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Village Centre
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MINUTES of the Meeting of the FINANCE, GOVERNANCE & ESTATES COMMITTEE held at 7.30pm on Thursday 22 February 2024 at the Hurstpierpoint Village Centre.

Members present:

Duncan Ranger (Chair)	Malcolm Llewellyn
David Evans	Claire Majsai
Mark Froud	Annette Street
Rodney Jackson	

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

F23/24.111: Apologies for absence: Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Barry Forster, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee ACCEPTS the apologies for absence from Cllr Barry Forster.

F23/24.112: Declarations of interest: There were no declarations of interest.

F23/24.113: Previous Minutes: The Committee considered the minutes of the Finance, Governance & Estates Committee meeting on 18 January 2024, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the minutes of the Finance, Governance & Estates Committee meeting held on 18 January 2024.

F23/24.114: Adjournment for questions from the public: There were no members of the public present.

F23/24.115: Parish Council Financial Monitoring for Month 10 (January 2024): The Committee noted:

- (i) Payments of £51,207.98 (EX VAT). This included December 2023 and January 2024 salaries.
- (ii) Receipts of £56,092.65 (VAT N/A). This included a £45,000 transfer from the Savings account.
- (iii) Bank Reconciliations. These were signed by Vice-Chair Cllr Jackson.
- (iv) Balance Sheet.
- (v) Nominal Ledger.
- (vi) Income and Expenditure.
- (vii) The funds held in CCLA shares on 31 January 2024 of 105,087.46. The Committee noted the account was not covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.
- (viii) The deposits and investments accounts on 31 January 2024 were noted.
- (ix) The Redwood Bank 1 Year Fixed Term Deposit renewal offer was 4.65% for 12 months, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the Parish Council financial monitoring for Month 10 (January 2024): and to reinvest the £100,000 in the Redwood Bank in a 1 Year Business Bond at 4.65%, and that the interest earned from the matured account would be transferred to the current account with Unity Trust Bank.

F23/24.116: Village Centre Financial Monitoring for Month 10 (January 2024): The Committee noted:

- (i) Payments of £4,907.83 (VAT N/A).
- (ii) Receipts of £2,171.35 (VAT N/A).
- (iii) Bank Reconciliations. These were signed by Vice-Chair Cllr Jackson.
- (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 10 (January 2024).

F23/24.117: Reserves Policy: The Committee reviewed the Reserves Policy and agreed to recommend it to Council for re-adoption, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to recommend the Reserves Policy to Council for re-adoption.

F23/24.118: Savings and Investments Policy: The Committee reviewed the Savings and Investments Policy. A question was raised with regard to clause 4.1, which requires all banking institutions used to be covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS). The CCLA account is not covered by the FSCS therefore clause 4.1 may need amending to relate to just short term investments as defined in clause 3.1, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to recommend the Savings and Investments Policy to Council for re-adoption subject to an amendment required to clause 4.1.

F23/24.119: Parish Action Plan: The Committee reviewed the:

- i) **the Finance & Governance Action Plan:** The Committee noted the Action Plan and it was agreed that the Business Plan would be re-prioritised now that the Regulation 19 Mid Sussex District Plan Review work was completed.
- ii) **the Estates & Facilities Action Plan:** The Committee reviewed the Action Plan and noted the progress against targets, and it was:

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

F23/24.120: Estates & Facilities Update: The Committee received an update report on Estates & Facilities Management. The issues arising from the flood at Court Bushes were resolved. The new CCTV cameras were being installed this week but an issue with the WiFi had arisen. It was confirmed that the final Green Circle sign had been installed and that the proposed new dog waste bin for Bullfinch Lane would be provided once the funding was secured, and it was:

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

F23/24.121: Grounds Maintenance Contracts: The Committee considered agreeing a revised start date for the new grounds maintenance contracts, to change from 1 April 2024 to 1 October 2024 (to end on 31 March 2029), and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to a revised start date for the new grounds maintenance contracts, to change from 1 April 2024 to 1 October 2024 (to end on 31 March 2029).

F23/24.122: Reeds Lane Drainage Project: The Committee considered a quote from a drainage specialist to manage the tender process and oversee the works. It was agreed to seek alternative quotes for the legal services required. Both fees would be re-claimed from the Section 106 fund, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the quote from a drainage specialist to manage the Reeds Lane Drainage Project tender process and oversee the works at a cost of £6,000 to be funded from Section 106 funds.

F23/24.123: South Avenue Recreation Ground Drainage: The Committee considered agreeing to the installation of an underground drain on the access track south of the bowling green to help alleviate surface water run-off, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to the installation of an underground drain on the access track south of the bowling green to help alleviate surface water run-off, at no cost to the Council.

F23/24.124: Energy Contract Renewals: The Committee reviewed the current market conditions and considered agreeing new electricity supply contracts for 1 June 2024. It was agreed that the renewal offers would be re-considered at the 18 April 2024 Committee meeting, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to re-consider the electricity contract renewals for 1 June 2024 at the 18 April 2024 Committee meeting.

F23/24.125: Court Bushes Community Hub: The Committee considered two requests for exclusive hire of the Function Room and Club Lounge at Court Bushes, received from current users. Following a thorough debate the Committee agreed that it would not offer exclusive hire of the Function Room and Club Lounge at this time but would be happy to discuss any options that helped hirers make better use of the building and which helped generate additional income for the venue, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED not to offer hirers exclusive use of the Function Room and Club Suite at this time.

F23/24.126: To note any further information items, correspondence received or requests.

F23/24.126.1: All Councillors had been sent an email from a resident of Kingsland Cottages, Reeds Lane requesting an Operation Watershed bid. Cllr Llewellyn explained the progress to date on all relevant agencies coming together including Andrew Griffith MP, to try to resolve flooding issues in Sayers Common. At this stage there is no solution identified therefore an Operation Watershed bid is not appropriate at this time.

There being no other business, the Chair closed the meeting at 9.33pm.

Chair