



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Meeting held on Tuesday 5th March 2019 @ 7.40 pm at Mortimer St Johns School, West End Road. RG7 3SH

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr. M. Dennett (Chairman), Cllr. J. Bull, Cllr. N. Carter, Cllr. N. Kiley, Cllr. C. Lewis (arrived at 7.55pm), Cllr. P. Wingfield

Clerk:

Mrs. L. Hannawin

Public/Press:

No members of the public and no members of the press present.

Part I

18/170 Public Questions

None

18/171 To receive any apologies for absence

Cllr. A. Richardson

18/172 To receive any declarations of interest

Cllrs. N. Kiley and C. Lewis declared an interest in 18/178: Mortimer Cricket Club

18/173 Minutes of Last Meeting

To resolve to APPROVE the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting on 3rd January 2019.

Proposed by Cllr. M. Dennett, seconded by Cllr. J. Bull, it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd January 2019 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

18/174 Income and Expenditure Report and Balance Sheet

To receive and approve the Income and Expenditure Report and Balance Sheet to 31st January 2019 for presentation to Full Council on the 14th March 2019:

The income and expenditure figures for January were reviewed and the following were noted:

- Nominal Code 4055 is over budget by 34%. This is because phone costs and internet line rental have been included here instead of in 4051: Admin Expenses. Admin Expenses is under budget by 65%.
- The salary payment showing for April 2018 is actually staff costs for March 2018. As a result, Nominal Code 4000: Staff Costs, shows 11 months worth of salary payments, with two months still to go. The Clerk will review the management of this with the internal auditor.
- The Youth Forum work has not yet been completed and the Berkshire Youth invoice, originally due to be settled on completion of the work in December, has not, therefore, been paid.

Proposed by Cllr. M. Dennett, seconded by Cllr. J. Bull, the Income and Expenditure Report and Balance Sheet to January 31st 2019 was **APPROVED** for presentation to Full Council on 14th March 2019, unanimously.

ACTION: CLERK

18/175 Community Projects Committee

To RESOLVE that the Community Projects Committee should cease to exist and that its functions be dispersed to other committees and working parties as outlined in this report for presentation to Full Council on the 14th March 2019:

Cllr. P. Wingfield presented a paper and the following points were noted:

- Many of the original projects identified by the NDP have now been completed or handed on to other committees.
- Moving forward, identified new projects would be overseen by other committees or managed by the SMPC Planning Working Party, which has a more flexible form of working, requires less formal administration and will be able to co-opt non-members of the council to give help and advice as required.
- Standing Orders and Committee Terms of Reference will need to be amended where necessary.

Proposed by Cllr. M. Dennett, seconded by Cllr. P. Wingfield, the motion was amended as follows: **To RESOLVE that the Community Projects Committee should cease to exist and that its functions be dispersed to other committees and working parties as outlined in this report for presentation to Full Council on the 14th March 2019: this acknowledges that this resolution will necessitate amendments to Standing Orders and Committee Terms of Reference.** This was **AGREED** unanimously.

18/176 Communications Committee

To RESOLVE that the Communications Committee should cease to exist and that its functions be dispersed to working parties and overseen by Finance and General Purposes for presentation to Full Council on the 14th March 2019:

At the Communications Committee meeting held on 5th February 2019 it was proposed

that:

- The Communications Committee is dissolved.
- A Communications Working Group, consisting of councillors and co-opted members, is established to oversee communications.
- A Communications Co-ordinator represents the Communications Working Group on the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- The Finance and General Purposes Committee oversee the Communications budget and spend.
- Decisions with regards to communications are taken by Finance and General Purposes or Full Council as appropriate.

Further to a discussion, in addition to the above, it was agreed that:

- A member of the Communications Working Group should sit on each committee.
- Standing Orders and Committee Terms of Reference will need to be amended where necessary.

Proposed by Cllr. C, Lewis, seconded by Cllr. J. Bull, the motion was amended as follows: **To RESOLVE that the Communications Committee should cease to exist and that its functions be dispersed to working parties and overseen by Finance and General Purposes for presentation to Full Council on the 14th March 2019: this acknowledges that this resolution will necessitate amendments to Standing Orders and Committee Terms of Reference.** This was **AGREED** unanimously.

ACTION: CLERK

18/177 Reserves Policy

To receive and APPROVE the updated Reserves Policy and note the draft reserves adjustments for presentation to Full Council on 14th March 2019:

The updated Reserve Policy and proposed reserve adjustments were discussed and it was noted that the final adjustment will depend on the February and March expenditure. As operational and maintenance costs are now separated from project costs, it was decided that the policy should be that General Reserves should hold a minimum of 9 months of operational/maintenance costs. The proposed reserve adjustments are in line with this policy.

Proposed by Cllr. P. Wingfield, seconded by Cllr. M. Dennett, the updated Reserves Policy and draft reserve adjustments were **AGREED** and noted for presentation to Full council on the 14th March 2019, unanimously.

