**MINUTES of the Meeting of the Finance + General Purposes Committee held** at 8.00pm on Thursday 13 October 2016 in the Village Centre, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint.

**Committee Members Present**

Stephen Hand (Chairman)
Rodney Jackson
John Lowman
Martin Machan
Julia Shorrocks

**Also Present:**

Stephen Hoyles CLERK TO THE COUNCIL
Charlotte Kempson – Assistant Clerk

**F16/033**. **Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest:** The following apologies were received prior to the meeting and accepted: Allan Brown, Amanda Geel, Judith Marsh. The following declarations of interest were recorded: Stephen Hand (personal interest): Item F16/037.5 Bowls Club lease. Martin Machan (personal and pecuniary interest) Item F16/037.5 Bowls Club lease.

**F16/034. Minutes of the meetings of Finance + General Purposes Committee of 8 September 2016:** The Minutes were received and adopted and signed by the Chairman.

**F16/035. Matters arising from Minutes of the Finance + General Purposes Committee of 8 September 2016:** There were no matters not otherwise covered on this agenda.

**F16/036. Adjournment for questions from the public:** There being no public present the Committee was not required to consider whether to adjourn the Meeting in accordance with Clause 1(d) of Standing Orders.

**F16/037. FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

**F16/037.1 Payments and receipts:** The Committee was asked to RESOLVE to approve payment of accounts totalling £37,614.65 for month 7 (October 2016) and the total receipts of £95,628.00 for Month 6 (September 2016), which includes the half-year precept. The committee is also asked to approve a revised payment total for September 2016 (Month 6) of £132,681.02, being an increase of £31.50 for Unity Bank charges. (This item is a direct debit at the end of the month and was too late to be previously recorded.) *(Ref: Schedule 1 and 2)*

**RESOLVED: The Committee RESOLVES to approve the schedule of payments of: (1) £37,614.65 for October 2016 and (2) the revised payments total of £132,681.02 for September 2016.**

**F16/037.2 Financial monitoring:** The Committee noted the Accounts Records for Month 6 (September 2016), in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the Council, as follows:
(1) Bank reconciliation and Trial Balance (Qtr 2 – Month 6)
(2) Income and expenditure (Qtr 2 – Month 6) *(Inc/Exp Qtr 2 month 6 )*
(3) Assets Register *( Assets Register 30 September 2016).* The matter of the correct valuations was raised and it was noted that these were in accordance with Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – Practitioner's Guide. The matter of the correct insurance valuation for the Village Garden sculpture was also raised.

It was noted that there were some outstanding payments for allotments rents and it was suggested that a penalty should be imposed for later payment.

**F16/037.3. Deposits and Investment:** The Committee noted that the Council was holding the following funds on the dates shown:

| Ref | Statement Date | Amount | Bank | Ref | Comment |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
| 8 | 30/09/2016 | 144,527.71 | Unity Bank | '20365408 | Current |
| 1 | 31/08/2016 | 10,343.53 | CCLA | '0663140001PC | Deposit |
| 4 | 29/09/2016 | 0 | Cooperative | '65190913 00 | Current |
| 7 | 06/07/2015 | 52,140.42 | Nationwide | '90001826 | Deposit |
| | **TOTAL** | **£207,011.66** | | | |

The Committee noted that the balance includes the sum of £92,095.00 received from MSDC for the half-year precept. The Co-operative Bank account is now closed.

**F16/037.4 Annual Return and External Audit - year ending 31 March 2016:** The Committee noted that the Annual Return 2016 has been signed off by the external auditor with no qualifying comments. The Notice of Conclusion of Audit has been published as required. *(Ref: PKF Littlejohn LLP ltr 30 September 2016; Annual Return 31 March 2016 signed 19.9.16 )*

**F16/037.5 Bowls Club lease:** Martin Machan left the meeting for this item. A new lease was granted by the Council to the Bowls Club in August 2014. The Club, under the guidance of the Council, has made application to MSDC for a s106 grant contribution towards the pavilion extension, which has also been approved by the Parish Council. In processing the grant the MSDC lawyers had said that the 2014 lease had not been produced in a manner that provides sufficient security of tenure to the Club, and were therefore withholding the grant. Following discussion with the MSDC lawyer and consultation with Council Chairman, the Clerk had instructed the current solicitors Mayo Wynne Baxter to prepare a new lease, on the same terms and with the same end date as the 2014 lease. Detailed proposals and request for authority to sign the lease would be taken to Council shortly. *(Ref: MSDC email Bowls Club 29 September 2016)*

**F16/037.6 Review of charges** :The Committee considered the annual review of charges to make a RECOMMENDATION to Council. *(Ref: BRIEFING NOTE: Review of Charges - 4 October 2016 )*

**RECOMMENDATION to Council: The Review of charges 4 October 2016 is approved.**

**F16/037.7 Budget 2017/18 :** The Committee considered the BRIEFING NOTE and to confirm the working assumptions to enable the Budget to be prepared, pending further input from the spending committees. *(Ref: CONFIDENTIAL BRIEFING NOTE Budget + Precept 2017/18 5 October 2016; Budget 2017/18 5 Oct 2016 V1 Working Draft)*

