MINUTES of the Meeting of the FINANCE & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE held at 7.30pm on Thursday 18 February 2021 via Teams Video Conferencing.

Members present:

Malcolm Llewellyn (Chair)	Rodney Jackson
Julia Shorrocks (Vice-Chair)	Seth Jee
Allan Brown	Duncan Ranger

Also present: Sarah Groom, Clerk to the Council & Andy Beams Locum Finance Officer.

F20/21.095 Apologies for absence: Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Stephen Hand, Cllr John Lowman and Cllr Majsai although not formally on the Committee.

F20/21.096 Declarations of interest: There were no declarations of interest.

F20/21.097 Minutes of the meeting of Finance & Governance Committee of 21 January 2021: The minutes were received and accepted and would be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

F20/21.098 Adjournment for questions from the public: There being no members of the public present the Committee was not required to adjourn the meeting in accordance with Standing Orders.

F20/21.099 Payments and receipts for month 11 (January 2021): The Committee noted the following:

i. Payments of £114,381.79 (excl. VAT). This larger than normal sum includes a transfer of £85,000 to the new fixed term deposit account with the Hodge Bank.
ii. Receipts of £4,225 (no VAT).

F20/21.100 Financial monitoring for month 11 (January 2021): The Committee considered the account records in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the Council, as follows:

i. Members noted the Bank Reconciliations (where there has been activity). The other cashbook balances have not changed. These will be signed by the Vice-Chair.
ii. Members noted the Balance Sheet.
iii. Members noted the Detailed Income and Expenditure by Budget Heading. Water bills for the allotments include payments in advance.
iv. Members noted the Summary Income and Expenditure by Budget Heading, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the following for month 11 (January 2021):

i. Bank Reconciliations.
ii. Balance Sheet.
iii. Detailed Income and Expenditure by Budget Heading.
iv. Summary Income and Expenditure by Budget Heading.

F20/21.101 Deposits and investments: The Committee noted the current funds held by the Council at month 11 (January 2021) as follows. These include the two new bank accounts with United Trust and Hodge Bank.

Financial Institution	Account Type	Maturity Date	Amount
Unity Trust	Current account	n/a	£171,558.19
Nationwide	95 Day Savings Account	95 days' notice	£54,107.44
Nationwide	2 Year Fixed Term Bond	11/02/2021	£33,614.78

Cambridge & Counties BS	3 Year Fixed Term Bond	10/05/2021	£51,716.82
Cambridge & Counties BS	3 Year Fixed Term Bond	14/11/2021	£36,559
United Trust Bank	1 Year Fixed Term	17/12/2021	£85,000
Hodge Bank	1 Year Fixed Term	13/01/2022	£85,000

A further £46,386.97 is held with the CCLA in shares. The two Nationwide accounts are being joined together. In order to agree a third new bank account to transfer £85,000 to, the Committee agreed to delegate the decision on which account to open, to the Clerk in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee NOTED the current funds held by the Council at 31 January 2021 and AGREED to delegate the decision on which further bank account to open to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee.

F20/21.102 Financial Regulations: The Committee reviewed the Financial Regulations of February 2020 and recommend their consideration and adoption by Council on 25 February 2021. It was noted that a revised NALC model version may be available in the Spring, in time for a revised version to be considered at the May 2021 Council meeting, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to recommend the Financial Regulations for consideration and adoption by Council on 25 February 2021.

F20/21.103 Review of Internal Controls: The Committee considered a draft set of internal controls as required by the Financial Regulations to be programmed in to take place in February and July each year, prior to visits by internal auditors. It was agreed to recommend their consideration and adoption by Council on 25 February 2021, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to recommend the Internal Controls for consideration and adoption by Council on 25 February 2021.

F20/21.104 Risk Management Policy Statement: The Committee considered a Risk Management Policy Statement as required by Financial Regulation 17. It was agreed that further work will be undertaken on revising the Risk Management Policy, the Corporate Risk Register and a Business Continuity Plan/Disaster Recovery Plan for consideration at the June 2021 Committee meeting, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED that further work will be undertaken on revising the Risk Management Policy, the Corporate Risk Register and a Business Continuity Plan/Disaster Recovery Plan for consideration at the July 2021 Committee meeting.

F20/21.105 Action Plan: The Committee considered the Action Plan Version 14, updated at Estates & Facilities on 11 February 2021 and agreed to add an Action No. 36 to consider a Risk Management Policy, Corporate Risk Register and a Business Continuity Plan/Disaster Recovery suite of documents, for the July 2021 Committee. Cllr Shorrocks suggested that there were other actions that could be updated as they had not been updated for over a year. It was agreed to recommend the revised version for consideration and adoption by Council on 25 February 2021, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to recommend a Version 15 of the Action Plan for consideration and adoption by Council on 25 February 2021.

F20/21.106 Reeds Lane Play Area Drainage Consultant Fees: The Committee considered a virement of funds from Court Bushes Project Code 211-5720 to Recreation Grounds Projects Code 202-5720 of £2,500, to fund a

specialist drainage consultant to recommend a drainage solution for the whole site including the play equipment at Reeds Lane Recreation Ground, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to a virement of funds from Court Bushes Project Code 211-5720 to Recreation Grounds Projects Code 202-5720 of £2,500, to fund a specialist drainage consultant for Reeds Lane Recreation Ground.

F20/21.107 MSALC: The Committee reviewed the minutes of the MSALC meeting on 26 January 2021 and received a verbal update from Cllr Brown on the meeting held on the morning of 18 February 2021. At the meeting West Sussex Town and Parish Council's received a presentation from Professor Corpus on his report circulated to the Committee, and from Hampshire ALC on the services they could provide in future. The Committee considered the resolutions on the West Sussex Association of Local Councils annual general meeting agenda for 10am on 25 February 2021, and agreed the approach to be taken by the two Parish Council representatives on WSALC, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to support the three Special Resolutions to instruct the Directors of WSALC to:

(i) not purchase governance services from the Hampshire ALC;
(ii) work with the ESALC to re-establish a Sussex Association; and
(iii) appoint a new Chairman and Vice-Chairman of WSALC.

F20/21.108 Nationwide Bank Closure in High Street, Hurstpierpoint: The Committee considered the letter from Nationwide regarding the proposed closure of the Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks branches and agreed to draft a response. Cllr Shorrocks suggested this was personalized to the specific issues relevant to the parish such as poor transport links. The Committee also noted other responses where the Parish Council had not been invited to be involved, namely the letter signed by Andrew Griffith MP, WSCC Cllr Joy Dennis and Cllr Alex Simmons of Hassocks Parish Council and the letter sent formally from Hassocks Parish Council, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to draft a response to the communication from the Nationwide Bank concerning their closure of the Hurstpierpoint Branch.

The Committee was asked to note any information items, correspondence received or requests:

There were no items.

The Committee RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the following item, the press and public be excluded under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

Confidential Matters:

F20/21.109. Locum Finance Officer: The Committee received a verbal report requesting an extension to the current Locum Finance Officer arrangements, which was agreed.

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.45pm.

Chairman