



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
The Finance & Administration Committee
Monday 12 April 2021 at 7.30pm
Held Virtually**

Councillors taking part: Vianne Gibbons (Chairman and Chairman to the LPC) (VG), Charlie Hollister (CH), Tony Oliver (TO).

Also present: Kim Owen (Clerk)(KO), Nicky Bourne (Deputy Clerk) & Jan Capon (RFO) (JC) who took the minutes.

There were no members of the public involved in the meeting.

1. To receive and record any apologies for absence.

Apologies received from Councillor Susan Luckhurst (substitute member to the committee)

2. To receive and agree any decision regarding any item to be taken as confidential. None.

Note-Item 14g re quotation was discussed, and there were no members of the public in attendance.

3. To receive any declarations of pecuniary interest on items in the agenda.

(In accordance with the NALC Model Code of Conduct for Parish Councils (pursuant to section 27 of the Localism Act 2011). In addition, any declaration of personal or prejudicial interest. *(As agreed by LPC 21 Jan 13).*

None received.

4. To receive any signed dispensation requests for any item on this agenda.

(Councillors to approve/disapprove as appropriate and to agree the reason for the dispensation if approved (see dispensation form). This follows the agreement made by the LPC at the meeting held on the 17 July 2017).

None received.

5. To agree and to sign as a correct record the minutes:

F&A Committee meeting held on the 6 January 2020 (210-215)

The minutes of the meeting on 6 January 2020 were duly **AGREED**. The minutes will be signed by the Chairman and passed to the Clerk accordingly. The RFO mentioned that the layout of the minutes will have to change because of 'accessibility' of the document on the website.

6. To receive any questions/comments from the public, and to note of anything tabled by the Clerk.

None.

7. Reconciliation of bank accounts

a. To reconcile the bank account balances to the accounts and bank statements, and to sign the Bank statements as Confirmation-Copy statements were supplied to members and all bank balances were agreed to the Appx A balance as at the year end 20/21. The RFO initialled the statements accordingly.

b. To note changes to cash tariff charge with UTB-The charges have gone up when paying in cash over the counter at the Post Office from £0.50p per £100 to £0.60p per £100. This was noted by members.

8. Examination of finance position & RFO Reports (ongoing agenda item):

- a. **20/21 -To discuss the year-end financial position of the Parish Council, and to examine spends and income as relevant.** The accounts summary as at the fiscal year end 20/21 was discussed. The RFO stated that the final credit balance of £68,524 was higher than expected which was due mainly to the lockdown restrictions during the pandemic, which resulted in projects being delayed and savings made on various running costs. The RFO then gave an overview of the underspends against budgets, and the extra funding received from MBC which compensated for the lack of hiring fees received during this period. In view of these savings, it has created a small general reserve.

It was **recommended** by the committee that some of this reserve to be put towards the cost of a replacement fence around the small child's play area which is in need of replacement. Quotes for a replacement fence have already been agreed by the PCH committee.

Action-RFO- recommendation to be taken forward with the full Council (meeting 19 April 21).

The RFO also mentioned about some regular hirers fees which were received prior to lockdown (March 20), and which have been held until hirers return to the Pavilion.

A more detailed analysis of spends and receipt variances in percentage terms will be put together during the AGAR (annual governance and accountability return) process.

Budgets as already agreed by the LPC 21/22 were also discussed.

Earmarked reserve items were also discussed, and are also referred to under agenda item 9b.

- b. **To authorise payments as relevant for any outstanding invoices, including annual subscription for KALC- Agreed** to pay the KALC subscription for 21/22, & for information to be circulated to all Councillors.
- c. **To note rates bill for Pavilion for 21/22-** It was noted that there will be no charge for rates at the Pavilion as a small business rate relief has been given.
- d. **To authorise any bank transfers as relevant-** It was recommended that a transfer is made from the UTB bank account to Barclays to take the balance below the FSCS (Financial Services Compensation Scheme limit of £85K). In view of the proposed amount it was **Agreed** that this matter to be agreed by the full Council. **Action-RFO-to be taken forward with the full Council (meeting 19 April 21).**

9. Funding (ongoing agenda item):

- a. **To review and discuss any funding challenges/ issues/applications-**The RFO gave details of the last funding received from MBC 'Lockdown Grant 3' for £2,096. Total various lockdown support funding received so far from MBC, totals £ 19,431 for 20/21. All of this amount was placed into the 'receipts' accounting spreadsheet. The RFO mentioned that the monthly funding & ongoing funding spreadsheets will change, which will only reflect non allocated funds, as this will provide better clarification on what is available to spend.
- b. **To discuss items to be earmarked/ring-fenced to 21/22-** n.b. *This item was discussed under item 8a above.* A document was put together by the RFO which included earmarked items, made up of funding still to spend, earmarked projects, and 'save to invest'. These items were noted and agreed by the committee, and are to be ratified by the full LPC. **Action-RFO-to be taken forward with the full Council (meeting 19 April 21).**
- c. **To discuss funding available and documentation-** Other funding available was discussed which included:
- FCC Communities Foundation- 'Community Action Fund' Which is available to Parishes and other groups who are based within 10 miles' radius of an FCC environment landfill site, and funds can be used for public areas including play areas etc. It is understood that a contributing third party (CTP) donor will need to be identified to cover 10.75% of the funding provided. MBC was mentioned as a potential CTP. **Agreed** that the Clerks Office apply for this funding, and will seek a specification for new equipment for the small child's play area at the KGVPF, including wetpour and benches. This will provide a quote to assist with a bid for funding (deadline 2 June 21). This spec can then be used to seek further quotations, to be agreed by **round robin** arrangement with the PCH committee.

