

HURSTPIERPOINT & SAYERS COMMON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Finance + General Purposes Committee held at 8.00pm on Thursday 6 December 2018 in the Village Centre, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint.

Committee Members Present

Rodney Jackson (Chairman)
Stephen Hand

Tony Lank
Malcolm Llewellyn
Martin Machan

Also Present:

Allan Brown
Stephen Hoyles CLERK TO THE COUNCIL
Paul Mayne – Assistant Clerk

F18/052. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest: The following apologies were received prior to the meeting and accepted: Amanda Geel, John Lowman, Julia Shorrocks. There were no declarations of interest.

F18/053. Minutes of the meetings of Finance + General Purposes Committee of 8 November 2018: The Minutes were received and accepted and signed by the Chairman.

F18/054. Matters arising from Minutes of the Finance + General Purposes Committee of 8 November 2018: There were no matters not otherwise covered on this agenda.

F18/055. Adjournment for questions from the public: There being no members of the public present the Committee was not required to adjourn the Meeting in accordance with Clause 19d) of Standing Orders.

F18/056. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

F18/056.1 Payments and receipts: The Committee approved payments £7,082.32 for month 9 (December 2018) and the total receipts of £83,363.21 for Month 8 (November 2018) (*Ref: Schedule 1*)

RESOLVED: The Committee approves the schedule of payments of £7,082.32 for December 2018.

F18/056.2 Financial monitoring: The Committee noted the Accounts Records for Month 8 (November 2018), in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the Council, as follows:

(1) Bank reconciliation and Trial Balance

F18/056.3. 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	30/11/2018	159,103.78	Unity Bank	'20365408	Current
1	30/09/2018	65,606.04	CCLA	'0663140001PC	Shares
7	28/08/2018	53,171.45	Nationwide	'90001826	Bond
9	12/02/2018	33,000.00	Nationwide	'90114712	Bond
10	10/05/2018	50,000.00	Cambridge + Counties	15011214	Deposit
11	31/10/2018	35,000.00	Cambridge + Counties	15012689	Deposit
	TOTAL	395,881.27			

It was noted that the Unity Bank balance included a recent receipt of £73,740.55 being the part s106 Agreement commuted sum accompanying the Little Park land transfer.

F18/056.4 Budget 2019/20: The Committee was asked to review the draft Budget and make suggestions for further adjustments. It was reported that the Tax Base figure for 2019/20 had now been published and was an increase of 2.8%. All spending committees had considered their bids, which were now incorporated. The final proposals would be set at the Committee meeting 10 January 2019, for approval by Council 24 January 2019.

In discussion the following were noted and agreed, with the objective of achieving a balanced revenue budget:

1) Reeds Lane Play Area: a request from the Reeds Lane Play Working Group for £20,000 capital expenditure. It was agreed that £5,000 would be included, but assumed that the balance be funded by s106 income.

- 2) The expected introduction of the new Court Bushes Community Hub was also noted and its projected budget showing an operating deficit reducing from £13,098 (not including estimated staff management charges) in Year 2019/20, reducing to neutral (not including estimated staff management charges) in 2021/22. In addition, the request from the Court Bushes Community Hub Working Group for £20,000 capital spend in 2019/20.
- 3) Councillor allowances: The recent decision to review allowances would be revisited, to save cost. The requirement to pay elected (but not co-opted) Members was noted and its impact on the year from the elections in May 2019. This would cost £9,000 in a full year.
- 4) Grants (Community Affairs Committee): reduced to £6,500, saving £3,000.
- 5) Planning consultancy (Planning committee): removed, saving £5,000.
- 6) Staff salary adjustment: reduced, saving £5,000.
- 7) Council Tax increase: 5.0% , combined with Tax Base changes.
- 8) The depletion of the General Reserves (but the maintenance of earmarked reserves, principally for Hurst Meadows works and maintenance) was noted. The General Reserves were forecast to drop below the preferred 4 months revenue expenditure during the period 2019/20 to 2020/21, but then recover to more acceptable levels. The Committee agreed to accept this situation, on the understanding that total reserves remained substantial in the interim.
- It was agreed that these adjustments would be incorporated into the draft Budget 2019/20 for final consideration by the Committee at its January meeting.

