

**Minutes of The Finance Committee held at The Rackliff Centre on**

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021 at 7.30 pm**

**Members Present:**

Cllr M O'Callaghan (MO), Chairman, Cllr Liz Ellicott (LE), Cllr B Edwards (BE), Cllr A Britcher – Allan (ABA) and Cllr D Funnell (DF)

**Officers Present:**

Mrs S Denne (SD) and Mr K Watson (KW)

**Cllr O'Callaghan was duly elected as Chairman and Cllr Funnell was duly elected as Vice-Chairman**

**Members of the Public:**

None

**1. Enquire whether anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting**  
No-one present intended to film, photograph and/or record the meeting.

**2. To receive and approve apologies for absence**  
None.

**3. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**  
None.

**4. Declarations of Lobbying**  
None.

**5. Minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021**  
These were agreed, and it was **RESOLVED** that the Chairman signed them as a true record  
5.1 Matters outstanding from these minutes (not listed as separate agenda items):  
None.  
5.2 Matters outstanding from previous minutes:  
None

**6. Open session for questions from the public:**  
None.

**7. Budget 2021/2022**  
i. It was approved the replacement Deputy Clerk role will be paid at spine point 19 of the National Joint Council (pay agreement) for local government services. This equals £25,481 per annum, pro-rata for the 15 hours' current job requirement. Annual leave, under the same agreement is set as 22 days per annum, pro-rata.  
ii. Officer Denne advised the draft Internal Audit for 2020/2021, completed by David Buckett, had been received and was receiving attention. The final version will be an Agenda

Item at Full Council Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021. Key points are to ensure the monthly reconciliation review by a Cllr (on a rota basis) and the quarterly reconciliation review is approved at Full Council. **Action:** KW to plan accordingly.

Cllr O’Callaghan proposed we complete a 2022/2023 consultation budget with residents due to the likely constraints on public services in the next financial year. The consultation to ask residents if they would be prepared to pay more Community Charge to maintain and improve village services (e.g. public bin emptying, bench maintenance) or accept a reduction in these services. The proposal was approved. **Action:** MOC please draft the proposed questions for residents. Cllr Edwards advised the youth organisations are financially better placed this year and we should consider alternatives for the budgeted £6,500. Cllr O’Callaghan questioned the £60,000 Contingency and Officer Denne explained the Council should always have sufficient to largely cover our annual Precept which is £79,000 for 2021/2022, 50% received in April and September annually. Cllr O’Callaghan confirmed the Highways Capital Expenditure of £39,000 is to cover our costs should the A264 road crossing go ahead. In view of the recent KCC update advising the crossing will likely not be considered this financial year then it was approved we would consider using some of the budget for improvements to the footpath crossing at the junction of Rusthall Road and Langton Road. **Action:** MOC to investigate the next steps required. Formal approval was received for GTW Services to be our “handy man” maintenance contractor on a self-employed basis, cost £20 per hour, as originally agreed at Full Council Meeting 24<sup>th</sup> August 2020. **Action:** KW to arrange for GTW Services to monitor weekly and repair, as required, the bus stop at Parsonage Road which is Council property. It was approved that Officer Watson should investigate costs for repairing the Council owned table tennis table at Southwood Road Rec. as the original installation was partly funded by local resident, Mr Sefton. **Action:** KW please investigate. Cllr Britcher-Allan requested we support the Rusthall Village Association, Fair Trade Coffee Mornings and the Lunch Club by co-ordinating a submission under the new KCC: Covid-19 Recovery/Re-opening Funding. **Action:** KW please co-ordinate and complete. Officer Watson advised we are waiting for Living Forest quotes for the fallen tree at Fremlins Close and the 2021 Tree Inspection.

#### **8. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)**

Officer Denne confirmed the AGAR has been received by PKF Littlejohn LLP and all information provided is sufficient. **Action:** KW monitor for formal acceptance.

#### **9. Receipts and Payments quarterly update – Officer Watson**

In accordance with Agenda Item 7ii above it was approved that Officer Watson will schedule a quarterly review of Receipts and Payments at this Committee ahead of subsequent Full Council Meetings. **Action:** KW please arrange dates and issue invitations in due course.

#### **10. Hampshire Trust Bank authorised signatories – Officer Watson**

Officer Watson, Cllr O’Callaghan, Cllr Edwards and Cllr Ellicott were approved as authorised signatories with any three to sign for transactions.

#### **11. Contingency Arrangements – Officer Watson**

Pending the retirement of Officer Denne on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021 the following was approved: The Council will reimburse Officer Denne for any unused annual leave and additional hours worked but not taken as TOIL (Time off in lieu). Officer Denne will remain on the bank accounts until the formal changes submitted have been implemented. Chris May, Speldhurst RFO (Responsible Financial Officer) can be approached to support Officer Watson with regards training. **Action:** KW instigate engagement. In view of the excess hours owed to Officer Denne and the current 40 excess hours owed to Officer Watson, Full Council will be approached to support hiring of an additional part-time Admin Assistant. **Action:** KW please ensure an Agenda Item is added for Full Council Meeting 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

**12. Items for Information**

None.

The meeting closed at 9pm



..... Chairman  
Dated *2nd September 2021*