



# PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

*Working together for a better future*

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2022 AT THE VILLAGE HALL**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs: Clarke (Chairman), Court, Ellis-Brown, Hare, Henly and Hunt

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs H Knight (Clerk)

*The meeting opened at 7.35pm*

**276. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received, and reason approved, from Cllr Kipp.

**277. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND CHANGES TO REGISTER OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest made. There were no changes made to the register of interests.

**278. MINUTES**

The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings, and that the Committee Chairman sign them.

Clerk's Report

Meeting 30.09.21, Min. 292 – Staffing: The Clerk had investigated with the insurance company a claim for costs for temporary cover of staff absence, however it had been confirmed that this was not covered by the policy.

Meeting 27.01.22, Min. 267 – Projected Planning: Confirmation had now been received from HDC that the area of community open space within DC/15/1084 Land North of Highfield was no longer allocated to either district or parish in the latest S106 agreements. It would be managed by a management company. The Parish Council could request this to be changed but it would require the agreement of Cala Homes and a deed of variation to the S106 Agreement. The Clerk asked whether members felt the council would wish to have responsibility for this land, in which case this would need to be a future agenda item. On balance, members felt it sensible to leave the status quo. This therefore necessitated the removal of item 1a Acquisition of new recreation ground re. DC/15/1084 from the Projected Planning list – **AGREED**.

**279. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING**

There were no public speakers.

**280. PARISH COUNCIL FINANCES**

Members had received bank reconciliations for Cashbook 1 as at 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022 and for Cashbook 3 as at 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022. These were **AGREED** when compared to the bank statements and the Committee Chairman duly signed the bank statements.

There were no creditor invoices outstanding over 30 days.

Arrangements had not yet been made for Cllrs Hunt and Ellis-Brown to undertake the outstanding quarterly inspections and the Clerk would be in contact with Cllr Hunt to set a date for the following week for the Q2 inspection to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021. Cllr Ellis-Brown would then be contacted regarding inspection to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021.

**281. EARMARKED FUNDS**

Members considered the latest statement of Earmarked Reserves, Income & Expenditure figures and spreadsheet detailing the Clerk's suggestions for movement of year end unspent funds. It was noted that most final figures remained unknown until year end spends and invoicing were available. For example, the Neighbourhood Warden annual invoice from HDC usually only arrives around the end of March/early April: This year would be unusual in that the posts had been vacant for several months, but with recruitment costs and some temporary cover costs to be incorporated, it was likely to be an underspend. Due to tight budgeting for 2023, she proposed that it would be prudent to roll forward any underspend in case of any shortfall at 2022 year end.

The Clerk had suggested that either the New Tractor/Machinery or MSF/Playground earmarked reserves (EMRs) would benefit from being built up in anticipation of considerable spends in 2022 and asked members to decide which or suggest other alternatives.

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to move funds from the Nat West Bank (current account) to earmarked reserves (CCLA Account) at year end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 as follows:-

- Final balance from Legal Fees (approximately £5,541) to New EMR Legal Fees (for pavilion leases/licences)
- Final balance from Neighbourhood Wardens (approximately £2,000) to Neighbourhood Wardens EMR (to buffer any potential shortfall for 2022-23)
- Final balance from Tractors & Equipment (approximately £3,754) to New Tractor/Machinery EMR (for new tractor/mower being purchased in 2022)
- Unspent balance from Advertising & Publicity (£600) to New Tractor/Machinery EMR
- Returned Grant Donation (£400) to New Tractor/Machinery EMR

It was also agreed that the Community Benefit Fund EMR balance of £2,335.64 would remain in place to be available for future suitable projects. The Clerk's advice that this had no deadline but should be used in a timely manner was noted.

**282. SPORTS PAVILION DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

As reported to Council the preceding week, there was still no movement of the council's planning application. Members noted email correspondence today from the architect in which he and the planning consultant still question whether a water neutrality statement was required. The Clerk confirmed that she would be advising the architect urgently that this was indeed required and referencing information that may assist in drawing it up. This incorporated utilising data on historical/current water consumption, current water outlets, anticipated new water saving measures and existing tools understood to be readily available for calculation.