**RESOLVED: The Committee confirms the working assumptions to enable the Budget 2017/18 to be prepared.**

**F16/037.8 Budget 2017/18 – Parish Action Plan 2016-21:** The Committee reviewed the Working Draft Budget for its sector (showing the Budget for 2016/17 and the initial proposals for 2017/18) and the Parish Action Plan 2016-21. The Committee considered the expected spend and which items might be deleted or added. Consideration was given to those plans which could be started in 2017/18 and the spending required. The Committee noted that it would not normally be expected to introduce significant new items that had not already been identified in the Plan. It was agreed that provision be made for the following capital expenditure or one-off items:

(1) feasibility study for Cuckfield Road traffic management (£5,000 to be sourced from s106 funds)
(2) feasibility study for cycle route (£5,000 to be sourced from s106 funds)
(3) Heritage Trail and 'Village in bloom'– initial phase (£10,000)
(4) Reeds Lane play area (£ unspecified, to be sourced from s106 funds)

*(Ref: BRIEFING NOTE Budget 2017/18 Parish Action Plan – 5 October 2016; Parish Action Plan 2016-21 Rev 2 31.8.16)*

**RESOLVED: The Committee confirmed its provisional proposals for the 2017/18 Budget.**

**F16/038. CONTRACTS:** The Committee noted the following contracts with a cost over £500 + VAT :

**(1) Bus shelter refurbishments:** The bus shelter at the Village Garden and the War Memorial require their periodic maintenance which was last undertaken in 2009. The proposed work and the tender process is detailed in the BRIEFING NOTE and the Committee was asked to approve the appointment of the contractor to undertake the works. It was noted that investigations are in hand to replace or refurbish the shelter at Willow Way. Discussion took place during which the possibility of replacing the Village Garden Shelter with a more attractive design, as part of the Village in Bloom project, was considered. The Committee then agreed to proceed with the War Memorial Shelter refurbishment but defer the Village Garden Shelter refurbishment. The current budget is only £2,000, but there is noticable underspend elsewhere and it is expected that this expenditure can be contained within the Committee's overall budget for 2016/17. *(Ref: BRIEFING NOTE Bus Shelter Repairs 27 September 2016 )*

**RESOLVED: Contractor GPS Sussex Ltd is appointed for the War Memorial Bus Shelter Refurbishment at a price of £3,950.00 + VAT.**

**(2) Chestnut tree, South Avenue Recreation Ground:** The dead Chestnut tree is to be removed and a contract had been granted to James Wilson Tree Care at a cost of £1,500.00 (no VAT applied).

**(3) Christmas lights and tree:** Contracts had been granted to Merlin Lighting for the installation and removal of the Council's Christmas lights and a tree and lights on the Village Garden, all as reported to Community Affairs Committee. The cost of the works is £3,055 + VAT.

**(4) Reeds Lane Play Equipment:** A contract had been let to Barcombe Landscapes for the removal and disposal of the derelict play equipment in Reeds Lane, at a cost of £580 + VAT, and which had now been removed.

**F16/039. PROJECTS:**

**F16/039.1 Action List 2016/17:** The Committee noted the Action List for the Council Year 2015/16. *(Ref: ACTION LIST 2016/17 rev15 31 August 2016)*

**F16/039.2 Streetlight Replacement Scheme**: The Committee noted that the mobilising work is underway. On site installation is expected to start October 2016. Local residents have been directly contacted where there are changes to the locations of lampposts. *(Ref: HP&SCPC ltr SSE 25 August 2016)*

**F16/039.3 High Street Improvement Scheme:** The Committee noted that the Council's consultants Stillwells had been working with WSCC Highways and have undertaken an assessment of remedial works which have been implemented by the contractor. The contract retention money (5% of the contract sum) is now due to be paid. The consultant is also liaising with WSCC regarding the formal handover of the scheme in accordance with the s278 Agreement.

**F16/040. OPERATIONS:** (exception reports only)

**F16/040.1 Street lighting:** Nothing to report.

**F16/040.2 Toilets:** The Pitt Road toilet had shown signs of cracking the wall and floor and there was some concern that minor subsidence might be occurring. A building surveyor (Andrew Knowles RICS of Worthing) had been appointed to inspect and report but meanwhile the female toilet has been closed, as the door was jamming. A question was raised as to whether the male toilet could be temporarily converted to unisex, and this would be investigated. The matter will be kept under review and reported to the Committee in due course.

**F16/040.3 Trees:** Nothing to report.

**F16/040.4 Cemetery:** Nothing to report.

**F16/040.5 Recreation Grounds:** Nothing to report.

**F16/040.6 Dog waste bins**. Nothing to report.

**F16/040.7 Buildings:**

**(1) Chantry Stables lease - Co-op request:** The Committee was asked to RECOMMEND to COUNCIL to agree to granting permission to tenants Hurstpierpoint Community Charity for Chantry Stables to be sub-let (assigned) to the Co-op, on a temporary basis. The background was detailed in the BRIEFING NOTE. *(Ref: Email Co-op 7 October 2016; Email Michael Barnes 7 October 2016; Chantry Stables lease 20 July 2016; BRIEFING NOTE Chantry Stables 12 October 2016)*

**RECOMMENDATION to Council: That permission is granted to the Trustees of Hurst Community Charity (the tenants) to sub-let Chantry Stables to Co-operative Group for a period of up to 6 months from 1 November 2016, for the purposes of a temporary food store. The rent defined in the lease will apply and the rent rebate to Hurst community Charity will not apply for the period of sub-let.**

**F16/040.8 Allotments:** Nothing to report.

**F16/040.9 Public enquiries:** The Committee was advised that the Parish Office maintains a Customer log of all public enquiries and which is available for inspection by Members.

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.18 pm Chairman