



Minutes were agreed but not signed at the meeting held on 1st December 2020

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE ON TUESDAY 3rd NOVEMBER 2020 HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM COMMENCING AT 7.30PM

40/20 PRESENT

Cllrs Adam (in the chair), Boswell, Jones, Mannington and Tippen were present. The Clerk and 4 members of the public were also in attendance.

41/20 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

42/20 PARISH COUNCILLOR DETAILS

Declarations of Interest

Cllr Boswell declared an interest on any item in relation to Southons Field as a neighbouring resident

Cllr Jones declared an interest on any item in relation to Marden Playing Field as a neighbouring resident

Changes to Register of Interests

Cllr Adam had amended his employer address on his register of interest. There was an issue with MBC not accepting the form but the Clerk was in correspondence regarding this.

Granting of Dispensation

There were no requests for dispensation of any item on this agenda

43/20 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21st January 2020 were agreed and would be signed at the first face to face meeting of the Finance Committee.

44/20 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

Three members of the public had expressed an interest to speak on item 50/20 and any other item in relation to the request for funding.

45/20 UPDATE FROM HR SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 2nd November had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting. No questions were raised for the HR Chairman.

46/20 2020/21 FINANCIAL YEAR

The Clerk had circulated the Expenditure and Income for Quarter 1 (1st April to 30th June) and Quarter 2 (1st July to 30th September) prior to the meeting. The figures were read out and any questions regarding over/under spend had been answered by the Clerk. Cllrs agreed to accept the income and expenditure for Quarters 1 and 2.

47/20 FINANCIAL PLAN

Cllrs agreed to defer this to later in the meeting as the forecast for 2020/21 (Item 49/20) and the draft budget for 2021/22 (Item 53/20) needed to be discussed first. *(Following these items being discussed Cllrs agreed to hold a further Finance Committee meeting on 1st December to discuss the financial plan in more detail).*

48/20 INCOME & EXPENDITURE RELATING TO COVID-19

The Clerk had provided information of what has had to be spent in result of the pandemic and what expenditure will be unspent/income not received. Cllrs discussed this and the Chairman proposed that the £10,000 CoVid-19 grant from Government be put to one side whilst making any decisions of how any unspent funds are used.

Cllrs discussed the figures and proposed that any savings at the end of the financial year, over and above the contingency previously agreed, could be set aside for legal/planning barrister fees if these were needed before 31st March 2021 (*see item 50/20 below*).

49/20 FORECAST FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR (TO 31ST MARCH 2021)

The Clerk had produced forecasts for Income and Expenditure for the remainder of the year and these had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting. Cllrs agreed with the figures and these would be updated at the end of next Quarter.

50/20 REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT**Barrister Funding**

Marden Planning Opposition Group (MPOG) had written in with a question for Cllrs to consider funding/helping to fund a barrister at Regulation 18(b) and Regulation 19 of Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan Review in regard to site 309 (North of Marden). Members of the public wished Cllrs to look favourably on this request.

Cllrs had already discussed this under item 48/20 above and agreed that it would be more relevant to look at funding for Regulation 19 due to the decision being put forward to MBC's Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Meeting on 9th November. If the decision at this meeting changed then Cllrs would review funding at a Full Council meeting if money were to be required for this financial year.

The Chairman reported to those in attendance that it would be useful to have an initial discussion with a planning barrister in case legal support proves necessary in the future. Further discussions for 2021/22 provision would be discussed under item 53/20.

Other Donations

No requests for donations had been received in the first half of 2020/21 financial year. Cllrs proposed that the Clerk contact Marden Foodbank to ask whether they needed financial assistance due to the current pandemic. If this were the case Cllrs would discuss at the next relevant meeting.

51/20 FEES & DONATIONS TO BE CONSIDERED FOR 2021/22

As the Amenities Committee had not met during the pandemic the Clerk had added an item on the next Full Council agenda to view and discuss the fees for Cemetery, Play Scheme and Open Space. A report at the next Finance meeting would be given to be incorporated into the final budget.

Donations would be discussed at item 53/20.

52/20 OTHER INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR 2021/22

Cllrs were asked to discuss the following:

New Parish Council Website

The Clerk was asked to investigate costings and report back to Finance Committee

Provision of MPC Cllr Emails

The Clerk proposed that all Cllrs be given the opportunity to have a @mardenkent-pc.gov.uk email following the elections in May. This would cost £9.99 per annum per email. Cllrs agreed and this would be taken into account when setting the budget.

Document Sharing and Storage

The Clerk was asked to look into what Microsoft 365 offered and at what cost. A report would be submitted to the next Finance Committee meeting.

Administrative Support

The Clerk reported that both hers and the Deputy Clerk's workload was increasing and they were spending an amount of time filing, contacting contractors, obtaining quotes and chasing responses. Cllrs discussed, and agreed, that provision would be made for administrative support in 2021/22 based on up to 7½ hours per week. The Clerk and Deputy Clerk were asked to put together a job description for HR Sub-Committee to discuss further.

Capital

Cllrs were asked to give some thought if any other capital expenditure should be taken into consideration for next year's budget setting.

53/20 BUDGET & PRECEPT 2021/22

The Chairman provided the spreadsheet for budget setting to enable all Cllrs to view. Each individual budget setting was gone through and it was proposed that these would either remain the same (if known), removed completely or an increase, based on 2.2% inflation, or a decrease was required.

This included provision of £15,000 towards planning legal costs if needed

The Parish Council vehicle's lease was due to expire in July 2021 and the Clerk was asked to put on the December Full Council agenda to discuss the options available.

This provided a draft income and expenditure for the next financial year and would be reviewed again after Quarter 3 when the tax base information would be available from Maidstone Borough Council. An Extra Ordinary Full Council meeting may need to be called in January to agree final budget and precept prior to submission of precept request to MBC at the end of January.

54/20 OTHER FINANCIAL ISSUES

Community Infrastructure Levy

Deferred until the next Finance Committee meeting.

55/20 INVOICES

Invoices had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting:

Graham Carey – Grounds maintenance £528.00

RJP Cleaning – Toilet cleaning £635.00

Marden Memorial Hall – Office Rent - £295.00

Stanleys Garage – mower/vehicle fuel - £160.10

Employees/HMRC – salaries, pensions and NIC/PAYE - £6,599.79

The Hop Press – Newsletter printing £885.00

Postage by Phone – Office postage £100.00

Total: £9,202.89

Cllrs agreed invoices and Cllrs Mannington and Tippen would authorise payments on Unity.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.16pm

Date:

Signed:

Cllr Richard Adam

Chairman, Finance Committee

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