



Holybrook Parish Council

Serving the communities of Beansheaf Farm and Fords Farm

Finance Committee Minutes

Date of Meeting	1 st March 2021
Location	Zoom Virtual Meeting
Present	Cllrs. Bedwell, Littlewood, H. Mistry (Vice-Chairman) S. Mistry and Tull (Chairman) Also present: Pam Kirkpatrick (Clerk)
Circulation	All committee members

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panels Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 (“the Regulations”) came into force on the 4 April 2020. The Regulations remove the legal obligation to hold local authority meetings at a specified physical location, by permitting members and others attending the meeting to do so by way of ‘remote attendance’. The obligation to hold an Annual Meeting was also removed.

All virtual meetings held by the Parish Council before 7th May 2021 (NOTE: the date could be brought forward if the Government rules are relaxed) are enabled by this legislative change. This Protocol applies to meetings of the Council and/or its Committees, that would, but for the coronavirus pandemic and the Regulations, be held in public. All other Standing Orders remain in place.

No.	Notes	Action
F08-20/21	Open forum for members of the public None.	
F09-20/21	Members accepted apologies for absence from None.	
F10-20/21	Declarations of Interest relevant to the Agenda None.	
F11-20/21	Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 2nd November 2021 Enclosed for information. Previously approved on 16 th November 2020.	
F12-20/21	Bank Balances, earmarked funds and capital reserves Members acknowledged the current earmarked reserves and bank balances. The Council has carefully managed its reduced Beansheaf Centre income (due to Covid-19) versus expenditure and it is estimated that, by year end, it will not have been necessary for the contingency reserves to be used and a modest general reserve in place. The proposed EMRs for 2021/22 are confirmed as: (Retain) - Play equipment maintenance: As per remaining EMR (320) plus any remaining funds from budget heading ‘play equipment maintenance’ (4166); - Sharnwood Drive (non-engineering): Remain as is at the end of the financial year; - CIL monies: to remain as it is at the end of the financial year (noted, of this, £37,791 is for Sharnwood Drive engineering and £13,087 is for FoLP/WBC improvements to the Linear Park).	

No.	Notes	Action
F12-20/21 continued	<p>Bank Balances, earmarked funds and capital reserves continued</p> <p>(amend)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Beansheaf Centre Refurbishment: to be increased to £25,000 to enable the upgrade of the Beansheaf Centre disabled toilet (hardware and lighting) and the Parish Office (particularly seeking to improve the office's Covid-19 health and safety requirements); - Large Grants: renamed to 'Grants' and remains as is at the end of the financial year plus any remaining funds from budget heading 'Grants' (3146); <p>(new)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff Training: use remaining funds from 2020/21 budget heading 'Staff Training' (1167); - Events: use funds remaining from 2020/21 budget headings 'Festival' (3210) and 'VE Day Celebrations' (3211). <p>(remove due to budget spent. No longer required)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Noticeboards; - Technology update; - Anniversary Trees: Works taking place on 2nd March 2021. Invoice awaited; 	
F13-20/21	<p>Appointment of Internal Auditor and Accountant:</p> <p>APPROVED:</p> <p>1) Claire Connell as the Internal Auditor for the financial year 2021-2022. 1a) the scope of the Internal Audit as described:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The internal audit will be carried out in accordance with the guidance provided in "Governance and Accountability for Local Council: A Practitioners' Guide"; - An internal audit plan will be drawn up in consultation with the Responsible Officer and with reference to the Council's Risk Assessment; - The internal audit plan will ensure that the internal audit work covers the necessary areas so that the assurance to be given in the annual audit report can be made. <p>2) Alan Harland as the accountant for the financial year ending 2021.</p>	
F14-20/21	<p>Budget – Current year actual against forecast</p> <p>Members noted the Interim Financial Report 2020/21 income and expenditure period 01/04/2020 to 31/01/2021.</p> <p>This has been an unprecedented year due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the Council, where possible, has reduced expenditure. However, more cleaning products have been required and this budget heading is close to its limit. Also, the ongoing issue with the water has resulted in a budget overspend on the 'Water' budget.</p> <p>The Keep income reflects a deficit of £30.00. This is due to an outstanding receipt from 2019/20. The Administration Assistant has consistently chased the payment to no avail. The Clerk will try to obtain the payment but, otherwise, Members AGREED that the debt be written off at the end of the Financial Year and the hirer block-listed.</p>	

