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30th January, 2020

PLEASE NOTE TIME AND VENUE

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee which will be held in the Gravenchon Room, Street Parish Rooms, 6 Leigh Road, Street on Tuesday, 4th February, 2020 for the purpose of transacting the business specified in the following agenda. The meeting will commence at 2.30 p.m.

Yours faithfully,

L.A. Ruff
Clerk of the Council

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - acceptance of any reasons offered
2. MINUTES
To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 5th November, 2019 (copies attached).
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS
4. GRANT - GREENBANK SWIMMING POOL (report attached)
5. GRANT APPLICATIONS (report attached)
6. HIGH STREET HANGING BASKETS AND PLANTERS (report attached)
7. BI-ANNUAL REVIEW OF RISK ASSESSMENT (report attached)
8. ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY (report attached)
9. RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS OCTOBER - DECEMBER, 2019 (attached)
Confidential sections for members only

10. PERIODIC REPORTS AND INSPECTIONS (report attached)

To: Councillors C.E. Axten, S. Carswell, P. Goater, A. Prior and H. Shearer

STREET PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee held on 5th November, 2019 at 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor C.E. Axten (Chair)

Councillors: P. Goater and A. Prior

PRESENT BY Councillors: P. Birch and T.W.E. Napper

IN ATTENDANCE: L.A. Ruff – Clerk

APOLOGIES: Councillors: S. Carswell and H. Shearer – another engagement – reasons accepted

16. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 3rd September, 2019 which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

In accordance with the Code of Conduct Councillor Napper declared a personal interest in the grant application from Wessex Youth Football Club as his grand daughter was a member and took no part in the consideration of this item.

18. GRANTS

The Clerk submitted a report which had been circulated.

RESOLVED

that the following grants be made for 2019/20 -

The Withys Social Club	£ 470
1 st Street Scout Group – meeting about the new scout hut to be arranged in January	£ 631
Mendip Disabled Association	£ 600
Street Striders Running Club	£ 600
Glastonbury FM – request listening figures	£ 600
Wessex Youth Football Club – ask College to reduce astro fees in view of £40,000 given for the astro and sports hall.	£1,000

19. ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE AND PRECEPT FOR 2020/2021

The Clerk submitted a report which had been circulated, including a confidential section for members only detailing staff salaries etc. The Committee wished to record their gratitude to the Clerk for producing the detailed report and explaining it clearly at the meeting so that they understood it. It was felt that any unspent funds from the allocation for issues in Street - vulnerable families etc. of £55,000 in 2019/20 could be used towards the cost of altering the Council's building as the new allocation in 2020/21 would fund an additional Parent Family Support Adviser etc.

It was agreed that the Clerk and Councillor Prior would produce a summary of the report for members to explain that the main reason for increasing the precept was to balance income with expenditure and showing the cost of altering the building separately.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

A. that the following be provisionally agreed and adjustments considered in January when the exact costs of altering the Parish Rooms were known –

the report and the Estimates for 2020/21 as attached as Annex A to the minutes in the Minute Book and the precept on Mendip District Council for 2020/21 to be in the sum of £460,000 – an increase of 16.5% or £17.26 (33p a week) on a Band D property (council tax base to be confirmed in mid December and figures revised accordingly)

B. that subject to A above the information for the council tax section of the District Council's website be as attached as Annex B to the minutes in the Minute Book

C. that subject to A above the general revenue reserves be set at £190,000 for 2020/21 to maintain current assets such as Street Skate Park, the Parish Rooms and Merriman Park and fund new projects or Services as they arise.

20. AMENDMENT OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Clerk submitted a report which had been circulated.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that minor amendments are made to Financial Regulations as set out in Annex C to the minutes in the Minute Book.

21. RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2019

The Clerk submitted reports which had been circulated. The detailed income and expenditure report by code at 30th September 2019 appears as Annex D to these minutes in the Minute Book. Attention was drawn to the following significant variations between the budget set and the income/expenditure.

1101 to 1109 Staffing

Saving of over £28,000 on staff costs as the former Neighbourhood Plan Officer left on 31st March 2019 and the new Assistant Clerk and Projects Officer will not start until 2nd January 2020.

1361 Elections

£8,822 unspent as there were no elections in May 2019.

1179 Grants Received

£1,555 Section 106 funding received from Mendip District Council for the refurbishment of the bus shelters by the Crispin Hall.

RESOLVED

that the report be noted.

