

# Ringmer Parish Council

Minutes of the Office and Finance Committee Meeting

Held on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at 10:00 in the Parish Rooms

<b>Present:</b>		
Cllr. David Terry (Chairman of Committee)	Cllr. Gordon Sims	Cllr. Sarah Philips
Cllr. Gavin May	Cllr. John Kay	Mrs. Carol Hodgson (Acting Clerk/RFO)
Item	Agenda Item (OF21)	Act
1.	<b>To receive apologies for absence</b> Apologies were received from Cllr. Morgan	
2.	<b>Declarations Of Members' Interests and Dispensation Requests</b> There were no declarations of member' interests nor any dispensation requests	
3.	<b>To accept the minutes from the Office &amp; Finance Committee meeting held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2021</b> Members reviewed action points from the minutes of the previous meeting prior to acceptance. <b>RESOLVED: The Minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2021 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as being a true record.</b>	
4.	<b>Public questions or comments relating to items on this agenda</b> There were no members of the public present.	
5.	<b>To consider recommendations from other Committees</b>	
5.1	<b>Personnel Sub-Committee</b> <b>a. To allocate up to £775 from the Councillors / Staff Training budget for the Assistant Clerk to undertake the CiLCA</b> Members discussed Cllr. Terry's suggestion of adding a 'pay-back period' clause to employees' undertaking training where it is funded by RPC costing in excess of £1,500. All agreed to this proposal. <b>RESOLVED: To recommend to Full Council that up to £775 is allocated from the Councillors / Staff Training budget for the Assistant Clerk to undertake the CiLCA qualification.</b> <b>RESOLVED: To recommend to the Personnel Sub-Committee that RPC reserves the right to include a 'pay-back period' clause for any employee's undertaking training funded by RPC costing more than £1,500.</b>	
6.	<b>Finance:</b>	
6.1	<b>To receive the latest statement of accounts and make any recommendations to Full Council requiring action and decision</b> Members had been circulated the latest statement of accounts and reviewed the actual to budget variances. Further clarification was requested on the Parish Rooms rental / utility costs, and it was agreed to request a meeting with Kings Academy Ringmer to go through the points raised. Copies of the Occupational Licences will be circulated to Members prior to meeting with Kings Academy. <b>RESOLVED: That the latest statement of accounts was received and there were no actions or decisions for recommending to Full Council.</b> <b>RESOLVED: To set-up a meeting with Kings Academy Ringmer to discuss the Occupational Licence and rental/utility charging.</b>	OFF
6.2	<b>To receive the latest bank reconciliation</b> <b>RESOLVED: The latest bank reconciliation was received, agreed and signed by the Chairman as being a true record.</b>	DT/GS /GM/ OFF
6.3	<b>To receive the Reserves Statement including movement</b> <b>RESOLVED: The latest Reserves Statement was received.</b>	
6.4	<b>To consider allocation of additional CIL Funds received for Council approval</b> Members reviewed the current allocation of CIL Funds and monies that had been spent to date on Community Projects. Current unallocated funds were £18,788 in the 'Community Pot' and a further £139,982.61 being the latest round of funds received from Lewes DC (payments are received in April and October each year). Members considered various options of allocating CIL funds – including £50k for Community Match Funding to address traffic concerns on Church Hill (next financial year), extension of land to the graveyard, St. Mary's Church Flint Wall repairs (clarification required if CIL can be used or should this be borne through the precept), further considerations for the Village Hall and further allowance for projects in progress. Members considered introducing a time limit on using awarded CIL funding, to mitigate financial risk.	

