



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held at Mortimer Methodist Church Hall on Tuesday the 5th of July at 7pm.

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr. M. Dennett (Chairman), Cllr. G. Bridgman, Cllr. S. Hill, Cllr. D. Morsley.

Officers:

Mrs. L. Hannawin.

Public/Press:

There were no members of the public nor press in attendance.

Part I

22/012 Public Questions (for agenda items only)

None.

22/013 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr. N. Carter and Cllr. C. Lewis.
Cllr. D. Kilshaw did not attend, and no apologies were received.

Cllr. A. Marsden did not attend. Apologies were left by phone message but not picked up in time for the meeting. The phone was checked on the 14/07/2022 and the message found to have been left at approximately 16:30 on the 5th of July.

22/014 To receive any declarations of interest

To receive from Members at this point or at any point during the meeting, in respect of any items included on the agenda, disclosure of any interests in line with the Parish Council's Code of Conduct and gifts and hospitality in line with Government legislation.

None.

22/015 Minutes of Last Meeting

To resolve to APPROVE the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting of the 9th of June 2022.

RESOLVED with 1 abstention that these minutes be approved for signature by the Chairman as a true and correct record of the meeting.

22/016 Clerk's Report

To receive a report from the Parish Clerk outlining actions taken following the meeting held on the 9th of June 2022 and other updates.

1. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) was submitted to the external auditors, PKF Littlejohn, on the 20th of June.
2. The Notice of Public Rights and copies of the AGAR Sections 1 and 2 and Unaudited Declaration were posted to the website and noticeboards on the 21st of June: [Annual Return 2021/2022 | Stratfield-Mortimer Parish Council](#). The period of Public Rights commenced on Wednesday the 22nd of June and ends on Tuesday the 2nd of August.

The report was received.

22/017 Items to be taken into private session

To determine which items, if any, of the agenda should be taken with the public excluded.

None.

22/018 Committee and Working Party/Group Reports

1. Communications Working Party

No report submitted.

2. Strategy Working Party

No report submitted.

3. The Street Footway Widening

No further developments.

22/019 Items for Consideration and Resolution

1. Personnel Sub-Committee

To appoint the members of the Personnel Sub Committee.

The Personnel Committee consists of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council and two other members.

Cllr. Dennett proposed Cllrs. Bridgman and Lewis as the additional members.

Seconded by Cllr. Hill.

RESOLVED with 1 abstention.

2. Internal Auditor 2022/23

To resolve the appointment of Mrs. C. Connell as the Council's Internal Auditor for 2022/23.

Proposed by Cllr. Dennett.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

RESOLVED unanimously.

3. Subscriptions and Continuous Payments

To review the annual subscriptions and continuous payments for 2022/23 for recommendation to Full Council on the 14th of July 2022.

Proposed by Cllr. Dennett.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

RESOLVED unanimously.

4. Delegation Arrangements

To review the current delegation arrangements and Committee Terms of Reference (Standing order 5.j Scheduled Review).

Cllr. Dennett confirmed the review of the delegation to staff will be undertaken by the Personnel Committee in line with Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

The Terms of Reference were reviewed, and no changes made.

5. General Data Protection Register (GDPR) and Freedom of Information Review (FOI) - CLERK

To resolve a budget of £100.00 for a review of the Council's GDPR and FOI arrangements and compliancy.

The Clerk confirmed this would be undertaken by a third party and would inform the scheduled review due to take place in September by the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Proposed by Cllr. Dennett.

Seconded by Cllr. Bridgman.

RESOLVED unanimously.

6. Council Policies

a. To receive the current list of Council policies and agree any to be reviewed.

The list of Council policies was received. It was agreed that once the review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations was complete, a review of the Code of Conduct and Communications Policy, including the Social Media and Facebook policies, would be undertaken.

b. To consider the need for an Investment Strategy and agree actions to be taken.

Three example strategies were considered. It was agreed for the Clerk to draft an Investment Strategy for SMPC which reflects current practices:

- A working balance up to £85,000 to be maintained in Unity Trust.
- The balance of any fund to be maintained in The Public Sector Deposit Fund.
- Return on investment is secondary to maintaining the safety of the Council's funds.

7. Office Lease

To receive and resolve the signing of the office Lease.

The draft lease was received.

Cllr. Dennett proposed that on receipt, the engrossed version should be signed.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

RESOLVED unanimously.

22/020 Finance

1. Accounts to the 30th of April 2022

To receive and approve the Income and Expenditure Report to the 30th of April and the Balance Sheet as of that date.

The accounts were received.

Proposed by Cllr. Dennett.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

RESOLVED unanimously.

2. Play Area Remedial Works

To note that the play area works identified by the annual RoSPA inspection have been undertaken without obtaining 3 quotes.

Cllr. Hill confirmed that the work was identified as part of the annual RoSPA Report and it was prudent to undertake the work without getting 3 quotes to mitigate any potential risk to the Council.

22/021 Items for information only

Minor Matters

- The painting of the phone box has received negative comments on Facebook. The Clerk will follow up the outstanding work needed with the Custodian and provide a statement on the phone box and defibrillator via the website and Facebook Page.
- Windmill Court was briefly discussed. An update will be given at Full Council and a resolution will be considered with regards to writing to the Windmill Court portfolio holder at West Berkshire Council (WBC).
- Permission has been received from WBC to install a shed for Council use in the garden behind the office. A budget will be requested at Full Council.
- Arisings from strimming have been left on the graves in the Council cemetery. The Clerk will liaise with the contractor.

22/022 Communications

To identify items for communicating

- Painting of the phone box and defibrillator.
- Victoria Road tree works once an update has been received from WBC.

22/023 Future Agenda Items

To identify future agenda items

Investment Strategy.

22/024 Exclusion of Press and Public

To pass a resolution under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting at Part II, items identified at 22/017 on the agenda due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Not needed.

Close

The meeting closed at 20:26.
Date of next meeting: TBC