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MINUTES of the Meeting of the FINANCE, GOVERNANCE & ESTATES COMMITTEE held at 7.30pm on Thursday 23 November 2023 at the Hurstpierpoint Village Centre.

Members present: Duncan Ranger (Chair) Malcolm Llewellyn Annette Street Mark Froud

Also present: Sarah Groom, Clerk to the Council & Responsible Finance Officer and Stephen Witchell, Estates & Facilities Manager.

F23/24.069: Apologies for absence: Apologies for absence were received from Cllr David Evans, Cllr Rodney Jackson and Cllr Claire Majasai, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee **ACCEPTS** the apologies for absence from Cllr David Evans, Cllr Rodney Jackson and Cllr Claire Majasai.

F23/24.070: Declarations of interest: There were no declarations of interest.

F23/24.071: Previous Minutes: The minutes of the Finance, Governance & Estates Committee meeting on 19 October 2023 were received and accepted by the Committee and signed by the Chair, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee **AGREED** the minutes of the Finance, Governance & Estates Committee meeting held on 19 October 2023.

F23/24.072 Adjournment for questions from the public: There were no members of the public present so the meeting was not adjourned.

F23/24.073 Parish Council Financial Monitoring for Month 7 (October 2023): The Committee noted:

- (i) Payments of £121,963.66 (EX VAT). This included a £100,000 transfer to the Unity Trust Savings Account on 3 October 2023.
- (ii) Receipts of £11,049.43 (VAT N/A). This includes the Q2 VAT Refund of £6,749.48.
- (iii) Bank Reconciliations. These were signed by Cllr Llewellyn.
- (iv) Balance Sheet.
- (v) Nominal Ledger.
- (vi) Income and Expenditure.
- (vii) The funds held in CCLA shares on 31 October 2023 of 103,694.53.
- (viii) The deposits and investments accounts on 31 October 2023 were noted.
- (ix) The Cambridge & Counties 1 Year Fixed Term Deposit was due to mature on 28 November 2023 and the Committee agreed to reinvest the £50,000, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee **AGREED** the Parish Council financial monitoring for Month 7 (October 2023) and to reinvestment £50,000 in the Cambridge and Counties 1 Year Fixed Term Bond Issue 64 at a rate of 5.2 Gross/AER% and the interest earned would be transferred to the current account with Unity Trust Bank.

F23/24.074 Village Centre Financial Monitoring for Month 7 (October 2023): The Committee noted:

- (i) Payments of £1,173.96 (VAT N/A).
- (ii) Receipts of £10,227.33 (VAT N/A).
- (iii) Bank Reconciliations. These were signed by Cllr Llewellyn.
- (iv) Balance Sheet.
- (v) Income and Expenditure.

- (vi) Bank accounts held were i) CAF Cash Current Account and ii) CAF Gold Savings Account. Maturity dates do not apply, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the Village Centre financial monitoring for Month 7 (October 2023).

F23/24.075: Parish Action Plan: The Committee reviewed the:

- i) **the Finance & Governance Action Plan:** The Committee noted the action plan.
- ii) **the Estates & Facilities Action Plan:** The Committee noted i) the indicative quote for the Reeds Lane drainage project had been received and it indicated the value will be over £25,000 net of VAT and therefore required to be advertised on Contracts Finder, ii) stockproof fencing had been installed at Ladies Walk, iii) the recommendations from the bin audit will be presented at the next meeting, and iv) a Section106 claim has been submitted for the Court Bushes container project, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the updated Action Plans for 2023/2024.

F23/24.076: Estates & Facilities Update: The Committee received an update report on Estates & Facilities Management. The Committee noted i) the need to replace further roof tiles at Court Bushes Community Hub that may have been re-used by MSDC following fire damage, ii) the flag-pole Christmas tree had been erected on the Village Garden but the High Street lights had unlit panels and the Sayers Common lights were not up yet and iii) the Chapel Workshop crack in brickwork had been inspected and the report will follow, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee NOTED the Estates & Facilities Management update report.

F23/24.077: Fees and Charges Review for 2024/25: The Committee reviewed the briefing note setting out the schedule of proposed charges for 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. An amendment was made to the description of the CPI on the first page and to the description of a non-resident on page three. The Committee agreed to recommend the report to Council for adoption, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to recommend the schedule of annual charges for 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 to Council for adoption, as amended.

F23/24.078: Budget Setting 2024/25: The Committee reviewed the draft Finance & Governance budget requirements for 2024/25 including staffing costs. The following amendments were agreed: i) Councillor Allowances would be amended to reflect the actual number of elected councillors able to claim the allowance, ii) the Professional Support budget would be increased by £500 to £1,500 mainly due to the likely costs needed for planning consultancy, iii) the insurance budget would be inflated by 40%, iv) Telephony would stay in the IT/Computer costs line as initially proposed and the 2023/24 coding of BT invoices would be amended, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the draft Finance & Governance budget requirements for 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, as amended.

F23/24.079: Budget Setting 2024/25: The Committee reviewed the draft Estates & Facilities Management budget requirements for 2024/25 and i) considered if the grounds maintenance budgets would need uplifting further as it was the intention to seek new quotes from 1 April 2024, ii) it was agreed to add a budget for cleaning the war memorial and some tree work to the adjacent tree, iii) it was agreed that the income from the small meeting room at the Village Centre should strictly come to the Parish Council due to the Lease arrangements with WSCC, and iv) the Business Rates at Court Bushes should be increased by 6.7%, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the draft Estates & Facilities Management budget requirements for 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, as amended.

F23/24.080: Phone and Broadband Contract Review: The Committee considered a proposal for the renewal of the phone and broadband services for Court Bushes Community Hub and the Parish Council office/Village Centre currently with British Telecom, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to postpone the renewal of the phone and broadband services for Court Bushes Community Hub and the Parish Council office/Village Centre currently with British Telecom until the technology improves, so lessons can be learnt from the roll out of VOIP by others.

F23/24.081: Draft CCTV Policy: The Committee considered a draft policy regarding the use of closed-circuit cameras for recommendation to Council for adoption. Amendments included i) consideration to be given to whether the policy could be incorporated into another such as the Data Protection Policy, ii) Appendix A to be completed and iii) a number of typing corrections. Due to the amendments required it was agreed that the Policy would be presented to Council in December 2023 instead of November 2023, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to recommend the draft CCTV Policy to Council in December 2023 for adoption, as amended.

F23/24.082: Court Bushes CCTV: The Committee considered a business case for the purchase of three extra cameras to cover Court Bushes Community Hubs external areas following a recent increase in vandalism, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to purchase three extra cameras at a cost of £1,895+VAT, plus additional cloud storage at an extra cost of £350+VAT, to cover Court Bushes Community Hub external areas, subject to securing Section 106 funding for the hardware.

F23/24.083: Draft Winter Plan 2023/24: The Committee considered a draft Winter Plan with a revised approach to previous years, for recommendation to Council for adoption. It was agreed to include details of the UKPN Priority Services Register and contact details for Age UK, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to recommend the draft Winter Plan to Council for adoption, as amended.

F23/24.084: To note any further information items, correspondence received or requests.

There were no additional items to note.

There being no other business, the Chair closed the meeting at 10.14pm.

Chair