



Local Government for Langton Green, Speldhurst, Ashurst and Old Groombridge

Minutes of a Finance Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 23rd November 2022 at
7.30pm in the Gallery Room, Langton Green Village Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllrs Ellery (Chair), Barrington Johnson, Rowe and Scarbrough.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mrs K Neve – Clerk, Mr C May – Finance Officer (RFO).

1. Covid Compliance

Councillors were asked if they were comfortable with the arrangements for the meeting, which they confirmed. There were no other specific items relating to covid compliance.

2. To enquire if anyone present intends to record the meeting:

The meeting was recorded by the Clerk for accuracy of the minutes. The recording would be deleted once the meeting minutes are signed off at the next Finance Committee meeting.

3. To receive and approve apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Woodliffe and Cllr Rajah (both work commitments). Apologies were also received from Cllr Mrs Lyle (ex-officio).

4. Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

5. Declarations of Lobbying

The Chair declared an interest in the Speldhurst Recreation Committee as he was a Trustee.

6. Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting dated 11th October 2022, copies having previously been forwarded to Members, be approved, and signed as a correct record.

7. Public Open Session

There were no members of the public present.

8. Review of Action Points

The Clerk reported that all action points had been completed.

9. Interim Payments

Mastercard: £9 card charges; £239.98* ShellyStore for energy monitors; £13* Companies House for SPC Pavilion Ltd Confirmation; £7.89* to Amazon for Office Sign (CCTV) and £29.90* to Amazon for LGRG equipment.

Payments marked with * were made under delegated authority.

10. Financial position to review expenditure vs budget at 15th November 2022:

Summary sheets and detailed reports had been circulated prior to the meeting. The RFO confirmed that the three virements agreed at the last meeting had been completed. These were: 4057 Legal fees (Land) £3,000 and 4107 Community Organisations £3,000 to 4900 Contingency.

11. Financial position to review expenditure for the Pavilion at 15th November 2022:

Summary sheets and detailed reports had been circulated prior to the meeting. The RFO confirmed that the Pavilion Manager had now been added.

12. Budget Virements

Virements would be considered under 19. Precept.

13. Banking and reserves

All accounts were in order, reconciled and within the FSCS limits. The RFO reported that Nationwide Building Society (BS) had increased the interest rate to 1.75%; Cambridge BS was still 0.75% but with easy access. Hampshire Trust Bank (HTB) was still 0.25% on 60 days' notice. He suggested that HTB be given notice to withdraw money leaving a minimum balance to keep the account open. £35,000 be transferred to Nationwide and other options be investigated. **RESOLVED** to advise HTB of the intention to withdraw.

14. Committee and Working Group expenditure

There were no issues to review.

15. Listing of Payments at Full Council

The Finance Committee Chair had requested that the list of payments at Full Council be listed under the Finance Committee report in future. The RFO explained that the Finance section at Full Council was to report on matters, decisions and requests for authorisation (eg on expenditure over the Finance Committee's limit of £5,000). The list of payments does not emanate from a meeting and therefore does not come under this section and is a Full Council matter, and therefore should be reported by the Chair.

16. Finance Committee Terms of Reference

The terms of reference were due for review. No changes were proposed. The spending limit of £5,000 would be reviewed at next year's review.

The Chair of Full Council would be requested to implore Councillors to make their availability and attendance known to the Clerk as only four attended this meeting, which was the required quorum.

17. Grant requests

There were none. The Clerk reported, however, that the Speldhurst Recreation Ground Committee had notified her that they had received new quotes for a slide replacement, the cost of which the council had previously agreed to match fund up to £8,000. The new quotes meant that they would need to request further funding. They would therefore be submitting another grant application and

wanted to make the parish council aware at the earliest opportunity. Councillors noted this but it was agreed not to make any changes to the budget at this stage, but they would consider the application when it came and funds would be made available from contingency if it was agreed.

18. Staff and Training

There was currently no training booked.

19. Budget 2023-24

The RFO had still not received the Tax Base figures from TWBC but was hopeful that they would be available for the December Full Council meeting.

There was much discussion on the figures and the RFO was asked to make some changes:

- Carry forward all figures into next year (e.g. trees)
- Increase next year's CCTV budget
- Verify salary figure for this financial year
- Reduce income of Café rental

Concern was expressed about the deficit from the Pavilion, which was mainly down to energy costs, even though the RRIM EMR (Repair, Renewal, Investment and Maintenance Ear Marked Reserves) balance would be used to offset a substantial part of it. There was a review of the boiler system and how this could be changed but it may not be able to impact next year.

The CCTV (4208) actual payments made so far this year were to upgrade the cameras in the office and add them to the same system used in the car park and pavilion. The annual service agreement was due for renewal and had increased substantially because of this. The RFO was asked to contact the company and negotiate a reduced service agreement, however it was agreed that this year's invoice should be paid (unless a reduced agreement was agreed) and alternatives would be sought next year.

There was further discussion regarding the contingency account. The RFO explained that in previous years the average amount held in the contingency at the start of a financial year was £25k. This varied if, for example, it was not all used it and it was carried forward, or if, under pressure from other requests, there was not that amount available. This year there was £35,300 still unused (£4.5k would be needed for CCTV), which meant there was £30k still in the account. If there were no further requests in this financial year, there would be £40k available including the additional £10k budgeted for next year. Further funds would be considered for the Speldhurst play area which meant that there was about £33k still available which was far higher than in previous years. He noted that the shop in Speldhurst might also need a grant to be considered next year.

20. Items for Information

- The Clerk advised that after a review of the asset register the insurance premium had increased by £200. This would be included in the December list of payments for approval.
- Dates of meetings for 2023/24:
 - Wednesday 4 January 2023 (only if necessary)
 - Monday 20 March 2023
 - Monday 12 or Monday 26 June 2023 (TBC)
 - Monday 9th October 2023
 - Monday 20th November 2023
 - Wednesday 3rd January 2024 (only if necessary)
 - Monday 18th March 2024

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting closed at 8.47pm.

Finance Committee Action Points

Action Number	Action	Owner	Date created	Status
37/22	Chase Tivoli for invoices for canine refuse collection	RFO	11/10	Complete
38/22	Add new line in spreadsheet for Pavilion Manager	RFO	11/10	Complete
39/22	Add new statutory clauses to Standing Orders and Fin Regs for Governance Committee	Clerk	11/10	Complete
40/22	Make virements for this year's budget from sections 4057 and 4107	RFO	11/10	Complete
41/22	Make changes to next year's budget as per list	RFO	11/10	Complete
42/22	Send out new budget form	RFO	11/10	Complete
43/22	Book room for meeting on 23 rd November	Clerk	11/10	Complete
44/22	Make virement from contingency to CCTV when contract figure was known	RFO	23/11	Ask Chris
45/22	Update Terms of Reference on Website	Clerk	23/11	In progress
46/22	Contact Sunstone regarding the service maintenance agreement	RFO	23/11	Complete
47/22	Give HTB notice of intention to withdraw funds	RFO	23/11	Complete
48/22	Investigate higher interest rates for the money we are giving notice on at HTB.	RFO	23/11	Ask Chris
49/22	Publicise read only Rialtas account to all councillors	RFO	23/11	Ask Chris
50/22	RFO to calculate Salary figure based on Governance recommendation	RFO	23/11	Ask Chris
51/22	RFO to carry forward figures (i.e. trees)	RFO	23/11	Ask Chris
52/22	Full Council Chair to re-emphasise need for Councillors to advise attendance.	Clerk	23/11	Check with Paul/Chris
53/22	Pay insurance premium	RFO	23/11	Complete