No.	Notes	Action
F15-20/21	<p>Capital projects and rolling maintenance schedule</p> <p>Members reviewed the aforementioned schedules.</p> <p>AGREED; the Beansheaf Centre disabled toilet hardware and lighting are refurbished in 2021/22 using no more than £10,000 of the EMR 'Beansheaf Centre Refurbishment (325).</p> <p>If was further AGREED that the EMR Beansheaf Centre Refurbishment (325) be increased to a total of £25,000 to allow £15,000 to be set aside for a Parish Office refurbishment. The refurbishment should be particularly focussed on improved lighting and Covid-19 health and safety. This project may be completed in either 2021/22 or 2022/23.</p> <p>Clerk to compile a list of redundant assets that are to be disposed of i.e. fax machine, and staff to produce a list of desired equipment/furniture/health and safety improvements.</p>	Staff
F16-20/21	<p>Large Grant applications</p> <p>Members reviewed the grant application from the 95th Reading Scout Group to the sum of £1000.00 to enable the group to subsidise the cost of an International Residential trip for the Explorer Scout Unity.</p> <p>REFUSED. The sum requested is not commensurate with the number of residents that would benefit from the grant. In addition, it is unclear, of the 20 children who had applied for the trip, how many are Holybrook residents.</p> <p>Members acknowledged that there has recently been a number of grant applications which have not adequately cited the number of Holybrook residents specifically that would benefit from the grant being requested. Therefore, the policy and application forms to be reviewed and enhanced/made clearer what is required.</p>	
F17-20/21	<p>Insurance and Health and Safety</p> <p>a) Members APPROVED the annual Risk Assessment and Management with an additional line to be added regarding Data Protection/GDPR when home working (and a couple of typing errors to be amended).</p> <p>In addition, It was AGREED that the staff health and safety policy will, initially, be reviewed at the next staffing meetings (Monday 15th March 2021) paying particular attention to home and lone working.</p> <p>It was noted that all of the Council's policies and procedures are, at least, annually reviewed at the Annual Meeting and this is particularly important in 2021 as the annual meeting was cancelled in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>b) Assets Register. APPROVED.</p> <p>c) Insurance renewal. APPROVED for a five year fixed term at a cost of £4,815.87 inclusive VAT. Noted, that this figure will increase when The Garage is added.</p>	

No.	Notes	Action
F18-20/21	<p>Beansheaf Centre Hire</p> <p>The 'road map' as published by the Government in February 2021 gives a broad overview of what business can open and when but the finer detail is yet to be confirmed such as social distancing requirements, capacity limits etc.</p> <p>The road map has been reviewed alongside the centre's current list of regular hirers.</p> <p>Monday 8th March: No change. The centre can continue to be open for essential services (Pre-school, NHS, formal training, support groups, elections);</p> <p>Monday 29th March: No change. The centre can continue to be open for essential services;</p> <p>12th April 2021: Community Centres can formally re-open. Certainly for children's and parent and toddler groups. Possibly children's parties (limited attendance);</p> <p>17th May 2021: Exercise classes and groups such as choirs.</p> <p>If all groups return to the centre, as set out in the Government's road map, the Council anticipates achieving its budgeted income levels. However, it is not yet clear, even if groups are permitted return that they will (Clerk to produce a regular hirer newsletter to gauge).</p> <p>i) AGREED: the currently reduced rate (of 25%) to continue;</p> <p>ii) AGREED: this will end two months after the date that formal confirmation has been made that 'lockdown' has finished i.e. no further requirement for social distancing etc).</p>	PK
F19-20/21	<p>Honorarium</p> <p>AGREED. Mr Prior will be granted an honorarium of £400 for his highly valued, daily work unlocking/locking of the Underwood Road playground gates.</p>	
F20-20/21	<p>Review of existing Contracts</p> <p>a) Members reviewed the list of current contractors and prices.</p> <p>It was AGREED that, although a number of the Council's contractors have been in place a number of years, their prices were reasonable and, generally, a good level of service provided. Particularly, during the last year, the cleaning/caretaking company has been very amenable.</p> <p>Several of the contracts are on fixed terms and will be reviewed when they are due for renewal in 2022.</p> <p>It was AGREED that BT be approached to see if a better price can be obtained and, when the photocopier contract comes to an end, this is to be reviewed.</p> <p>b) APPROVED: contract renewal with Sunshine Commercial Services at an increased rate of 1.96%.</p>	PK
	<p>There being no other business, the meeting closed at 20:33</p>	

Signed: Dated:

Minutes prepared by	Pam Kirkpatrick, Clerk
Minutes dated	4 th November 2020

