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**STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET PARISH COUNCIL F&GP COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a meeting of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held at 7.45pm on Wednesday 27th March 2024 in The Mountfitchet Exchange, Crafton Green, 72 Chapel Hill, Stansted Mountfitchet, Essex

**PRESENT** Cllr J O’Brien (Chair), Cllrs M Caton, S Ghosh, J Hogg, P Jones and G Sell

**ATTENDING** Mrs Ruth Clifford – Parish Clerk

Mrs Emma Philbrick – Deputy Clerk

Cllr A Barnes (via Zoom)

1 member of the public (via Zoom)

**492 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE -** None

No apologies were received from Cllr Khan

**493 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST -** None

**494 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10TH JANUARY 2024**

**RESOLVED** To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10th January 2024 as a true and accurate account.

**495 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON ACTION POINTS FROM THE LAST MEETING**

None

No feedback has been received on the part-night lighting, but our Communications Officer has prepared a video which will be going out on social media to remind everyone that the trial is now complete and to send any feedback.

**496 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE CHAIR, CLLR O’BRIEN**

Attached

**497 LIGHTING**

**a) TO RECEIVE AN OUTAGE REPORT**

The Deputy Clerk advised that the light is still out on Chapel Hill by the bus stop. She has been in touch with UKPN as the job is showing as paused. They are looking into this internally and she has been copied in on the emails but still no answer. The office will continue to chase until a response is received.

**b) TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON GENERAL LIGHTING**

As per the Chair’s report, the part-night lighting trial is due to end this month. We are hoping for savings when we are able to amalgamate all our accounts and await a new contract.

**498 TO APPROVE THE LIST OF PAYMENTS**

Cllr Jones had checked the invoices against the payment schedule before the start of the meeting.

Cllr Sell asked regarding the insurance with Gallaghers and the Clerk confirmed that we shop around for quotes every year. This year we had an issue as a few companies would not quote as we do not have a market value for the Windmill. It was agreed that the Clerk would look at the possibility of removing the Windmill from the main insurance and she would work if it is cheaper in future to insure it separately.

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The list of payments was approved.

**499 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 28TH FEBRUARY AND 20TH MARCH 2024.**

Both sets of minutes were received

**500 TO CONSIDER RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PERSONNEL SUB- COMMITTEE WITH REGARD TO THE ANNUAL PAY REVIEW**

Cllr Sell commented that as a Committee they do not get to see what the salaries and increases are and he feels that they should be informed of these details under Part 2. The Clerk explained that due to GDPR, this information is only for the Personnel Sub-Committee and pay reviews are based on appraisals. The proposed increases are all within the 2024/25 budget. Other councillors commented that as long as it is within the budget which was set by the Council then it shouldn’t need to be known what the individual increases are.

It was also advised that due to GDPR, in future the salaries will be shown as one figure on the budget documents rather than each one individually. This was noted.

Having been proposed by Cllr O’Brien and seconded by Cllr Caton it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** To approve the recommendation from the Personnel Sub-Committee with regard to the annual pay review.

**501 TO REVIEW THE INVESTMENT POLICY AND MAKE A RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL**

A draft policy with proposed changes highlighted in red was circulated to members ahead of the meeting. Cllr O’Brien highlighted that the changes includes better wording for operating within the law and also includes a borrowing strategy.

Cllr Sell said we may need some guidance on borrowing in relation to assets/precept etc if the Council is ever minded to go down this route. The Clerk confirmed she will ask the auditor if the council has any options other than the Public Works Loans Board and whether we would be able to consider inter parish council or town council borrowing.

Having been proposed by Cllr O’Brien and seconded by Cllr Sell, it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** To make a recommendation to Full Council to adopt the amended Investment Policy

**502 TO REIVEW THE COUNCIL’S RISK ASSESSMENT**

A draft risk assessment with proposed changes highlighted in red was circulated to members ahead of the meeting after being reviewed by the Clerk and Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee. Cllr Caton suggested some further updates which the Committee agreed with so it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk would incorporate these and email the document to the Committee for approval via email.

**503 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON FLOODING**

Cllr Jones said that regarding the proposed developments on land East of High Lane and Walpole Meadows, we need to be as precise as possible on the S106 relating to flooding. Both Cllrs Jones and O’Brien will be walking the area to consider factors. Cllr Hogg asked to also take part in this. Cllr Sell commented that nothing was set in stone with the Local Plan.

Cllr O’Brien advised that he had written to Cllr Shaw who is the Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways regarding the safety of volunteers when clearing the trash screen. She has responded and asked Cty Cllr Gooding to intervene. Cllr Gooding

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has agreed that extra space is needed and will be putting something into the Uttlesford Local Highways Panel and arranging a meeting with all interested parties. Cllr Sell said that we need to be aware of when the ULHP meetings are taking place so that we can attend and also find out how much notice we need to give to speak at the meetings. The Clerk confirmed she has chased Cllr Gooding on numerous occasions for the dates. Cllr Sell offered to chase Cllr Gooding.

**504 WINDMILL – TO RECEIVE ANY AVAILABLE UPDATES**

Cllr O’Brien gave an update on the meeting that had taken place earlier this evening.

**505 STAFF MATTERS**

No updates

**506 YOUTH MATTERS**

Cllr Caton read out a report from the provider detailing the increase in young people attending and what activities are taking place and plans going forward including taking part in the community litter pick.

Stansted Youth 2000 are looking at the funds they hold and plan to transfer them to the Parish Council to use for the Youth Club. Cllr Caton reminded Cllr Sell that he had promised to donate to the Youth Council but he confirmed that he would also like to donate to the Bentfield Play Area so would look at what money he had left.

Cllr Caton advised that a meeting had taken place earlier with members of the Youth Council. They are taking steps to run themselves and are looking to moving their meetings to after school rather than during the school day in the hope it may get some Youth Club members join. They are considering visiting primary schools to see what pupils would like to see and also get the older ones on board as they move up to secondary schools.

The Youth Council plan to take part in the community litter pick on 27th April 2024.

Meeting closed at 8.38pm

**ACTION POINTS**

497a Office to continue to chase UKPN

498 Look at the possibility of covering the Windmill on a separate insurance policy

501 Clerk to speak to the Auditors

502 Further amendments to be incorporated and circulated to members by email for approval.

503 Cllr Sell to chase Cllr Gooding.