The Clerk also reported email correspondence with the HDC Community Services Team Leader, who had offered to check with the HDC Grants & Funding Officer and S106 officers any potential external funding opportunities for the Sports & Social Club/Pavilion project as well as HDC S106 monies. She was also checking on potential WSCC S106 funds for this or the youth club element of the project. Additionally, the potential for alternative developer funds other than S106 agreements for other community projects was being explored.

#### **283. STAFFING SUB-COMMITTEE**

Following agreement at the last meeting (Min. 268 refers), Members considered the Clerk's report and draft terms of reference for a Finance & Policy Staffing Sub-Committee. Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED**:-

- To appoint a Finance & Policy Staffing Sub-Committee of 3 committee members;
- To appoint the Council Chairman, Chairman of Finance & Policy Committee and Vice-Chairman of Finance & Policy Committee as ex-officio members ;
- To adopt the Terms of Reference as attached as Appendix 1, to be reviewed in one year.

#### **284. INTERNAL CONTROL POLICY**

Following review of the Internal Control Policy (previously circulated), it was **RESOLVED** to recommend to full Council adoption without amendment for the ensuing financial year.

#### **285. LEASES – PULBOROUGH BOWLING CLUB**

Due to the confidential nature of this item (contractual), it was **RESOLVED** to move to confidential business for this agenda item and that any press or public arriving would be excluded (SO 3d refers).

Members considered the response received from Pulborough Bowling Club to the Council's initial points regarding the lease renewal. It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk would respond on several points discussed and also offer that the committee would be happy to meet with members of the bowling club to discuss matters on an informal basis at this stage.

#### **286. STAFFING**

Owing to the confidential nature of this item (staffing), it was **RESOLVED** to move to confidential business for this agenda item and that any press or public arriving would be excluded (SO 3d refers).

The Clerk gave a verbal, confidential report on recent staffing matters.

#### **287. CORRESPONDENCE**

##### **CCLA**

- Email/letter 26.01.22 advising that the temporary reduction of the AMC (Annual Management Charge) will cease on 31.03.22 and will revert to the previous 0.08%.
- E-newsletter 02.02.22 – why we will see an increase in index linking and rates in 2022.

##### **Grant Aid 2021**

Email 09.12.21 from PDCCA querying the reason for the reduced grant awarded, and Clerk's response of 07.01.22.

**288. PAYMENTS**

Members had received the list of Payments for Authorisation. It was **RESOLVED** to approve these, and the payments list and invoices were duly signed.

| £                                       |         |
|-----------------------------------------|---------|
| Pulborough Social Centre (Village Hall) | £200.73 |
| NatWest Bank                            | £33.05  |

***The meeting closed at 8.56pm.***

.....Chairman

.....Date

UNCONFIRMED

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **FINANCE & POLICY STAFFING SUB-COMMITTEE**

#### **Constitution**

Not less than 3 members and not more than 3, formed from the Finance & Policy Committee membership. The Chairman of Council, Chairman of F&P Committee and Vice Chairman of F&P Committee are-officio members. A quorum consists of 3 or more.

#### **Purpose of Finance & Policy Staffing Sub-Committee**

The sub-committee is appointed to make decisions about staffing matters, subject to budget and expenditure limits set by the finance committee.

#### **Terms of Reference**

1. To establish and keep under review the staffing structure in consultation with the Finance & Policy Committee.
2. To establish and review salary pay scales for all categories of staff and to be responsible for their administration and review.
3. To oversee the recruitment and appointment of staff.
4. To establish and review performance management, including annual appraisals, and staff training programmes.
5. To oversee any process leading to dismissal of staff, including redundancy.
6. To keep under review staff working conditions and health and safety matters.
7. To consider grievance or disciplinary matters, and any appeals, in accordance with the Council's grievance or disciplinary policies.