22. PERIODIC REPORTS AND INSPECTIONS

The Clerk submitted a report which had been circulated.

RESOLVED

that the report be noted.

The meeting ended at 9.15 p.m.

To: Policy and Finance Committee
From: Clerk
Subject: Grant - Greenbank Swimming Pool

In February 2019 it was agreed that a grant of £18,000 be made for Greenbank Pool for 2020/21 subject to confirmation that the Pool would be open for the season, to 3 Council representatives being on the Management Committee (2 to attend each meeting), a discount being offered on season tickets to Street residents and to receipt of the latest audited accounts.

A letter confirming the above requirements has been received from Stephanie Moss who works for the Pool Management Committee and the latest accounts, subject to audit, will be available at the meeting.

The Committee is asked to consider recommending that a grant of £18,000 is made in respect of the Pool for the financial year 2021/22 as requested by the Management Committee. The letter from the Management Committee will be circulated at the meeting. The grant from the Council is very much appreciated and constitutes a vital element of the annual funding of the Pool which faces extensive ongoing maintenance bills and several capital projects on the horizon.

L.A. Ruff
Clerk
04.02.20

To: Policy and Finance Committee
From: Clerk
Subject: Grant Applications

As agreed at the extraordinary meeting on 21st January to consider grant applications recently received from Strode Theatre and Mendip Citizens Advice Bureau.

Strode Theatre

On 14th January 2020 Robin Peters, Manager of Strode Theatre made a presentation to the Council and a letter was circulated on 15th January requesting a further £5,000 per annum from 2020/21 for 3 years. A draft budget was also circulated and copies will be available at the meeting. This would give a total annual grant of £20,000 and would be one of the highest of such grants with Greenbank Pool at £18,000 and funding of library staff at around £21,700.

Mendip Citizens Advice Bureau

An application for £9,800 for 2020/21 was recently received from the above and this sum has been allocated in the budget for the next financial year. The organization delivers free, confidential and impartial advice for residents and has always been very well used. The current location at Crispin Community Centre is central and well known by local people.

Crispin Community Centre

£5,000 has been agreed as a grant for the Community Centre in 2020/21. They may be applying for an increased amount.

Activities for Vulnerable Young

In the Summer it was agreed to award £1,000 to Elmhurst School for activities in the holidays for vulnerable young people. There is £400 left and this will be used during the February half term to take a number of disadvantaged young people on a trip to the Forest School in Shepton Mallet.

L.A. Ruff
Clerk
04.02.2020

To: Policy and Finance Committee
From: Clerk
Subject: Bi-Annual Review of Risk Assessment

As agreed by Council, this Committee is asked to carry out the annual review of risk assessment and management. Under Financial Regulations when any new activity is being considered, the Clerk/RFO is required to prepare a draft Risk Management policy addressing the legal and financial liabilities and risk management issues for the consideration and if appropriate, adoption by the Council. Separate reports on managing risks associated with projects such as the alteration of the Parish Rooms have been submitted for the consideration of members as necessary.

All information on the Council's computer system is backed up on to a portable device on a Monday, Wednesday and Thursday and each device kept off site in case of fire, flood, theft by the 3 staff members. All files are now backed up in the cloud via Office 365. The accounts are backed up on to a memory stick and kept off site.

In accordance with advice contained in the Local Councils' Governance and Accountability Guidance, the Committee is asked to -

1. identify and update key risks facing the Council in achieving its priorities and service objectives
2. evaluate the potential consequences to the Council if an event identified as a risk takes place
3. decide upon appropriate measures to avoid, reduce or control the risk or its consequences.

Risks can be placed in high, medium and low categories according to how likely they are to occur and their potential impact.

The bi-annual risk assessment is attached for review.

L.A. Ruff
Clerk
04.02.2020

To: Policy and Finance Committee
 From: Clerk
 Subject: Annual Investment Strategy 2020/2021

It is recommended that the AIS for the next financial year, as set out below, is approved and recommended for adoption by the Council.

ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2020/2021 STREET PARISH COUNCIL

In accordance with the Local Government Act 2003 section 15(1)(a) the Council on 18th November, 2004 adopted the Guidance on Local Government Investments by agreeing to draw up an Annual Investment Strategy for the financial year 2005/2006 and by agreeing that the AIS should be approved each February thereafter for the next financial year.

ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY FOR YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 2021

The general policy objective is that the Council should invest prudently the surplus funds held on behalf of the Street community. The Council will seek the highest rate of return consistent with proper levels of security and liquidity. The Annual Investment Strategy must be approved by the Full Council and can be varied during the year subject to Council approval.