(REF: Budget 2019/20 V2 28 November 2018 and V3 (REVISED); BRIEFING NOTE Budget and Precept 2019/20 28 Nov 2018,).

F18/056.5 Internal Audit Report: The Committee was asked to consider the Internal Audit Plan and letter following the Auditor's visit of 9 November 2017, and recommend to Council that it was received and adopted. Reference was made to Action Plan of the letter, and the Clerk's response as follows:

Summary of Matters arising	Summary of Recommendations	Council response
The Council publishes extensive information on the website and is largely compliant with the requirements of the 2015 Transparency Code. However, the website is a little cluttered	I recommend that a new tab is set up, labelled transparency, and all data required by the Code should be held on this tab. I have recommended Crowborough TC as a template for this information	Agreed, but this action would be incorporated in the re-vamp of the Council's website in 2019/20.
Money coverage is not sufficient at £250K. The Council's cash holdings regularly exceed this balance, and the Council is due to receive further s106 monies relating to Hurst Meadow.	I therefore recommend that the insurer is contacted and insurance is increased. Again, a watching brief should be kept on this area, as the Council takes on new responsibilities.	Insurance cover has been increased to £500,000 (at no increase to premium in the current year). The matter will be reviewed again at insurance renewal in May 2019.
I note a number of significant changes to the Council's finances are expected over the next few months	I recommend that these changes are - Included in 2019-20 budget planning - Added to risk assessments - Included in insurance policies	Noted and will be incorporated into Budget 2019/20.

(REF: Internal Audit letter year ending 31 March 2019 - 12 November 2018; Internal Audit Plan 31 March 2018, 11 November 2017)

RECOMMENDATION to Council:

- (1) The Internal Audit Report (12 November 2018) is received and adopted.**
(2) The Council responses are approved.

F18/056.6 Transfer of Country Open Space 2 – COMPLETION STATEMENT: The Committee noted that the final tranche of land for the Little Park country open space had been transferred to the Council on 29 November 2019. This being the woodland comprising Tilleys Copse and the Wilderness. The Completion Statement was noted, and the receipt of £73,740.55, being the commuted sum of £75,253.75 less the legal fees. . (REF: Transfer of Country Open Space 2 – COMPLETION STATEMENT November 2018)

F18/057. CONTRACTS: The Committee noted the following contracts with a cost over £500 + VAT:

F18/057.1 Village Gateways: The installation contract has been awarded and work was expected to start on site in the week commencing 10 December 2018.

F18/057.2 St Georges Green steps: The repairs contract had been awarded and the work was due to be undertaken in the week commencing 3 December 2018.

F18/057.3 Cemetery access road repairs: The repairs contract had been awarded and the work was now complete.

F18/057.4 Cemetery Wall repairs: The contract had been awarded but discussion is taking place with the contractor and the owner of the neighbouring property regarding a start delay to avoid the worst winter period, as any wet weather would cause significant ground damage and disruption. The Committee noted this decision.

F18/057.5 Streetlight replacement scheme : It was noted that the identification labels and the painting of some columns remained outstanding.

F18/058. PROJECTS:

F18/058.1 Action List 2018/19: The Committee is asked to note the Action List for the Council Year 2018/19. (Ref: ACTION LIST 2018/19 rev30 30 October 2018 ATTACHED)

F18/059. OPERATIONS: The Committee is asked to note (exception reports only):

F18/059.1 Street lighting: (No report)

F18/059.2 Toilets: (No report)

F18/059.3 Trees: (No report)

F18/059.4 Cemetery:

F18/059.5 Recreation Grounds:

F18/059.6 Waste bins:

F18/059.7 Buildings: (No report)

F18/059.8 Allotments: The Hurstpierpoint Allotments Association AGM had taken place on 28 November 2018 and a report would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

F18/059.9 Village Centre: (No report)

F18/059.10 Village Garden: (No report)

F18/059.11 Highways: (No report)

F18/059.12 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 9.05 pm

Chairman
