### 56. BUSINESS PLAN: UPDATE.

- 56.1 The Chairman referred to the report that had been prepared by the Clerk and circulated with the Agenda. To progress this matter further, it was necessary for the Council to summarise project ideas for the forthcoming 3 to 5 years. Members were reminded that a business plan would provide help in the future to budget and in so doing to agree the precept. The Clerk was currently talking to SSALC and informal discussions were taking place with a large Town Council, who were offering help to other authorities with business planning. It had been proposed that a questionnaire be completed by all members, including staff, to facilitate this process. Members had been invited to confirm the report proposals.

It was **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council to approve the report and for the proposed questionnaire to be sent to all members and staff to complete.

### 57. OFFICE EQUIPMENT.

- 57.1 The Chairman reported as follows:

a. To consider the procurement of a new Photocopier. The Clerk had obtained four tenders for the replacement of the current photocopier. It was **AGREED** to proceed with the tender submitted by Supplier 1 as stated in the table for a lease of 36 months:

Supplier	Printer	Lease (cost per Quarter)	Fees		Print charges	
		36 Month Lease	Lease Admin	Lease setup	Black	Colour
1	Toshiba 2515	£297.00	£140.00	£40.00	0.0032	0.0320

It was further **AGREED**:

- a) For the Clerk to serve notice on the existing agreement.  
b) For the Clerk, in conjunction with the Chair and Vice Chair, to review the full terms and conditions and, if satisfied, to sign the contract for the new printer.

b. To consider a replacement Telephone Contract. The Clerk referred to their report that had been circulated with the Agenda in which it was confirmed that the PSTN and ISDN telephone lines would be phased out by 2025. Benefits of the replacement Voice over Internet Protocol system were outlined and a quotation to upgrade the existing contract was obtained. A one off installation charge of £598.28 and a monthly charge (for four lines) of £53.50. This compared to the existing four line system (excluding call charges) of £31.07 per month.

It was **AGREED** to upgrade the telephone system, subject to receiving further information regarding suitability of existing handsets compared to new units.

c. To consider quotation for replacement of Air Conditioning Unit. The Chairman advised members that the air conditioning unit was no longer working. The gas coolant could not be replaced due to changes in legislation and as such the whole unit would need replacing. A replacement unit would cost £1,607.70 plus VAT, including fitting.

It was **AGREED** to replace the air conditioning unit for a cost of £1,607.70 plus VAT, including fitting.

### 58. SOCIAL MEDIA: TO CONSIDER THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY COUNCIL OFFICERS IN ORDER TO BOOST COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

- 58.1 The Clerk referred to their report that had been circulated with the Agenda, enclosing a draft Social Media Policy and SLCC Advice Note: A Guide to Twitter. It had been proposed to open a social media account using Twitter to promote the Council and partner agencies such as MSDC and WSCC. This would assist the Council to extend a communication link and to engage with local residents who preferred to communicate using social media. One way communication only would be provided and responses from members of the public would not

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be invited. The Councils' data protection officer would be available to offer advice. Officers would not use the platform to debate issues with members of the public. Any user with a grievance would be invited to either telephone or email the office. The account would be operated only during office opening times or during Council events.

Members acknowledged this would appeal to a wider audience embracing a different age group and that advantage would be gained providing early access to information. Concern was raised regarding impact on staff time, however the Clerk confirmed this would not present a problem, anticipating that perhaps half an hour might be required at the beginning of each week in order to manage the account.

It was **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council to approve use of Twitter with one way communication by the Clerk and Deputy Clerk. It was also **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council to approve the Social Media Policy.

### 59. CLERK'S REPORT.

59.1 The Clerk reported on the following items:

Fire Alarm Service. The regular 6 monthly fire alarm service had been carried out 1 August 2019 with no problems reported.

RBS Accounting Software Package. The software had now been down loaded and progress was ongoing. Consideration might have to be given towards additional training being requested.

Asset Register Software Package. The software had been down loaded and the existing asset register successfully transferred. A review of some of the items listed was being carried out in view of their age and current day relevance.

### 60. TO CONFIRM ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING AND CONFERENCE EVENTS.

60.1 The Clerk confirmed attendance of staff at the following training and conference events:

CiLCA	Deputy Clerk
GDPR, FOI & Policies Workshop	Clerk
Business Planning Workshop	Clerk
Stress Management	Clerk
Legal & Finance	Clerk & RFO
Clerks Technical Networking Day	Clerk & Deputy Clerk

The above was **NOTED**.

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

61.1 There were no matters arising.

The public part of the meeting ended at 20.46 hours.

### 62. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [AND PRESS].

62.1 It was **RESOLVED** in accordance with the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960 Section 1(2) and the Parish Council's Standing Order 3 (d) that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted it as desirable in the public interest that the public [and press] be excluded.

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### 63. CLOCK TOWER HOUSE LEASE.

63.1 It was **NOTED** that progress was ongoing.

The meeting concluded at 20.50 hours.