

# MINUTES OF HORSMONDEN PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE AT HORSMONDEN VILLAGE HALL

ON FRIDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2023 AT 2.00 PM

## **Present:**

Cllr Russell (Chair) Councillors, Davis, and March.

## **In attendance:**

Lucy Noakes (Clerk). No members of the public

## **Declarations of Interest:**

Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct were invited. None were recorded.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr Richards was unable to attend. His reason for non-attendance was proposed for acceptance by Cllr March and seconded Cllr Davis. Unanimous.

### **2. PUBLIC SESSION (no decisions)**

No public

### **3. CONSIDER ANY NECESSARY CHANGES TO THE COUNCILS EAR MARKED RESERVES (EMR'S).**

The Committee considered the Ear Marked Reserves currently held by the Council and it was proposed by Councillor March, and seconded by Cllr Davis that the EMR's remain without alteration at present. Unanimous

### **4. BUDGET MONITORING.**

#### **See Appendix 1 – Detailed Receipts and Payments by Budget Heading (updated version).**

The following matters were raised against cost centres as the Council went through the various headings:

#### **110 Administration**

4000: Staff Salary- March was still to be paid and the Clerk had overtime to claim so this budget heading would be over budget. This was largely down to the increase in NALC salary scale.

4030: Employer NI- this budget followed suit with staff salary and would therefore be a little over budget

4080: Training– Now showing at considerably over budget, but this was because of the First Aid course which the Council had booked and which had not been expected. The certification would last for three years.

4090: Official Hospitality - slight overspend at APM.

4140: Professional Legal Fees - over budget- mainly planning consultancy for Bassetts Farm planning application and legal fees for new Sports club lease which had not been expected.

4190: Office equipment – over budget: hand held microphone for public address away from the village hall, new laptop for additional parish councillor on email, and new set of defibrillator pads .

4210: Computer consumables & maintenance - over budget. It was proposed by Cllr March, seconded by Cllr Davies and voted for unanimously that the Council's Zoom account should be discontinued and the council did not seem to be using this very much. **Clerk to discontinue.**

The Clerk had not yet paid £50 to Ready Call under Publicity (4230) however a discussion took place as to whether the Welcome Pack could be put on the PC's website and produced digitally to make it more environmentally friendly and ensure it was available to as many people as possible. It could always be printed out for the few people who may not have digital access? **Cllr Davies** to speak to Patrick Smythe about the potential for this.

### **120 Outside spaces**

4300: Landscaping and Groundwork- over budget but include some items which had been claimed for under insurance so had been received back as income. Plus installation of the Jubilee bench and tree and extra cuts of the Council's grass areas.

4310: Outside Spaces - over budget- mainly owing to purchasing the new planter which had been reclaimed under insurance and was matched by an income therefore.

4390: Traffic solutions projects - repair and service of Speedwatch equipment, and an ATC around Green Road both of which had not been budget for.

It was suggested that **the Clerk** approach Sarah Hamilton (KCC ) to see if she is able to provide any wild flower seed under the Kent Bee Plan or if not any funds from her members grant for purchase of seed for the Council's wild flower project at Fromandez Drive.

### **130 Play Area**

4310: Maintenance- over budget. Several unexpected items such as 'head entrapment' to be remedied.

4510: Cleaning- were Clearview Windows due to carry out another clean of the play area this financial year? **Assistant Clerk** to ask Wez.

### **140 Toilets**

4310: Maintenance - overspend due to unexpected amounts of repair work due to vandalism.

4360: Electricity - increased costs in electricity which the Council could not plan for

4510: Cleaning - The Council is aware that a large over spend will now take place in the cleaning costs following a large increase in these costs. **The Clerk** needed to remove the shelter cleaning costs which had been added for two months and transfer this cost to cleaning outside spaces.

**The Clerk** to produce a report on expenditure at the Public Toilets to be shown at the Annual Parish Meeting.

### **150 Street lighting**

4360: Electricity- the Councils electricity contract with SSE was renewed in October but only for 6 months, therefore other quotes should be obtained by **the Clerk**.

### **170 Asset Management**

4710: Clock Tower and Clock – **The Clerk** needed to organise a structural survey of the clock tower to see if any repairs were needed as there had been some movement at the top of the tower.

4730: The Institute Building -This budget heading was over spent owing to the second half of the windows installation. It then went further over budget as the roof required works.

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Following their discussions, Cllr Russell proposed the following:

The Committee have been through the budget headings and noted that in some cases, there are overspends for which there are legitimate reasons. However, owing to this it will be necessary to take a strict line in terms of keeping within the budget expenditure during the next financial year. Seconded Cllr March, unanimous.

## **5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Discussion only)**

Cllr March reported back on her visit to the Winter Warmers on the previous Friday lunchtime. The committee were pleased to hear that the Winter Warmers group had attained a five-star award in food hygiene, the certification and training for which was supported by a grant from the Parish Council.

The **Assistant Clerk** to advertise this on website and Facebook as part of the Council's achievements.

There being no further matters to discuss the meeting ended at 4.05pm.