

HERSTMONCEUX PARISH COUNCIL

Agenda Item: Committee Reports – F&GP

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on **Tuesday 07 June 2016** at Herstmonceux Village Hall, Herstmonceux.

Present: Councillors: Mrs J. Angear, M. Bradshaw (Chairman), M. Goodsell, Mrs H. Kenward (as observer).

S. Goacher, RFO, took the Minutes,

Members of the Public: None.

FIN.01.06.16 APOLOGIES: Councillors S. Nash, and I. Stewart.

FIN.02.06.16 DECLARATIONS of INTERESTS:

Councillor Mrs. Angear: Herstmonceux Village Hall, Herstmonceux Bowls Club, Angears Builders.

Councillor Goodsell: Various small maintenance contracts.

FIN.03.06.16 DISPENSATION REQUESTS: None received

FIN.04.06.16 CURRENT YEAR EXPENDITURE:

The Old Surgery: The RFO reminded the meeting that the tenant of The Old Surgery had requested that loft insulation be installed in the loft area of the premises, and that the tenant would supply the insulation material. The RFO had approached various people suggested, to engage their services to install the insulation, but all had not been prepared to do so. The RFO had approached Mr. P. Angear, of Angears Builders, who had quoted a sum of £300.00 plus VAT. The meeting **RECOMMENDS to FULL COUNCIL** that this estimate be agreed.

Locum Clerk: Councillor Mrs Angear raised the matter of the continuing employment of Mrs. K, Crowhurst as Locum Clerk with the RFO. The RFO stated that Mrs. Harrison had started to build up a relationship with SALC, and had the RFO to ask, plus Mrs. McInnes on matters of procedure and historic information, and that the only future requirement appeared to be the covering of meetings during Mrs. Harrison's forthcoming holiday commitment period. Councillor Bradshaw stated that the matter would be discussed at the next meeting of the Personnel Sub-Committee, and a recommendation brought back to the next meeting of the F&GP Committee.

Bank Clearance, adjacent A271, Hailsham Road: The RFO reminded the meeting that residents of the neighbouring properties to the bank in question were to be surveyed as to the proposals to clear the bank and what, if any, shrubs or other plants they wished to be left by the contractor. The RFO was not aware of the current situation with this process. The meeting was of the opinion that this survey had taken place. Subsequently to the meeting the RFO contacted Councillor Nash who confirmed that the survey had NOT been carried out and that this was an item that had slipped over the period of change of Clerks. It is, therefore, **RECOMMENDED to FULL COUNCIL** that this item be placed on the July / August Agenda of the Amenities Committee to officially survey the residents affected, prior to the contractor to be given instructions to clear the bank.

Defibrillator Units: The RFO reported that he had only received further information regarding the supplier of the defibrillator units and had therefore not been in a position to place an order for the two units. It was confirmed that the units now required were The iPad SP1 Automatic External Defibrillator Package supplied by Wel Medical at a 35% reduced price of £841.75. The cabinets for these units are to be purchased through an ambulance organisation of which the Clerk has been notified.

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Software Requirement: The RFO and Clerk had discussed the need for software that would compress large PDF files, such as planning applications and other brochures that needed to be circulated to Councillors electronically. 'Winzip' software was thought to be a good product and was used by the RFO in other capacities. WinZip Express lets you use popular WinZip features even when you're working in other applications. Use it with Explorer, Microsoft Office, your scanner (Pro only), your photos (Pro only) and Microsoft Outlook to zip, encrypt, share and more. * WinZip Express tools now support Office 2016. 'Winzip' 20.5 was available at a cost of £25.95. The meeting was in favour of the purchase of this software but it was also wanting to know if Councillors could open or 'unzip' the attachments on receipt. The meeting **RECOMMENDS to FULL COUNCIL** that the Parish Council purchase 'Winzip' for the Clerk's use. Proposed: Councillor Mrs. Angear; Seconded: Councillor Goodsell; All Members in favour.

FIN.05.06.16 PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT: No Report had been received.

Composition of Sub-Committee: The meeting discussed the composition of the Personnel Sub-Committee in the light of Councillor Steward being elected Chairman of the Council. The Chairman of the Council, who acts as the first person any employee may take a grievance or other matter to in respect of their employment with the Parish Council, cannot be a Member of the Personnel Sub-Committee. The meeting confirmed that Councillor Bradshaw was willing to continue, and felt that the Vice Chairman, Councillor Nash should also be on the Sub-Committee. Councillor Bradshaw asked Councillor Mrs Angear if she would be willing to sit on the Sub-Committee replacing Councillor Stewart, which she affirmed. The meeting, therefore, **RECOMMENDS to FULL COUNCIL** the appointment of Councillor Mrs. Angear to the Personnel Sub-Committee.

