



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

Minutes of a Finance Committee Meeting held on Monday 26th July 2021 at 7.30pm
at the Council Office, Langton Green Recreation Ground

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllrs Mrs Soyke, Ellery, Rowe and Pate (ex-officio)

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mr C May – Clerk and Mrs K Neve – Clerk.

1. Election of Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Ellery was elected as Chairman. It was noted that Councillor Lyle had resigned from the Committee because she can now attend on an ex-officio basis.

2. Election of Vice-Chairman

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

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

No-one present intended to record the meeting.

4. To receive and approve apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs Lyle (unwell), Rajah and Scarborough (Covid) and Mrs Woodliffe (work commitment)

5. Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

6. Declarations of Lobbying

Cllr Ellery had attended a Speldhurst Recreation Committee meeting in his capacity as SPC representative.

7. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting dated **29th March 2021**, copies having previously been forwarded to Members, be approved, and signed as a correct record.

8. Public Open Session

There were no members of the public present.

9. Interim Payments

These are payments made during the month that were not approved at the last Full Council Meeting.

- Unity Bank: £87.00 Pavilion – PAT testing.
- Mastercard: £6.00 Land Registry enquiry and £89.98 – 2 year Norton for all computers.

10. Financial position to review expenditure vs budget at 31st July 2021:

Summary sheets and detailed reports had been circulated prior to the meeting. The clerk highlighted some figures that needed attention and recommended some actions:

- Pension contributions: Budgeted for three staff at 3% SPC contributions. The Council now have four staff eligible for pensions and contributions have increased from 3% to 5%. This will mean that expenditure will exceed budget and this will be kept under review.
- SLCC Membership: Mrs Barrett needed to be added as a member which will incur a small over expenditure.
- Microsoft 365: he recommended that this money be transferred to the section for IT Support and that this section be renamed IT Services. He also recommended a transfer from contingency of £2,000 to cover expenditure on the Cloudy IT contract.
- There had been an overspend on budget for the Computer Repairs and Upgrade because of the sanctioned purchase of two new laptops for the clerks. He recommended a transfer from contingency of £1,200 to cover the purchases and that the section be renamed Computer Capital Spending.
- He suggested that money from Footpaths could be transferred to salaries to pay for the Groundman's work clearing the Twittens but this would be considered at the next meeting.
- He pointed out that there was money available under Community Organisations (£4,000) and Sports Clubs (£5,000) that could be transferred elsewhere if necessary.
- The contingency account stood at £26,795 and that after the above transfers it would be £23,500. He said that further internal transfers may be necessary and for the purposes of considering grants to third parties that Councillors should use £20,000 as a figure to work from.
- He said that he had received no invoices from Tivoli for canine refuse.

11. Financial position to review expenditure for the Pavilion at 31st July 2021

Summary sheets and detailed reports had been circulated prior to the meeting which were considered in detail. The Clerk reported that the income from the café was likely to be higher than budget. He also said that he had received no invoices so far for the cleaning of the pavilion.

12. Budget Virements

RESOLVED to make the following virements: £3,200 from contingency to cover the purchase of the laptops (£1,200) and to cover expenditure for the Cloudy contract in IT Services (£2,000). **RESOLVED** to transfer the £1,000 currently under Microsoft 365 to the IT Services section as this would be paid in the new contract.

13. Banking and reserves

The Clerk confirmed that the accounts were all under FSCS guidelines of £85k and now that he was a signatory on all but Unity, the updates had improved.

14. Renewal of Council Insurance

The Clerk explained that the Long-Term Agreement (LTA) with Zurich was due to expire on 1st August. At the last Governance meeting he was requested to obtain 3 quotes, which he presented to the Committee. The quotes were from Zurich (renewal of policy), WPS Insurance Brokers and BHIB Council Insurance.

All companies had received the same information (a copy of the asset register and a blanked out copy of the renewal schedule). Councillors noted that each company presented their policy differently and it was difficult to compare like for like. However, after much deliberation it was **RESOLVED** to insure with WPS Insurance Brokers.

15. Committee and Working Group expenditure

a) The decision by Full Council to approve the expenditure for benches was discussed. The exact figure was unknown but could be between £1,000 to £2,000. No decision was made on where the funds should come from.

16. Grant requests

- a) A grant towards the printing costs of the Ashurst Broadsheet had been previously submitted and further information had been requested. This was considered and it was **RESOLVED** to grant £300 to St Martin's Church, Ashurst, towards printing costs of the broadsheet. Councillors asked the Clerk to advise them that if further funds were needed they should re-apply near year-end. Cllr Mrs Soyke abstained.
- b) An application from the Trustees of the Speldhurst Recreation Ground had been received for a grant towards a new Triple Link Tower to replace a unit that was not replaced in 2014 when the playground was refurbished. The total cost of the new tower was £12,418 inc. VAT, delivery and removal of the old unit. **RESOLVED** to make a recommendation to Full Council that a grant of £8,000 be made to the Trustees for the renewal of playground equipment on the condition that at least one more quote is sought. This money would come from the contingency account and if agreed a virement would be needed.
- c) The Clerk advised Councillors of a pending grant request from Ashurst and Blackham Sports Association (ABSA) for money towards the cost of upgrading the outside patio area in front of the pavilions at the sports ground. The total cost was £16,000. No decision was required at this stage but ABSA had been sent the forms to be completed and informed that SPC had limited funds available.

17. Staff and Training

There was nothing to report.

18. Covid Compliance

There were no specific items relating to covid compliance.

19. Items for Information

There were none.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting closed at 9.26pm.

Chairman

DRAFT