

**Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held at
Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade on Monday 15 July 2019 commencing
at 7.30 p.m.**

Councillors present: Mr I Davies (Chairman), Mr V Davies, Mrs L Clarke, Mr B Hinder and Mrs W Hinder together with the Clerk Mrs D Baylis and Assistant Clerk Mrs M Fooks.

1. Apologies and non-attendance

Apologies: Cllr Hayday, Cllr Dengate and Cllr Brindle

2. Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying.

None received.

3. Minutes of the meeting of 28 May 2019

The minutes of the meeting were **agreed** and **signed** as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

4.1 Minute 3259/4.1 Long Term Investments Working Group. A meeting will be arranged for the group in the near future. **Action: Clerk.**

4.2 Minute 3259/4.2 Cyber Crime GDPR. The update has been completed and the Clerk will forward this to Councillors. **Action: Office**

4.3 Minute 3259/10 Insurance. All insurance premiums were paid as approved by members. Cybercrime insurance minimum premium will be £305 but details of exact cover are still awaited. Nothing has been received to date. **Noted.**

4.4 Any other matters arising from the minutes, but not on the agenda. **None.**

As no members of the public were present the meeting was not adjourned.

5. Financial report.

5.1 Reconciliation of accounts. The Chairman reported that, prior to the meeting, he had successfully undertaken a reconciliation of all the bank accounts. **Noted.**

5.2 Income/Expenditure report as at 30.06.19. **Received** and **noted**, members asked for clarification on expenditure under some codes and this was given.

5.3 Petty cash reconciliation. The Chairman reported that, prior to the meeting, he had undertaken a reconciliation and all was in order.

5.4 Investments Report. It was agreed to reinvest the money in the Lloyds accounts for a further 3 months. It was agreed to move £50,000 of the Parish Council's money from the HSBC Beechen Hall account into the UTB account.

5.5 Earmarked Reserves. **Noted**

6. General Data Protection Regulation

The Clerk will produce an update on outstanding action and circulate it to members for comment. **Action: Clerk.**

7. Changes to IT and Website

Website. The Clerk and Assistant reported that further problems had occurred with the website and that the provider was still failing to respond to the council's complaints. It was proposed by Cllr Bob Hinder and all agreed that the office should contact Stone Parish Council to get the name of their website provider with a view to obtaining a quotation for a new website and new domain name. **Action: Office.**

New data storage. No action until website requirements list is agreed.

Wi-Fi Extender for Acorn Room. The Clerk and Assistant clerk would look into the cost of this. **Action: Office**

8. Parish Councillor and Chairman Allowances (remitted by full council)

After discussion it was agreed **to recommend** to full council that allowances should in future be linked to the Consumer Price Index with the latest annual variation

available in November (normally that for September) being used to determine any increase.

Cllr Bob Hinder then opened a discussion on whether the present Councillor Allowance system is equitable with all eligible councillors able to claim the same amount no matter the number of committee and full council meetings attended. After considering possible alternatives, it was agreed to leave matters as they are.

Following this Cllrs Bob and Wendy Hinder left the meeting at 8.20 while the issue of the Chairman's Allowance was discussed. It was **agreed to recommend** to full council that the allowance be 50% of the Councillor Allowance and furthermore that Committee Chairs be paid 25%, with no councillor able to claim more than one additional allowance. These changes to be effective immediately.

Cllrs Bob and Wendy Hinder returned to the meeting at 8.25

9. **Bank Mandates**

The bank mandate changes were in progress with the previous Clerk being removed and Mrs Baylis added. **Action: parish office.**

10 **Contingency Fund and Budget adjustments**

Gratuities Budget. Noted that with the payment to the previous Clerk the earmarked reserve was now closed.

Contingency Fund. An urgent need to update the Beechen Hall electrical consumer units had not been foreseen and the Estates Committee had insufficient funds to meet this need. **Agreed** that once all the quotations have been received, money could be vired to cover this cost. **Action: Office and Estates Committee.**

11 **Personnel matters**

11.1 TOIL, training, leave and sickness cover
The Assistant Clerk's hours were now within the TOIL ceiling.

12 **Policies and Procedures: Reports and Reviews**

12.1 **Health and Safety Policy (Review).** It was **agreed** to change the title of this document from 'rules' to 'Policy'; the existing paragraph stating that "The parish council has a full health and safety policy which is available in the staff handbook or from the parish office" to read "A copy of this policy shall be included in the staff handbook and also available from the parish office; **(Action: Office)** and with no other amendments **to recommend** that the policy be adopted by full council.

12.2 **Direct Debits, Standing Orders and BACs transfers (Review).** As the existing policy does not adequately reflect current practice, a new policy needs to be drafted. **Action: Office**

12.3 **Risk Assessment (General) (Review).** *This was deferred to enable the new Clerk to look at the current policy.* **Action: office.**

12.4 **Public Use of Computers (Review).** It was proposed by Cllr B Hinder and all agreed that this policy be scrapped.

12.5 **Training Needs.** Cllr Mrs Hinder said that she felt it was very important that members of the Environment Committee went on planning courses to keep up to date with current practice and legislation.

12.6 **Draft Financial Regulations.** After minor amendments it was **agreed to recommend** to full council that the new format and amended draft be adopted.

13. **75th Anniversary of VE Day 8 May 2020**

This was deferred to allow councillors to come up with ideas. It was noted that the Church had recently asked to use the village green in Boxley for a VE Day Fete.

14. **Grants**
No applications received

15. **Matters for Information**
None received

As it was 9.30pm the Chairman used his delegated powers to extend the meeting for a further 30 minutes.

16. **Items for Next Agenda**
Councillors' reports and requests for items to be included on the agenda to be submitted no later than 9 September 2019. **Noted.**

17. **Date of Next Meeting**
Monday 16 September 2019 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Meeting closed at 21.33 p.m.
Signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

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

DRAFT