Monthly Appraisals of Clerk through Probationary Period: The meeting felt it important that Councillor Nash undertakes monthly 'mini' appraisals with Mrs. Harrison to monitor her progress, how Mrs. Harrison fits into the post of Clerk, and if Mrs. Harrison has any concerns regarding the Parish Council and its workload. These 'mini' appraisals will build up to the decision of the Parish Council by 18 October 2016, the expiry of Mrs. Harrison's probationary period, when the Parish Council must be in a position to confirm Mrs. Harrison's appointment.

Employee Holiday Entitlements: The RFO had calculated and circulated to Members of the Personnel Sub-Committee the holiday entitlement for Officers for 2016-17 and expressed these in hours. The Clerk, who commenced on 18 April 2016, is entitled to 120.50 hours and the RFO to 57.60 hours. Copies of the calculations were made available to Councillors in attendance.

FIN.06.06.16 NALC/SLCC NATIONAL PAY AWARD REPORT: The RFO circulated at the meeting a 'Confidential Report' showing the recent National Pay Award, effective from 01 April 2016, as it affects the Officers employed by the Parish Council. The National Pay Award covers the period 2016 – 2018, the SCP's (Spinal Column Points) values being set out effective from 01 April 2016 and 01 April 2017. The RFO reported that the estimated additional costs to the Parish Council for 2016-2017 amounted to £866 and in 2017-18 a further £164.

The RFO reminded the meeting that the Clerk was due an 'incremental progression' in salary on attending the New Clerks Course, and a further 'incremental progression' on the successful confirmation of her appointment at the expiry of her probationary period.

The RFO informed the meeting that a space on the New Clerks Course had become available and Mrs. Harrison would now be attending the course scheduled for 15 June 2016.

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FIN.07.06.16 INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE FINAL ACCOUNTS 2015-2016: The RFO circulated copies of the Internal Auditor's report on the Final Accounts for 2015-2016. There being no problems found with the accounts, the Internal Auditor had highlighted some matters for consideration:

1. **Donations/Grants:** Any Payments of this nature need to be minuted with the particular Local Government Act (LGA) that provides the relevant Authorisation/Powers. A List has been given to the RFO. If no LGA is appropriate, S 137 can be used - note that the relevant sub-paragraph should be quoted – check with the Arnold Baker Local Council Handbook, Section 22.20. **NB:** The RFO reported that he had a list of Statutory Provisions that he can use on behalf of the Parish Council and which can be allied to the nature of the Grant or Donation being made.
2. **Insurance:** Hirer's Liability/Indemnity. As the Council has a few Letting Agreements to Third Parties, it is recommended that this Cover is added to the Schedule. **NB:** The RFO had emailed AON Ltd, the Parish Council's insurers asking if the Parish Council are required to have Hirer's Liability Indemnity for the Old Surgery, The Allotments site, and for any hiring in respect of Lime Cross Sports Ground, Recreation Ground or Village Green.
3. **Data Protection Act:** It is likely that the Clerk and/or the RFO will occasionally hold Personal Information on some Residents in an electronic Format (e.g. Emails etc.). Registration should be arranged with the Information Commissioner's Office – see: www.ico.gov.uk. **NB:** The RFO confirmed to the meeting that he had registered Herstmonceux Parish Council under the Data Protection Act and that an annual fee of £35 had been paid for 2016-17.
4. **Financial Regulations & Standing Orders:** These are currently under review and the Exercise will be completed shortly. Note that such Reviews should take place annually. **NB:** The Internal Auditor was informed that a major review of the Parish Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations were due to be reported to the June cycle of Council meetings, and would incorporate the Policies that he had highlighted in his previous year's report
5. **Gratuities:** Payment was recently made to the retiring Clerk. Details should be passed to the External Auditors: amount, calculation, contract terms. **NB:** The RFO has submitted to the External Auditors all details of the Gratuity payment made in April 2016, together with the 2015-16 Annual Return and associated paperwork.

Councillor Bradshaw asked that a letter of thanks be sent to Mr Frost, Internal Auditor, for the work completed for 2015-16.

FIN.08.06.16 ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA: Dates for F&GP Committees
Banking Provision
Auto-Enrolment

FIN.09.06.16 CLOSE OF MEETING: There being no other business, the Chairman, Councillor Bradshaw thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 20.15pm