Consultation with the public will also be key towards understanding what is required.

Action- NB & KO

- MBC S106 funds for land west of 73 Haste Hill Rd (planning ref MA16/500014)- “£18,751.13 towards improvement, maintenance and refurbishment of the play and sports facilities at King George V Playing Field Walnut Tree Lane Loose”. This is still to be claimed, and a form has been received, which has to be completed in order that MBC can release the funds. It was noted that some quotes have been received for MPU (multiplay units). -JC to look into this further. **Action RFO**
- A letter had been received from the Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP regarding a fund for boosting tourism to towns & local areas after the pandemic, called ‘welcome back fund’. Available funding will be given directly to Borough Councils. It was **Agreed** that the RFO contacts MBC with a view to showing an interest in the funding for Loose Parish. It was mentioned about any available funding to be included within management plans. This to be agreed once funds are forthcoming. **Action-JC**

10. To discuss new RBS accounting system, including training and reporting-

The RFO gave a brief overview relating to a different type of reporting on the RBS system. Training will be undertaken by KO & JC scheduled for the 13 May 21. Further details following the training will be shared with the LPC in due course.

11. Risk (ongoing agenda item):

- a. To review and discuss any risk management issues with regards to finance-** Risk assessment record for finance & Admin was reviewed by the committee and **Agreed**. The matter of providing ‘digital tablets ‘to all Councillors was discussed. It was agreed that this suggestion is revisited later in the fiscal year. **Action Dec 21/Jan 22 F&A meeting agenda**
- b. To review risk record for the LPC and to take forward as relevant-** Nothing to report-This record will be tabled at the next appropriate meeting of the LPC. (21 June 21)

12. Publications/website/social media (ongoing agenda item):

To discuss matters generally and make any decisions as relevant- KO asked if the committee were happy with the new LPC Facebook page, VG said she was very happy with it, and thanked the Office for working on this which was felt to be a very worthwhile communication medium.

13. Ratification of any Round Robin agreements

It was ratified that the RR agreed (F&A mins 14(iii))- re quotation for RPII checks, which will be done by the RFO on the 27th Feb 20.

14. To discuss and make any decisions on the following reviews:

- a. Financial Regulations for the LPC-**Small amendments were made by the RFO-(section 4.1c clarified; 5.2 refers to changes to procedures with not having to sign invoices during pandemic restrictions; section 6.18 to add that the Caretaker has a credit card with limited limits). **Agreed** for the amended document to be circulated to all Councillors for information and agreement. **-Action RFO to add to LPC agenda (21/06/21 meeting)**
- b. Standing Orders for the LPC** –One amendment made by the RFO (Item 19 reference made to new adopted staff handbook)- (last reviewed Sept 20). **Agreed** for the document to be circulated to all Councillors for information and agreement. **-Action RFO to add to LPC agenda (21/06/21 meeting)** **Agreed** for the Chairman to receive hardcopies of Fin Regs/Standing Orders and staff handbook- **Action RFO**
- c. Press & Media Policy-**Changes made to section 8.1-amend to Clerk/ Dept Clerk/Communications and Media Clerk; Section 8.2-add social media and website will be used for Council information only.

Further changes include new format for all policies (e.g. font colour of title), new logo, Page numbers, 'calibri font' - **Action RFO**

- d. **Policy for the press & public on attending meetings**- Changes include new format for all policies (e.g. font colour of title), new logo, Page numbers, 'Calibri font' - **Action RFO**
- e. **Publications Scheme**-Changes identified to the document, included section 'minutes to be published' this should not include HR committee minutes; noted some boxes are missing in the table. Further changes include new format (e.g. font colour of title), new logo, page numbers, 'Calibri font'. To check statutory regulations on what documents should be included within this Publication Scheme. The document to then go to the Website working Group for further Action-**Action RFO**
- f. **Working alone Policy**-Agreed no changes except new format (e.g. font colour of title), new logo, page numbers, 'Calibri font'. - **Action RFO**
- g. **Vision ICT mailbox Charges**-(*n.b. This matter was passed to this Committee by the LPC at the meeting held on the 20th July 20 item 17e*). Problems are still being experienced by staff and Councillors regarding the remote hosting facility. It appears that the Councillor mailboxes are administered by Vision ICT and the staff mailboxes are administered by Microshade. Some concerns were raised on the passwords and accessibility during changeover. After some discussion it was **Agreed** that Microshade to take over the hosting of the Councillors mailboxes, as costed (See confidential minutes for information), which will make things more consistent. **Action KO/JC to take forward**

15. To discuss present Internal Auditor(IA) arrangements

It was **Agreed** to continue with the present checking arrangements as covered by the IA during 20/21.

16. To discuss any other matters for information only

- a. **Loose Parochial Charities accounts 31st March 2020**- The accounts as at the 31st March were received. An annual donation is given by the LPC of £150, which has never changed. It was agreed that a letter should be sent out to the Charity with a view to understanding future requirements. **JC Action**
 - Letter from Lloyds Bank-Information on changes to online card payments was mentioned.
 - HR Services Partnership- Information on new parent company, Marlow PLC.
 - The RFO stated that the AGAR will be agreed at the June LPC meeting due to bringing forward the AGM to the 4th May, and in view of the Internal Auditor not visiting until the 6th May.
 - At the last PCH meeting it was agreed that an extraordinary meeting should be convened if necessary to cover the re-opening of the Pavilion. However, in view of time constraints on the Clerks Office and the fact that NB has carried out an extensive risk assessment, it was felt that this is not now necessary.

The meeting closed at 21.48

Date of Next Meeting – 5th July 2021

Ratified by Chairman- date & signature