

**Minutes of The Finance Committee held at The Rackliff Centre on  
Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at 7.30 pm**

**Members Present:**

Cllr M O'Callaghan, Chairman; Cllr E Ellicott and Cllr D Smith

**Officers Present:**

Mrs Alison Stevens, Locum Clerk  
Chris May Locum RFO

**Others and Members of the Public:**

There were no members of the public in attendance

- 1. Enquire whether anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting**  
No one present filmed, photographed or recorded the meeting.

- 2. To receive and approve apologies for absence**  
Apologies were received from Cllr Edwards (prior engagement) and Cllr Funnell (unwell)

- 3. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**  
None.

- 4. Declarations of Lobbying**  
None.

- 5. Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2022**  
The Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2022 were agreed, and it was **RESOLVED** that the Chairman sign them as a true and accurate record

- 6. Clerk's Report on Matters Arising from the Minutes not included elsewhere on the agenda**  
All matters arising were included elsewhere on the agenda.

- 7. Open session for questions from the public**  
There were none

- 8. Budget and Precept 2022/2023**
- i. The Locum RFO had produced three print outs showing all the bank accounts, Ear Marked Reserves, spending to date versus budget, and percentage of budget spent. He said that the Unity Trust Bank (UTB) and the Mastercard account were both reconciled and the second half of the precept has been received from the Borough Council.
  - ii. All the accounts were within budget except the locum payments so he suggested a virement of £7300 from salaries to rectify this. This would have the effect of keeping the accounts balanced for the next quarter when the Council expects to have more information on the Clerk's wellbeing.
  - iii. Cllr Smith asked for more information about the large amount kept in the budget and Ear Marked Reserves for Highways, and what progress is being made. He felt that if the project was no longer affordable then the funds should be re-allocated. Cllr O'Callaghan said he would make further enquires and report back. Councillor Smith also asked if the

Parish Council has received an annual payment of £1000 from Gatwick Airport. The money is to help compensate for the noise levels. Meter readings are taken from a monitor at the allotments. The Locum RFO informed him that the last payment was received in November 2021 and he confirmed that it had been applied as a credit to the allotments.

Budget Virements: The RFO suggested a transfer of £7000 from Salaries to Locum/Agency payments (three months) and a transfer of £300 from Salaries to Travel. A discussion followed after which Councillors **RESOLVED** to accept both virements.

#### **9. Land to the rear of The Rackliff Centre**

The Commons Ranger has asked if he can rent some storage space at the rear of the Rackliff so the Locum Clerk will find out what he needs and incorporate his requirements in the latest plans. The new plans also include a double garage to store the Boxing Club's minibus. Builders will then be approached for advice and costings.

#### **10. Trough at the Memorial**

It was **RESOLVED** to spend up to £150 securing the trough.

#### **11. Budget and Precept Planning 2023/2024**

The Locum RFO presented a budget for next year based on last year's actual v budget and this year's YTD figures. He went through the figures explaining the rationale and asked Councillors for their input. He recommended a precept of £85000 for the next financial year which represents a 7.5% increase (there has not been an increase for two years and prior to that the increase was £1000). He pointed out the £85000 was only a suggestion, and it was open for discussion, but to not increase it in the face of rising costs will be to the detriment of the Council's finances.

The Locum RFO also said the Chairman should bring this item to the next Full Council Meeting so that all Councillors could have their say on the matter.

Having carefully considered the figures, councillors agreed the following changes;

- To increase the hire income from £3500 to £4500
- To decrease salaries from £41000 to £31000
- To increase Allotment Grass Cutting from £2500 to £3500
- To increase Allotment Maintenance from £7500 to £8000
- To allow £500 for the Nature Reserve
- To decrease Village Maintenance/Trees from £1000 to £0 because there is enough in the EMR
- Increase Village promotion from £500 to £2500 for the King's Coronation

Cllr Edwards had asked for some more money to be allocated to Youth Organisations but as there was already £6500 in the budget it was agreed not to increase it at this stage

£3000 had been allocated for Christmas Lights and hanging baskets and Councillors considered increasing this to £9000 but felt a decision should be sought after discussing the matter at the next Full Council Meeting.

The Locum RFO said he would make the changes and produce a report for the November Full Council Meeting.

#### **12. Items for Information**

Cllr O'Callaghan had information from KCC about the storage of items from the Archaeology Group which he will pass onto councillors for them to consider at the next Full Council Meeting.

**13. Next Meeting**

The next Finance Committee Meeting was arranged for Monday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022. The meeting is needed to finalise the budget so that it can be considered for approval in December.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.21pm

..... Chairman

Dated .....