

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held at 7.00pm on Monday 15th February 2021.

Present: Cllr Peter Gee (Chairman), Cllr Chris Farrance, Cllr Sarah Craig, Cllr Diana Harvey, Cllr Stuart Elborn & Cllr Steve Airton

In attendance: Karyn Reid (Executive Clerk)

20/21FC 19. OPEN FORUM

No member of the public made a representation.

20/21FC 20. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies were received.

20/21FC 21. DISPENSATIONS & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Gee declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 20/21FC 24, funding support for the Village Festival.

20/21FC 22. APPROVAL OF MINUTES & ACTIONS LOG

i) Cllr Elborn proposed approval of the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting on 17th December 2020; seconded by Cllr Harvey.

AGREED by all.

ii) Cllr Airton suggested amending Item 19/20FC 51 on the Action Log. Cllr Farrance clarified that he was in the process of organising a Zoom meeting with local businesses and retailers in the Parish. The Executive Clerk to add more detail on Item 19/20FC 51 on the Action Log.

ACTION: The Executive Clerk to move Item 19/20FC 59 regarding online training for IT focus and Councillor based training to Staffing Committee meetings.

The Executive Clerk circulated the increased parking costs from HDC. The Committee briefly discussed the matter, noting their concerns over the proposed increase.

ACTION: The Executive Clerk and Cllr Farrance to arrange a meeting with HDC to discuss the parking costs.

20/21FC 23. BUDGET REVIEW

i) To review spend v's budget as at 31.12.20 & 29.01.21

The Committee discussed the Burial Ground financial figures as they were significantly under budget.

ACTION: The Executive Clerk to complete a comparative analysis of types of burials in the recent years.

Cllr Harvey queried that the Community Bus Insurance appears twice and noted that this must be rectified. The Executive Clerk noted the coding issue causing this error and assured the Committee that this will be addressed and corrected immediately.

ACTION: The Executive Clerk to investigate the coding issue of the Community Bus Insurance on the Annual Budget document and correct accordingly.

ii) Review and approve any journals for Quarter 3

Cllr Farrance proposed approval of journals for Quarter 3; seconded by Cllr Craig.

AGREED by all.

iii) Review reserves statement and 21/22 movement against future Capital projects

Councillors expressed concerns over lack of clarity regarding reserves statement and agreed that given the significant amounts being moved from the reserves, it should be discussed with Full Council.

ACTION: Cllr Gee and the Executive Clerk to prepare information in relation to reserves statement to share in the next Full Council meeting.

20/21FC 24. FINANCE APPROVAL

i) Review circulated quotations and approve next step and/or spend;

Additional funds for Parish Truck

The Executive Clerk noted that Horticulture & Amenities Officer and Cllr Roger Robertson have agreed the best type and model of truck to replace the current Parish truck which was circulated to the Committee. The Horticulture & Amenities Officer has spoken with several dealerships in search of a second-hand vehicle, however, due to the high demand and low supply of these models the current budget is insufficient and an increase in budget will be required to cover the costs. Therefore, it was suggested that it may be more beneficial in the long term to invest in a new vehicle. Cllr Airton suggested an increased budget of £20,000 to cover the costs of the vehicle. Cllr Elborn suggested leasing instead of purchasing a vehicle, particularly given the current impact of Covid-19 on the market.

Cllr Airton proposed approval of increasing the Parish Truck budget to £20,000; seconded by Cllr Elborn.

AGREED by all.

ACTION: The Executive Clerk and Horticulture & Amenities Officer to look for a vehicle of up to £20,000 and to investigate the option of leasing a vehicle.

Funding Support for Village Festival

The Committee had a brief discussion in which multiple Councillors expressed their concerns that providing the Rotary Club with a grant/donation for the Village Festival would not follow Policy. Cllr Elborn suggested the Village Festival becoming a co-sponsored event with the Rotary Club to which Councillors felt this is and always has been Rotary Club's event. Cllr Craig highlighted key points in the Grants and Donation Policy that allow the Parish Council to consider applications for funding where there are no alternatives to obtain the relevant funds and where the community will directly benefit. Cllr Airton suggested the Parish Council fund several of the substantial costs, for example, the marquee. The Committee agreed that this was the most appropriate option. Cllr Farrance requested that the Rotary Club provide a break down of their sponsorships in the previous years as an evidence base for their fund needs this year.

ACTION: Cllr Gee to obtain information regarding Rotary Club's sponsorships in previous years.

ACTION: The Executive Clerk to move the discussion of funding support for Village Festival at Full Council meeting in March.

ii) Cllr Airton proposed approval of payments listing; seconded by Cllr Harvey.

AGREED by all.

20/21FC 25. FINANCE COMMITTEE MATTERS

i) Cllr Craig established the main changes of the Draft Grants and Donations Policy 2021. Section 3.14 was revised to emphasis that the Parish Council cannot offer grants or donations to individuals unless the community is directly benefiting. Cllr Elborn discussed the use of discretion within the Policy to which Cllr Craig suggest altering the wording slightly to create more flexibility for the Parish Council when making decisions. Cllr Harvey stressed the importance of creating clear guidelines for Councillors. The Executive Clerk explained the need for the Policy to be simple and clear to avoid numerous interpretations and confusion. Cllr Craig suggested adding to Section 3.11 to clarify and to ensure people come forward with

their applications. Cllr Craig highlighted the benefits of putting on website and social media to make the community aware of grants/donations offered by the Council.

ACTION: Cllr Craig to amend Section 3.11 of Draft Grants and Donations Policy 2021 before taking to Full Council in March.

Cllr Craig proposed approval of amendment to Draft Grants and Donations Policy 2021 which will then be presented in Full Council on 1 March; seconded by Cllr Elborn.

AGREED by all.

20/21FC 26. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS & PARISH COUNCILLOR MATTERS

Cllr Steve Airton – updated the Committee on quotations for internal refit and external landscaping at St Mary's. Due to the high costs of these quotations, alternative avenues will be investigated within the local community.

Cllr Farrance suggested contacting the developer Stratfield Homes, who recently purchased the Travis Perkins site. Cllr Harvey to send contact details to Cllr Airton.

Cllr Chris Farrance – noted that the Community Bus working party are strongly considering investing in a new community bus as second-hand vehicles that meet all the necessary requirements are not available on the market. The recommendation will be proposed at Full Council.

Cllr Craig highlighted that the S102 funds from HCC would cover most of the cost of approximately £55,000 and the difference will be split with Rosie bus team.

20/21FC 27. CORRESPONDENCE & DATE OF NEXT MEETING

No correspondence was received.

The next meeting will take place Thursday 22nd April 2021 at 7.00pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.47pm.

..... Chairman

.....Date

Appendices

- Actions Log
- Reserves Statement
- Payments Listings
- Draft Grants and Donations Policy 2021

Abbreviations used in these minutes: Cllr ~ Councillor HCC ~ Hampshire County Council HDC ~ Hart District Council