



**Working for the Community in Rotherfield, Mark Cross,
Eridge Green, Boarshead and surrounding areas**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY 18th APRIL 2017 AT 19:30
IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL**

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. L. Henrick (Chair)

Cllr. R. Harris.

Cllr. N. Wickenden

Cllr. T. Gilbert

Cllr. A. Martin

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (LGA 1972 s 85).

Cllrs. D. Thomas and Watson Smith submitted apologies for absence.

2. TO RECEIVED DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

None. The Chair reminded Councillors that they should declare an interest if at any point in the meeting they became aware of one in connection with an agenda item. Clerk has reviewed the issue raised regarding all Councillors having an interest in the matter as Council Tax Payers. It has been determined that section 10 (2) (c) vi of the Council's code of Conduct, as adopted at the 30th August 2012 Parish Council Meeting, covers the matter. It is therefore not necessary to pass a separate dispensation for Councillors to deal with Budget and Precept matters.

3. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING 6th DECEMBER 2016 & MATTERS ARISING.

Draft minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was **RESOLVED** that they were a true record and the Chair signed them.

4. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS: -

a) Approval of draft accounts for Financial Year 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017.

These were circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting. The accounting entries relating to the £6K grant toward the pitch drainage were discussed at length.

ACTIONS for CLERK

- i. Adjustments for £6K grant receipt for pitch drainage work. Clerk requested that he be emailed with precise details of the adjustments required before he closes the accounts for the financial year ended 31st March 2017, this to enable the entries to be made for the April 2017 payments and receipts.
- ii. Refund of Burial fees. Entries to be passed to reduce the income figure in this account by the £3700 refunded and to clear the "burial refunds" account.

It was **RESOLVED** that the draft accounts be **APPROVED** subject to the corrections detailed above.

b) Agreement of any adjustments required to the 2017/18 Budget.

RESOLVED that no adjustments are required.

c) Review of Council cash balances and allocation of reserves.

Currently funds are held with Santander and the Clerk reported that from 30th January 2017 the UK Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) has covered the first £85K of the deposits of small local authorities.

Balances of the Council's accounts as at close of business on Thursday 27th April were as follows: -

- Current account - £10,481.26 cr
- Deposit account - £56,803.59 cr

Clerk suggested that consideration be given open an additional account with a second bank to take advantage of the fact that the £85k protection available under

the FSCS is per deposit holding institution but it was considered that the total balances will not exceed £85K for a significant period.

ACTION for **CLERK** to adjust reserves when first Precept instalment is received to reflect the Council's policy of holding 50% of annual precept as an earmarked reserve.

- d) **Review of Asset Register and any changes required to insurance policy cover.**
Current register needs review and is currently in Excel spreadsheet format. **CLERK** to action.
- e) **Recommendation from Clerk that Parish Council purchase software for Asset Register management.**
Current accounting software provider also offer an asset management package and Clerk recommends that this is investigated. **RESOLVED** that **CLERK** investigate the Asset Management software provided by RBS who supply our accounting software to consider if it offers any benefits over the current register.
- f) **Review of Financial Regulations.**
ACTION for **CLERK** to publish an amended version of these to reflect the increased delegated spending limits agreed at the March Council meeting.
- g) **Review of banking arrangements and information regarding interest rates available. Information regarding use of electronic banking for making payments.**
Current interest rate on deposit account is 0.10% paid monthly. Once the additional signatories are confirmed Clerk will investigate if electronic payments would save time.
- h) **List of grants for payment at the April 2017 Council meeting.**
It was **RESOLVED** that the following grant payments be made at the April meeting of the Parish Council.

Recipient	Purpose	Amount
Rotherfield St Martin	Support Grant	£500.00
Wealden CAB	Support grant	£300.00
T/W Samaritans	Support Grant	£200.00
Rotherfield Friendship Club	Support Grant	£200.00
Smith and Fermor Charity	Support Grant	£500.00
North Weald Community Transport	Support Grant	£1,016.00
Kent Air Ambulance	Support Grant	£250.00
Total		£2,966.00

The following payments will be made when required by the recipients

Friends of Rotherfield Surgery	Grant for cost of P/L insurance.	£75.00
Royal British Legion	Donation for Poppy Wreaths	£80.00
Mark Cross Community Centre	Grant for Xmas lights	£200.00
Total		£355.00

- i) **Review accounting software and account headings and categories used.**
ACTION for **COUNCILLORS** to provide list of specific queries to raise with RBS, our accounts software provider, relating to processes and nominal codes, also suggest to

Clerk and amendments and additions to our account categories and headings which would assist with financial reporting.

j) Smith & Fermor charity annual accounts and report.

Circulated in advance of the meeting. Clerk highlighted details of the grants paid during the year.

5. URGENT ISSUES FOR NOTING OR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDA.

- Clerk reported that no response had been forthcoming in response to his written request to BT of a month ago for information regarding installation of Broadband in the Scout and Youth Community Hall. Will chase a response.
- **CLERK** to ask groundworks contractor to cut side of path that runs by the Town Row bridge.
- Chairman's notes from February meeting with Clerk regarding duties and responsibilities have been circulated to Councillors. Vice Chair mentioned that this matter was the responsibility of this Committee and it was suggested that future meetings of this nature should include Chair or Vice Chair of this Committee as well as the Council Chair. It was considered that in all meetings regarding employment matters that two Councillors be involved, and that Clerk should also be permitted to bring a representative to such meetings if wished.
- Agreed that Planning Committee meeting scheduled for Tuesday 25th should be cancelled and that the Applications be dealt with at the April Council meeting on the 27th of April. **CLERK** to arrange and investigate if meeting may be relocated to the Scout and Youth Community Hall to allow more room for public attendance.
- **CLERK** to liaise with Cllr. Cahan who has offered to take on website updating duties.
- Rotherfield Recollections book. These to be offered to those attending the Annual Parish Meeting.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday December 5th in the Parish Council Room.

The Vice Chair declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:50.

7. PUBLIC FORUM.

None.

..... Chairman.....Date