

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE OF BRENCHLEY AND MATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 12th JULY 2022 AT 10.30am at MATFIELD PAVILION

Present: Cllr A. Wells (Chair), Cllr J. Buttery, Cllr A. Stout, Cllr C. Churchill, P. Horn (RFO)
In attendance: C. Brooks (Clerk)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies received from James Spencer.

2. Review of Minutes of the last meeting of this Committee 26.04.22

Action taken from the meeting of the 26.04.22 were noted.

Point 5 – Terms of Reference have been approved

Point 6 – Financial Regulations have been approved and published. An application has been made to increase the credit card limit to £1000. The Clerk has compiled a list of preferred tradesmen.

Point 8 – The interim audit has been cancelled.

Point 9 – The RFO contacted the Auditor. Further discussions are included in point 5 below.

Point 10 – RFO has liaised with Cllr Akenhead regarding Cinderhill. Further discussions are included in point 7.2.

Point 12 – Guides have reduced their cupboard and the PC are now using the additional storage.

Point 17 – Cllr Spencer has held the meeting on Porters Wood and we are awaiting a costed proposal.

Point 18 – John Dower Trustees were informed and a meeting of the Trustees is arranged for September at which point the RFO will resign as a Trustee. A deposit account at Charity Bank has been applied for.

3. Declarations of interest on any item on the Agenda

No declarations of interest were received.

4. Year end 31 March 2022 Internal audit report

The Internal Audit report does not require action and was received by the Full Council on 6th June 2022.

5. Internal Auditor

The current Auditor, David Buckett has announced his plan to retire. It was agreed that Mulberry and Company should be asked to provide a formal quote for Auditor services with a recommendation that the council appoints them as new auditors if the quote received is in line with our current budget.

Action: RFO to approach Mulberry and Co.

6. Management Accounts

Detailed Receipts and Payments by Budget Heading – It was agreed that RFO will populate the committed Expenditure on the Detailed Receipts and Payment report.

Action RFO

Receipts and Payments vs Income and Expenditure – The benefits to the council of the change to Income and Expenditure was discussed.

RECOMMENDATION that the Council switches from Receipts and Payments to Income and Expenditure for its accounting package at a one off cost of £350.

7. Budget Monitoring

7.1 Review current year spending and 5-year historical review

A YTD expenditure was circulated with the Bank Reconciliation to end June together with a summary of historic spending together with a forecast of expenditure for year end. The impact of expenditure on the budgets was discussed.

7.2 Cinderhill

The meeting discussed the results of the Cinderhill meeting with the High Weald Partnership and the implications of the costs to the P.C.

7.3 Cost Centre Review

There was a discussion on whether existing costs centres are fit for purpose it was agreed that: Trees should be apportioned to the relevant cost centres with the tree survey having its own cost centre. Mowing should remain a distinct cost centre and not split into individual land asset areas.

Cinderhill will be identified in the Management accounts in two separate cost centres to separate the costs to be borne by the PC from money received and passed onto TWBC.

Action: RFO to update cost centres

8. Members Grant

An application will be made for Sarah Hamilton's KCC members grant for Porters Wood. Cllr Spencer has advised that costs are likely to be around £4,500 and it is hoped that Section 106 money and a member's grant of £1,000 would cover half of this amount. There is currently £3,000 in the Porters Wood budget, which should cover the remaining costs. Final quotes are awaited from Cllr Spencer.

9. Carbon Footprint Audit

Cllr Wells advised the meeting of the results of the audit and implications for the PC.

Action: Cllr Wells will draw up an Action Plan for Council to discuss.

10. Draft Budget and Precept 2022-23 timeframes

The following timeframes were discussed:

Internal working draft budget-setting meeting to take place on September 6th.

Second budget meeting (Finance Committee meeting) 25th October

Draft budget to November meeting of PC for comment.

Full PC to approve budget at December meeting

This will allow time for obtaining quotes to underpin budgets proposed for projects. The final budget must be approved by the PC at the December meeting to allow for the formal request to TWBC for the precept to be submitted and agreed by them in January.

Action: The RFO will email Councillors requesting them to forward quotes for any proposed projects in 2023/2024 for the budget-setting meeting in September.

11. Renewal of Contracts and Suppliers

11.1 Grenke Photocopier

Contract ends October 2022. RFO will approach Grenke to determine costs of retaining the machine at a reduced cost or enter a new contract.

Action RFO

11.2 Landscape Services

The current contract appears to be working well but the previous contractors also provided an excellent service. The current contract with Landscape Services ends Dec 2022. It was agreed to obtain quotes for a three year contract with Landscape Services and Capel Groundcare for Jan 2023-Dec 2025. It was agreed that the Drying Ground mowing should cease and allow to grow up with just a pathway mown. This adjustment will be made to the tender document as well as a review of the work carried out at the Jack Verrall Gardens to ensure there is no duplication of work.

Action: RFO/Clerk

12. Direct Debits

The Committee were advised of Direct Debits and standing orders in existence.

Utilities:

npower streetlights electricity	Variable
EDF Pavilion Electricity	£85 pcm,
Business Stream Pavilion Water	£7pcm including waste.

Services:

Microshade, Software supply and support	£103.58pcm.
Grenke, photocopier/printer costs	£102.00 quarterly
Capel Groundcare: Playground Inspection	£45 monthly
Churchill Group: Toilet Cleaning	£564.43 monthly
Tower: Phone equipment leasing	£25.02

Staff:

SMART pension	Variable monthly
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SMART pension admin fee
Fixed Salaries for Clerk and RFO

£18 monthly
May be amended after appraisals

- 13. Date of next Meeting - 6th September internal budget-setting, Finance Committee 11th October 10.30am**