



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

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY 17th APRIL 2018
IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL.**

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. L. Henrick (Chair)
Cllr. R. Harris (Vice Chair)

Cllr. T. Gilbert
Cllr. A. Hardy

Cllr. D. Hiles
Cllr. A. Martin

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None.

ALSO PRESENT

Clerk to the Council, Trevor Thorpe. Cllr. Richardson were present to observe the meeting, Cllr. Glynn also observed and provided information regarding item 2b)

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

None.

2. TO RECEIVED DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Clerk has reviewed the issue raised regarding all Councillors having an interest in the matter of setting the Council's Precept as they are 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 this and it is therefore not necessary to pass a separate dispensation for Councillors to deal with Budget and Precept issues. No other interests were declared.

3. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING 5th DECEMBER 2017 & MATTERS ARISING.

Draft minutes had been circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting. It was **RESOLVED** that they were a true record of the meeting and that they be adopted. The Chair signed the minutes.

4. TO CONSIDER INFORMATION AND MAKE DECISIONS ON ACTIONS AND EXPENDITURE AS REQUIRED REGARDING THE FOLLOWING ITEMS

a) Approval of draft accounts for Financial Year 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018.

Financial reports and associated documents relating to all the agenda items had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Clerk clarified that the End of Year processes had been run and that internal auditor would be visiting shortly to verify these figures and sign the Annual Return. An item will feature on the May Parish Council meeting agenda for final approval of accounts by Full Council and countersignature of the Return.

b) Agreement of adjustments required to the 2018/19 Budget and consider budget required to support the "Rotherfield in Bloom" initiative.

Cllr. Glynn has offered to be the Council's representative for this project and to liaise with the Bonfire Society who have offered their support for it. Key points of the project are listed below: -

- i. Highgate Florists have offered their services in respect of the arranging the baskets and tubs proposed.
- ii. Highgate Nursery do not grow bedding plants and have recommended Jordan's Nursery in Crowborough for supplying these; Jordan's have offered to supply at cost.

Provisional costs and requirements are as follows: -

Clerk: Trevor Thorpe, 82 Fermor Way, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 3BJ

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- iii. 25 baskets, including brackets for fitting - £15 each
- iv. 3 tubs at £25 each.
- v. It was considered that watering of these items would need to be undertaken by contractors.
- vi. The Bonfire Society suggest that, due to tight timescales, that the competition would not be entered and that this year would be a “trial run”.
- vii. Baskets would be attached to properties willing to consent, also to lamp columns.
- viii. Risk assessments and appropriate Health and Safety considerations would need to be complied with when installing, maintaining and removing the baskets.

RESOLVED that £800 be allocated to this project, funded from reserves, and that a new account be created under the Highways cost centre for this. Cllr. Glynn to please provide updates on progress.

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

As at 16th April: -

Santander	£6359
Santander deposit a/c	£76897
Unity current a/c	<u>£20247</u>
Total	<u>£103503</u>

Clerk reported that the total balances held with Santander were now within the £85K Deposit Protection Guarantee Scheme limit. Precept instalments of approx. £60K will arrive from WDC into the Unity account at the end of April and September; Clerk recommends that an interest-bearing account is opened with Unity.

It was also **RESOLVED** to make the following changes to the reserve accounts: -

- i. Amend title of 321 to “Precept Contingency”
- ii. Merge 322 and 324 into one “Recreation and Car Park” Reserve.

CLERK to action.

d) Review of Asset Register and any changes required to insurance policy cover.

ACTIONS for CLERK.

- i. Review Asset Register figures for adding to the Annual Return.
- ii. Check that up to date details of insurance for our contractors and other organisations are held.
- iii. Ensure that, where relevant, the Parish Council’s interest is noted on policies where Council owned properties are involved.

e) Review of Financial Regulations and this Committee’s Terms of Reference.

Details circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Clerk is reviewing to establish if any changes are required regarding the use of on-line payments.

f) List of grants for payment at the April 2018 Council meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend at the April Council meeting that these payments be made to the following organisations: -

RECIPIENT	SUM
¹ Rotherfield St Martin	£1000.00

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Wealden Citizen Advice Bureau	£300.00
Tunbridge Wells & District Samaritans	£200.00
Rotherfield Friendship Club	£200.00
Kent, Sussex & Surrey Air Ambulance	£250.00
Friends of Rotherfield Surgery	£75.00
Rotherfield Pre - School	£750.00
Royal British Legion	£80.00
Total	£2855.00

¹To be paid in two £500 instalments, End of April and October.

The budget allocated for general grants is £3000; it was noted that the cost of the £750 grant to the Pre- School is covered by the annual ground rent of the same sum paid to us by ESCC.

Additionally, a grant of £1100 is proposed from the Highways Budget to “Wealdlink” in support of the local bus service connecting Rotherfield and Crowborough.

ACTION for **CLERK** to add item to agenda of the April Parish Council meeting.

Cllr. Harris suggested that grant support be given to the Bonfire Society, specifically toward the cost of their annual public liability insurance. **ACTION** for **CLLR. GLYNN** to please liaise with the Society to establish cost and other details of their requirements, and report back so that grant figure may be determined.

g) Review accounting software, account headings and categories used.

Amendments and simplification of account headings were agreed at this Committee’s December meeting, these to be effective after year end. **CLERK** to action.

h) Clerk’s update regarding internal audit processes and appointment of replacement for current auditors who are retiring.

- The “Governance and Accountability for smaller authorities in England 2017” publication has been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.
- Details of internal auditors in the area have been obtained from SSALC, and other local Parish Councils contacted for their recommendations.
- Clerk reported that new internal auditor would need to be appointed prior to the mid-year audit visit which takes place in October/November. **RESOLVED** that **CLERK** circulate the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 which details audit requirements and establish the qualifications required for Internal Auditors, also adds item to agenda of June meeting to agree appointment of new Internal Auditor.

i) Smith & Fermor charity annual accounts and report.

The Clerk summarised the work of the Charity of which he is Secretary/Treasurer and gave details of the grants it had made in 2017.

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

CLERK to note that an agenda item is required for the May meeting to agree review of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Committee Terms of Reference and other Policies.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 11th December 2018 at 19:30 in the Parish Council Room, Rotherfield Village Hall.

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Chair declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:30.

7. PUBLIC FORUM.

None.

**Adopted as a true record at the 4th December 2018 meeting of this Committee
and signed by the Committee Chair**

..... Chair..... Date