	<p><b>RESOLVED: To recommend to Full Council to agenda an item for a discussion on 'Considering a land extension to the Graveyard'.</b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED: To provide an update to the next Full Council Meeting on the current situation with CIL Funds - to include introducing a time limit for using awarded funding and to review funds that are not used after 2 years.</b></p> <p><b>6.5 To receive an update on Bank Account signatories</b> There were no further updates to report. This item is still in progress.</p> <p><b>6.6 To receive an update on appointing a Parish Office cleaner</b> A cleaner had not yet been appointed. Cllr. Philips advised she had someone interested and it was agreed to invite them to the Parish Office the following week.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: To delegate authority to the Acting Clerk to make arrangements to appoint a Cleaner within the agreed budget.</b></p> <p><b>6.7 To consider any Grant Applications</b></p> <p><b>a. Royal British Legion</b> The Ringmer branch of the Royal British Legion had applied for an annual grant of £300 to cover expenses in connection with the Remembrance Parade on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2021. Cllr. Terry proposed and Cllr. Kay seconded to award the grant. All voted unanimously in favour.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: To recommend to Full Council to award a grant of £300 to the Royal British Legion.</b></p>	
	<p><b>7. Budget preparation for 2022/23</b></p> <p><b>7.1 To receive the forecast of income and expenditure to 31-Mar-22</b> <b>RESOLVED: That the forecast of income and expenditure to 31-Mar-22 was received</b></p> <p><b>7.2 To consider expenditure for inclusion in the 2022/23 budget</b> Following a review of the forecasted income and expenditure to 31-Mar-22, Members proposed that the Communications budget should be increased by £1,500 to £2,500. <b>RESOLVED: To recommend to Full Council to increase the Communications budget from £1,000 to £2,500 to help improve the circulation of information throughout the Parish.</b></p> <p><b>7.3 To consider a budget amount to recommend to the Full Council</b> A draft 2022/23 budget for Office and General + Staffing had been circulated to Members. Following a careful review, Members agreed to recommend setting the 2022/23 Office and General budget at £39,683 and the 2022/23 Staffing Budget at £50,207. Making a total of £89,890 <b>RESOLVED: To recommend to Full Council to set the 2022/23 Office and General budget at £39,683 and the 2022/23 Staffing Budget at £50,207. A total of £89,890.</b></p>	
	<p><b>8. Other Matters</b></p> <p><b>8.1 To review the Office and Finance Committee Terms of Reference.</b> <b>RESOLVED: Cllr. Terry and the Acting Clerk to review the Office and General Committee's Terms of Reference for consideration at the next Committee Meeting</b></p> <p><b>8.2 To consider frequency of meetings and schedule Committee meeting dates to May 2022</b> Members requested that the date of the meetings should fall 2 weeks before the Full Council Meetings. <b>RESOLVED: Cllr. Terry – as Chairman - to propose a schedule of meeting dates for the ensuing year.</b></p> <p><b>8.3 To receive an update on arranging a Parish Council 'Strategy Day' incorporating working towards a 3 – 5-year financial forecast</b> A 'Strategy Day' had not yet been arranged but Members noted a similar item had been referred to the Full Council for consideration. No further action was required at present.</p> <p><b>8.4 To receive any updates on the future running of Ringmer Swimming Pool</b> Cllr. Sims reported that Ringmer PC had not put forward a proposal at this stage but had asked ESCC to keep Parish Council informed of any proposals.</p> <p><b>8.5 To receive an update on the progress of the asset survey</b> There were no further updates to report. Cllr. Philips suggested along with the current review of litter and dog bins in the Parish, that each Councillor is allocated an area in the Parish to report on any assets.</p> <p><b>8.6 To receive any updates on recommendations put forward to Full Council requiring action and decision</b> This was previously discussed under item 3. when accepting the Minutes of the last meeting. The Clerk confirmed that the following recommendations had been approved by Full Council:</p> <p>a) Un earmarking of reserves – Please refer to Cost Centre Report It was suggested as the budget agreed was for £150,000 and the precept was agreed at around £130,000 that the difference needs to be reflected as a heading, it was proposed to use earmarked reserves codes 312 Precept Offset £12,000 and 313 Special Projects the amount of £8,000 for the amount to be readily available and no longer held in reserves. Action – seek</p>	DT

	<p>approval from Council It was resolved to approve this.</p> <p>b) Merging of cost codes - Please refer to Cost Centre Report It was agreed to merge the earmarked reserve codes 301 – 304 which were all for play area equipment into one heading called Community Asset Renewal. Action – seek approval from Council It was resolved to approve this.</p> <p>c) To agree which budget to find the cost of £1,508.00 from the 2021 budget for installation of 2 signs to the Parish Office, at the B2192 Harrisons Lane Junction and at Harrisons Lane and Greater Paddock - Please refer to Cost Centre Report It was agreed to recommend to Council that Code 61 contingencies for £1,112.00 be used as well as Code 80 also contingencies for the amount of £301.00 and Code 73 Highway and Signage £200 be used to offset the cost for the installation of the 2 signs. Action – Seek approval from Council It was resolved to approve this subject to Cllr Gavin May providing a cheaper source. Action: Cllr Gavin May to provide details of a possible cheaper source and office to organise whether with cheaper source or, if no cheaper source found, with current quote.</p> <p>d) Adoption Procurement Policy For Ringmer Parish Council. (The Office and Finance Committee recommend adoption.) It was resolved to approve this.</p> <p><b>8.7 To identify any financial risks implications</b> Members considered the legal actions being taken by 2 separate entities and confirmed that appropriate action had been taken to mitigate the cost of defence, if needed.</p>	
9.	<p><b>To consider any other financial matters that cannot be held over to the next agenda at the Chairman's discretion</b> There were no other financial put forward for consideration</p>	
10.	<p><b>Date of next meeting and items for inclusion on the agenda</b> Cllr. Terry and the Acting Clerk to liaise and advise on the date of the next meeting. Cllr. Terry requested that 'Treasury Strategy' was added as an item to the next agenda.</p>	
11.	<p><b>Close of Meeting</b> There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.39am</p>	