



Local Government for Langton Green, Speldhurst, Ashurst and Old Groombridge

Minutes of a Finance Committee Meeting held on Monday 19th October 2020 at 7.30pm conducted online via zoom electronic communication

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllrs Mrs Lyle (Chairman), Mrs Soyke, Ellery, Rowe, Rajah and Barrington-Johnson (ex-officio)

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

OFFICERS PRESENT

C May – Clerk and Mrs C Barrett – Admin Assistant

1. To enquire if anyone present intends to record the meeting:

No-one present intended to record the meeting.

2. To receive and approve apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Woodliffe due to family commitments.

3. Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

4. Declarations of Lobbying

There were none.

5. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting dated 2nd September 2020, copies having previously been forwarded to Members, be approved and signed as a correct record.

6. Public Open Session

There were no members of the public present.

7. Interim Payments

These are payments made during the month that were not approved at the last Full Council Meeting. Unity Bank: £1,000 to St Mary's Church; £50,000 transfer to HSBC; £79.40 transfer to credit card; £566.40 Defibrillator batteries; £70 for wasp nest control and £9 charges on Mastercard.

8. Financial Position as of October 2020 and review of expenditure vs budget to-date

Agreed to combine a review of the council's financial position with item no. 16 on the agenda, which would be an initial discussion about next year's precept.

9. Financial position as of October 2020 and review of expenditure for Pavilion to-date

The Clerk reported that EDF had agreed to lower their direct debit and he will send the latest meter reading to see if it can be further reduced.

Cllr Mrs Lyle said there would be no hiring of the pavilion for the foreseeable future.

10. Budget Virements

There were none at this stage.

11. Banking and reserves

The Clerk reported that accounts were now all under FSCS guidelines of £85k.

It was recommended that Cllr Rowe replace Cllr Milner as a signatory for all institutions. This would be put before Full council for approval.

It was agreed that Cllr Ellery would investigate alternative building societies to Cambridge, which had presented complications when changing mandates.

12. Committee and Working Group expenditure

- a) Landscape Services have been advised that their quotes for repairs to the paving by the pavilion and by the five-bar gate have been approved and works are set for half-term week. The works totalling £3,500 and will be paid from the business rate grant income.
- b) The Clerk advised that there had been quotations for the maintenance of trees, bushes and shrubs in Langton Green and Speldhurst. This work had been recommended by the Amenities Committee and totalled £1,140. There was also work at Pocket Park required totalling £276. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the quotations.
- c) It was agreed that The Clerk would approach Cllr Scarbrough about replacing Cllr Milner on The Committee.

13. Grant requests

RESOLVED to approve a grant request from St John's Church, Groombridge towards churchyard maintenance for £1,000.

14. Parish Council transport

The Clerk advised that the current leasing company were happy to extend the lease on the temporary vehicle while a long-term solution was being investigated. It would be changed for a smaller vehicle as soon as possible.

After a breakdown of costs for different purchase/hire options and much discussion, it was again recommended that a second-hand petrol vehicle with a warranty be purchased outright using the BRSF.

In the meantime, Cllr Barrington-Johnson would tabulate research undertaken by Cllrs Langridge and Pate to present at the next Full Council Meeting when it was hoped a final decision would be made.

15. Staff & Training

There was nothing to report.

16. The Precept 2021-22

The Clerk had reviewed the financial requirements for the following financial year and made recommendations. Councillors assessed the current financial position and reviewed the precept priorities for 2021-22. The Clerk was asked to make some adjustments:

- Prepare a virement of £3,500 from Capital Grants: Sports Clubs to contingency as per a decision made last year
- Estimate expenditure on LGRG pitch maintenance this year of £3,000 thereby reducing the c/f figure and increasing next year's budget
- Increase footpath expenditure by £2,000 to allow for groundman's or other third party involvement
- Input a reduced income from the Café of £6,000 and rental of £500
- Pavilion budget figures: Input a Utilities figure of £5,000, increase insurance to £800 and maintenance at £4,000
- Grants: Increase figure for Community Organisations to £3,000
- Decrease vehicle lease figure to zero (subject to Full Council decision)

It was agreed that the Clerk would present the figures for the Committee to finalise at their next meeting in November for final approval at Full Council in December.

17. Items for Information

Cllr Mrs Soyke advised that she knew of two possible individuals to assist with footpath repairs if the Groundsman ever happened to be unavailable.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting closed at 9.17pm.

Chairman