At present most funds are held in the Nat West current and Business Reserve accounts and the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund. The British Government has guaranteed deposits of up to £75,000 for some parties and it seems that this does apply to parish councils. Interest rates in various accounts are still very low but CCLA PSDF offers a gross interest rate of around 0.3739% (changes daily) compared to 0.01% with Nat West Business Reserve Account. More funds have been transferred to CCLA to gain over £1,000 per annum in interest provided funds remain at about the same level.

1. For the financial year ended 31st March, 2021 the balances, other than sums transferred from time to time to the National Westminster Bank current account to pay invoices etc. shall be held as follows -

Up to £2,000 in the Nat West Debit Card current account (for online payments made by the Clerk and Assistant Clerks)
 Up to £60,000 in the Nat West current account
 £75,000 + in the Nat West Business Reserve account
 £225,000 + in the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund

The interest rate on the loan of £250,000 with the Public Works Loan Board is 3.56% with half yearly payments of £11,111.11. The loan will be repaid on 13th November, 2023. It is proposed to take out a new loan of £100,000 over 14.5 years from the PWLB to part fund the alteration of the Parish Rooms for library/council/community use. Final approval will be considered on 25th February and the annual loan repayments will be around £8,111.

Money will still be held in reserves for the following and the updated earmarked reserves are attached -

Gratuity	£ 2,295
Future fund for Skate Park and Scout Hut	£ 23,000
Parish Rooms refurbishment – to be used in 2020/21 subject to final agreement on 25 th February 2020	£ 50,000
Future fund for Merriman Park	£ 50,000
Neighbourhood Plan Grant	£ 4,890
TOTAL	£130,185
General Revenue Reserves	£178,821
TOTAL	£309,006

2. As considered appropriate, the Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Council, will ask the Committee to review the investment of some funds in a Time Deposit, Bond etc. bearing in mind funds received and required and to make a recommendation to the Council.

3. All accounts shall be operated by the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer or the Assistant Clerk and Projects Officer who shall report transfers on a quarterly basis to the Policy and Finance Committee. In the absence of the Clerk/RFO and the ACPO the accounts shall be operated by the Chair of the Policy and Finance Committee and either the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Council and that RBS Software be engaged as necessary to give professional assistance.

L.A. Ruff
Parish Clerk
04.02.2020

To: Policy and Finance Committee
From: Clerk
Subject: Receipts and Payments October – December 2019

Details of receipts and payments for the quarter have been emailed to members.

The income and expenditure by account code report is attached.

BUDGET VARIATIONS OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2019

On 18th June 2013 the Council agreed, as recommended by Probusiness Ltd. the internal auditor, that the quarterly report on income and expenditure by code should be attached to the Committee minutes when considered and details given in the minutes of comments and explanations made when considering variations between budget set and expenditure or income. This was to evidence the reasons behind any such variations and that these had been considered by the Council.

EXPENDITURE DETAIL

1101 – 1109 Staffing

Considerable saving made as NPO left 31st March 2019 and ACPO did not start until January 2020.

1361 Elections

£8,822 unspent as no parish elections were held in May 2019.

INCOME DETAIL

1178 Sponsorship Received

C and J Clark Ltd. are no longer giving a grant of £4,000 towards Christmas lights in the High Street.

1179 and 1328 Grants Received

£10,000 Section 106 funding received from Mendip District Council for the refurbishment of the bus shelters by the Crispin Hall and new bike racks.

To: Policy and Finance Committee
From: Parish Clerk
Subject: Periodic Reports and Inspections

Bank Transfers and Reconciliation

The quarterly report on any transfers between accounts for 1st October - 31st December, 2019 will be detailed in the Receipts and Payments for that period - agenda item no. 9.

The detailed income and expenditure report for each month is now emailed to members with the bank reconciliations, successfully completed, and earmarked reserves.

Internal Control

As agreed Councillors Carswell and Prior carry out the quarterly inspection of accounts, verifying the bank statement against the reconciliation with the Clerk in attendance to answer any queries. Any other member is welcome to inspect the accounts by arrangement with the Clerk.

Overtime and Mileage

The Chairman of the Council/Staffing Committee has received and approved a record of all members of staff Time Off In Lieu, annual leave and mileage for October to December, 2019k.

L.A. Ruff
Clerk
04.02.2020

