**DRAFT Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting of Chidham & Hambrook Parish Council held remotely on 27 April 2021 at 7:30 pm**

**Present:** Cllr P Bolton Cllr B Garrett

Cllr G Hyde Cllr P MacDougall (Chair) Cllr J Sheppard

**Also present:** Clerk and RFO: Bambi Jones

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 029-20 | **Apologies for absence**  All members were present. |
| 030-20 | **Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest**  No interests were declared. |
| 031-20 | **Minutes**  **Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2020 be agreed as a correct record.  **Agreed** that the Clerk sign the minutes on behalf of the Chairman noting this minute number. |
| 032-20 | **Public Open Forum**  No members of public were present. |
| 033-19 | **Review of End of Year Accounts and Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)**  Members were requested to comment on the 2020-21 year end accounts and the AGAR return including an explanation of variances between 2019-20 and 2020-21 outturn figures. The current General Reserves figure as at 31 March 2021 was in the region of £102,903. Excluding the sum of £24,062 (six months precept held in general reserves for expenditure by the Council for times when extreme pressure is put on the Council’s finances) there is £78,841 in General Reserves. Two projects were identified for allocation of earmarked reserves totalling £65,000, namely £50,000 to The Meadows development project and £15,000 to the renewal of playground equipment. A further project relating to the provision of IT hardware and software to councillors in the sum of £5,000 had been identified at the Council meeting held on 1 April 2021. These earmarked reserves are not time-dependent and will be held until the Council is in a position to fund these projects.  Members considered the draft Reserves Policy and the draft Expenses Policy; some amendments were suggested. It was agreed that the six months buffer for unidentified Council expenditure should be reviewed at the next meeting of this committee to ensure its adequacy. **Action: Clerk to add to next agenda.**  It was suggested that a report be brought back to the following Finance Committee meeting with an indication of the recurring costs as a percentage of the budget, including last year and projecting to the following year. **Action: Clerk to prepare report for next meeting.**  The Clerk suggested that R S Hall & Co. be appointed as Internal Auditor in line with her work for the Council in previous years.  **Recommendations to Council:**   1. That R S Hall & Co. be appointed as the Council’s Internal Auditor. 2. That, subject to some small amendments, the Reserves Policy and Expenses Policy be approved. 3. That Earmarked Reserves be set up as follows: £50,000 for The Meadows Development project and £15,000 for the Children’s Playground Renewal of Equipment.   **Resolved** that the 2020-21 Year End Accounts, with amendments, be noted and sent to the Internal Auditor for review. |
| 034-20 | **Review Financial Regulations**  The Financial Regulations, last approved by the Council in September 2019, were again reviewed to ensure they were still fit for purpose. An amendment was requested as follows – ‘2.4 The RFO shall supply each Council Member ~~(Member)~~ with a copy…’  **Recommendation to Council:** That, subject to the amendment, the Financial Regulations be approved. |
| 035-20 | **Review the Asset Register**  The revised Asset Register, which had been input into the new Alpha software, was reviewed. Last year’s assets totalled totalled £105,173.84. The Council disposed of assets to the value of £10,180.68 and new assets were added to the value of £12,760.00. The revised total assets amount to £107,753.16.  It was suggested that at the next review the Asset Register includes locations. Also before the next review the Clerk and Cllr Garrett will reconsider the insurance values. **Action: Clerk/Cllr Garrett**  **Recommendation to Council:** That the Asset Register be approved. |
| 036-20 | **Review of Insurance Policy**  The Council has a three year long term agreement with Came & Company until 31 May 2022. The committee considered the mid-year adjustment to the insurance policy which had been based on the revised Asset Register. The insurers had included a population number of 2,500; the Clerk will ascertain whether this figure affects the insurance and its source. The Clerk will also change the Council’s address in the insurance document. **Action: Clerk.**  **Recommendation to Council**: That the Council’s insurance policy be renewed for a further year from 1 June 2021. |
| 037-20 | **Risk Management Policy and Register**  The committee considered the Risk Management Policy and the Risk Management Register. There were no suggested amendments to the Policy but some tidying up to do on the Register. **Action: Clerk/Cllr Garrett**  It was suggested that an additional member should have access to the Council’s records. **Action: Clerk to email all members for a volunteer.**  **Recommendation to Council:** That, subject to minor amendments, the Risk Management Policy and Register be approved. |
| 038-20 | **Any other business**  Some members had had difficulty getting into Zoom for this meeting and there was concern that residents may not be able to access the Annual Parish Meeting on Thursday night. **Action: Clerk undertook to circulate a guidance note to residents.**  It was suggested that in the Chair’s opening speech he mentions the precept which had had a minimal increase of 1.85% this year. |
| 039-20 | **Date of Next Meeting**  The next scheduled meeting will take place on 22 July 2021. |

  The meeting closed at 8:52pm

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: (Chairman) (Date)