18/178 Parish Council Charges

To AGREE the charges for Parish Council services for the year 2019/2020:

As per the Budget, the effect of a 3% increase in fees was discussed with a view that prices would be rounded accordingly. Fees for clubs for annual hire charges for the Fairground were agreed along with the terms of play. A request from Mortimer Pre-School, regarding the use of the tennis courts for outdoor play, was considered and a trial period agreed in principle. The Clerk was asked to finalise the details and any charges.

Proposed by Cllr. P, seconded by Cllr. N. Kiley, the charges for Parish Council services for the year 2019/2020 were **AGREED** unanimously.

ACTION: CLERK

18/179 Grant Policy

To discuss the need for a SMPC grant policy by considering a possible draft policy:

Further to a discussion and a review of a draft policy, it was decided that any request for financial assistance should continue to be considered on a case by case basis. This will be taken to Full Council on the 14th March 2019 for approval.

18/180 Committee Quorum

To review and AGREE the Committee quorum as per Standing Orders and Committee Terms of Reference for presentation to Full Council on the 14th March 2019.

The discrepancy between the committee quorum as per Standing Orders and the committee quorum as per the Committee Terms of Reference was discussed. To bring the Committee Terms of Reference in line with Standing Orders it was **AGREED** to amend the Committee Terms of Reference to:

- The Committee quorum is set by Standing Orders at not less than three Councillor members

18/181 Asset Register

To receive the Asset Register for presentation to Full Council on the 14th March 2019:

The Asset Register was received and APPROVED for presentation to Full Council on the 14th March 2019.

18/182 Planning Working Group

To discuss taking forward the Planning Working Group:

Cllr. P. Wingfield reviewed the purpose of the Planning Working Group and presented a schematic as a means of deciding upon and managing potential new projects. Potential new projects will need to be considered by the new Council in May in order that necessary budget decisions can be taken as part of the 2020/2021 budget process and projects developed over the next three years. It was agreed to take this to Full Council to agree the process and necessary resources.

18/183 “Crazy Nellie”

To receive an update on “Crazy Nellie”:

The stolen van has now been found but it is uncertain as to whether Crazy Nellie remains inside. Due to the low cost of Crazy Nellie and the insurance excess figure it was agreed not to pursue an insurance claim.

18/184 Bank Reconciliation

To receive and note the Bank Reconciliation report for the period 1st October – 31st December 2018:

Cllr. J. Bull provided a verbal report that he had inspected and confirmed the Bank Reconciliations in full accordance with the Financial Regulations, which was received and noted.

18/185 Orders Placed Outside of Financial Regulations

To receive and note orders placed for purchases with a value from £1001 to £5000, without 3 quotations having been obtained - FR 11.1i:

Cllr. N. Kiley reported:

- Although 3 quotations had been obtained for the Drainage Report for the station car park, the lowest one did not meet the necessary requirements and the decision was taken to go with the second lowest quote.
- Four contractors had been asked to tender for the new 3 year Grounds Maintenance contract but only two quotes were received. It was agreed to place an order with the incumbent supplier at the lower rate.

18/186 Members Bids and Parish Grants

To discuss Members Bids and Parish Grants:

Some money is still available from West Berkshire Council from Members Bids and Parish Grants. It was agreed for the Clerk to email councillors and request for ideas to be brought to Full Council on the 14th March 2019.

ACTION: CLERK

18/187 Matters Arising for information only

Cllr. N. Carter reported on the following:

- District Parish Council. Cllr. Carter will be attending this on the 14th March 2019 and will not, therefore, be at Full Council.
- “Mass Unwrap” event. Plastic Free Mortimer is participating in the “Mass Unwrap” on Saturday 9th March 2019 from 10:00-12:00 at Tesco Express Burghfield and Sunday 10th March from 11:00-13:00 at Budgens Mortimer. Council members are invited to attend to support the event.

The Clerk reported on the following:

- Making Tax Digital (MTD). As of 1st October 2019, all councils with an annual taxable turnover above the VAT threshold of £85,000 have to keep their records digitally and submit VAT return figures directly to HMRC via compatible software. SMPC is registered for VAT, but does not have an annual taxable turnover above the threshold and therefore will not have to comply with the new regulations. It can choose to do so and Rialatas software is compatible. This would incur an annual support fee of £59.00.
- Operation London Bridge. The office is reviewing the required protocol in the event of the passing of a Senior National figure.
- Managing Council Elections. The office is promoting the elections via the website, FB and Council noticeboards. A separate page has been set up on the website for election information.

18/188 Future Agenda Items

Cllr. J. Bull requested that Garth Hall be added as a future agenda item but was unaware that this had been discussed at Full Council on the 14th February 2019. Cllr. C. Lewis is drafting a proposal for the Garth Hall Working Party to consider. Once agreed, this will be

submitted to the RBL, prior to a joint meeting of the two parties being held.

Close

The meeting closed at 10.00pm