



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

Minutes of a Finance Committee Meeting held on Monday 29th March 2021 at 7.30pm conducted online via zoom electronic communication

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

OFFICERS PRESENT

C May – Clerk and Mrs K Harman – Assistant Clerk

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

There were none.

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 **10th February 2021**, 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: £206.96 BT (broadband & phone); £19.78 Mr Cooper (expenses); £1,200 Reach Publishing (clerk vacancy advert); £1,440 Tivoli (11 months dog waste collection discounted); £1,000 St Mary's Church (maintenance grant); £1,000 All Saints Church (maintenance grant); £19.80 Cllr Pate (expenses); £1,119.68 transfer to Mastercard; KCC (KCS) £94.96 (photocopier); £150 JLM Pest Control (contract); £26.52 Streetlights (maintenance); £168 Knockout Print (LGRG signs); £98.16 RPC (stationery); £322 EDF (pavilion electricity); £75.00 Mrs Shorter (refund pavilion booking); £1,359.84 Commercial Services (Groombridge pollarding); £146.20 Veolia (recycling); £24.00 BT (mobile) and £31.05 Unity Bank charges
- Mastercard: £9 charges and £50.33 (building supplies).

Cllr Ellery queried when the BT contract was due for renewal and the Clerk advised that it was soon. He suggested that a better deal could be obtained.

8. Financial position to review expenditure vs budget at year-end:

Summary sheets and detailed reports had been circulated prior to the meeting. The clerk shared the budget sheets on his screen showing firstly how the figures had been calculated and then the revised budget documents. He explained that some figures had exceeded budgeted expenditure, but these were offset by savings elsewhere and the nett difference was under £500. There were adjustments to some of the carried forward figures now that all invoices had been paid. Cllr Mrs Lyle explained the large carry-forward was partly due to the business rates grants.

9. Financial position to review expenditure for the Pavilion at year-end

Summary sheets and detailed reports had been circulated prior to the meeting which were considered in detail. The business Rate Support Grants had enabled the accounts to show a surplus of £10,000 which will be transferred into the pavilion reserve account (RRIM).

10. Budget Virements

There were no virements necessary. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council that retrospective approval of the transfer to EMR for £10K be made.

11. Banking and reserves

The Clerk confirmed that the accounts were all under FSCS guidelines of £85k. Mandates had been completed and new signatories were in place as follows:

- Unity Trust Bank: Cllrs Barrington-Johnson; Mrs Soyke; Mrs Lyle, Mrs Woodliffe and Rowe.
- HSBC: Cllrs Barrington-Johnson; Mrs Soyke; Mrs Lyle, Rowe and Mr C May (Clerk).
- Hampshire Trust Bank: Cllrs Barrington-Johnson; Mrs Lyle, Rowe and Mr C May (Clerk).
- Cambridge Building Society: Cllrs Barrington-Johnson; Mrs Soyke; Rowe and Mr C May (Clerk).

12. Committee and Working Group expenditure

- a) Cloudy IT Proposal: Cllr Rajah explained that he had discussed in detail with the clerks the areas which they felt needed to be improved within the office IT set up and procedures and he made a recommendation to the committee that a contract be taken out with Cloudy IT to enable the clerks to be more efficient in their administration and handling of documents and messages and to bring the systems up to date. There would be a one-off set up fee of £1,330 and then he had calculated additionally approx. £415 per annum for the service. It was noted that Dave's Computer Repairs would still be needed to deal with hardware issues, making an additional annual on-going cost of approx. £650 after the set-up fee had been paid. It was **RESOLVED** to move forward with the Cloudy IT contract, subject to review of the contract; that the recently renewed Microsoft 365 subscription can be continued and taken over by Cloudy IT and that the terms of cancellation of the contract, should it be decided at a later date to do so, are satisfactory and that the Clerk obtain them in writing.
- b) Landscape Services proposal for 2021-22 mowing: **RESOLVED** to finalise the contract with Landscape Services without the gang mowing of the LGRG.

13. Grant requests

- a) **RESOLVED** to make a recommendation to Full Council that a grant of £10K be made to Langton Green Primary School to purchase and winter-proof a yurt for the community's use to enable the provision of wellbeing support and care services.
- b) **RESOLVED** that the Clerk speaks to the Chairman of Speldhurst School Governors to request further information to include overall costs; timetable of build and when any grant was to be payable and a completed grant form.
- c) Speldhurst Recreation Ground's financial position was noted and councillors agreed that whilst they were unable to contribute towards running costs, they would be prepared to consider a grant request towards capital expenditure if required. Councillors recommended they investigate the availability of support grants.

14. Staff and Training

There was nothing to report.

15. Covid Compliance

There were no specific items relating to covid compliance, however councillors were disappointed that the extension of permission for meetings to be held via electronic communication had not been granted by the Government.

16. Items for Information

There were none.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting closed at 8.48pm.

Chairman

