

All minutes are draft until ratified by the Committee at the next meeting

Scouts & Guides should be briefing the local residents more often about the work currently being undertaken.

10. The residents were thanked by the Chairman for all their comments and said that the Scout & Guide Build Management Committee would be made aware of all their concerns.

Declarations of Interest

11. No declarations of interest were made.

Chairman's Report

12. The Chairman made no report but highlighted that there was a significant amount of business to attend to.

Minutes of the previous meeting

13. **RESOLVED:** To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 16th September 2019 as a true record.

Orders for Payment November 2019

14. **RESOLVED:** The P&R Committee approved the Orders for Payment that were outstanding up to the date of the meeting

The Clerk referred members to Appendix A in their briefing pack. He also commented that there was a number of outstanding direct debit payments that had not been posted on the accounts system due to other the priority being given to producing other reports being dealt with this evening.

Review of Ear Marked Reserves

15. The RFO spoke about the ongoing review of the Parish Council's Earmarked Reserves (EMRs). This process was started after the last Internal Audit report. A report showing all of the EMRs was presented to the meeting. He highlighted the following items as follows.
 - There are one or two reserves that need further analysis in order to identify how they need to be managed from now on.
 - These include the EMR 341 "Staffing Reserve" of £31,243.28.
 - Some EMRs will need to be managed indefinitely.
 - Examples include EMR 362 "Under 12 Play Area" & EMR 363 "Over 12 Play Area" as the commitment to maintaining these areas is currently unending.
 - As items of play equipment wear out there will need to be money spent on replacement items.
 - For those EMRs that are assigned to specific time limited projects there should be limits applied to how big this can become.
 - Documentation should show reasons for why each EMR is being retained.
 - Earmarked Reserves should not be considered as part of the General Reserve and are managed separately.
 - The General Reserves is recommended to be at a figure of at least six months operating expenditure.

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It was agreed that a future meeting of the Committee would decide on the term length of each EMR, the reason for holding money in an EMR and the maximum figure held in each EMR.

Budget & Precept 2020-21

16. The RFO presented the draft budget for 2020-21. The most significant cost codes in the document were salary costs (1101), employer NI costs (1102) and employer pension costs (1103). These have been difficult to calculate due to Central Government not setting a budget (including Income Tax thresholds for 2020-21) and the fact that the National Joint Council has not published an agreed pay award for 2020-21 onwards.

The RFO said that the Local Government Pension Scheme had amended its employer contribution rates for 2020-21. This meant that it would no longer be charging a capital sum to provide for the fund shortfall and would instead be increasing employer contributions over time. This would result in a smaller employer contribution in 2020-21.

Other cost codes to be considered for an increase were Employee Training (1109), Office Rent (1111), Insurance (1125), Tree Management (2144) and the Lloyd Pavilion Utilities (3143)

A more significant increase to the cost code Youth Worker (1163) was considered. With a new three-year management agreement now agreed there would need to be an increase from £10,400 to £15,000.

Non-precept income was then discussed. It was noted that the Lloyd Recreation Ground was generating more income due to greater use of the 3G court and the fact that the Football pitch was back in use.

Investment income was also predicted to increase albeit by a small amount.

The RFO then summarised the variations in total.

2019-20 Administration costs of £198,600 with the 2020-21 figure estimated to be £201,250.

2019-20 Non-precept income was £4,825 with the 2020-21 figure estimated to increase to £7,200.

2019-20 Precept total was £241,525. It is hoped that the 2020-21 figure will broadly speaking stay the same.

The 2019-20 Band D rate was £116.72. The Band D rate for 2020-21 was proposed to be £116.71.

RESOLVED: The P&R Committee recommends the draft budget as published in Appendix C to the Full Council for approval at its meeting to be held on the 9th December 2019.

A councillor asked if the Committee's previous decisions regarding the replacement IT infrastructure and the potential for replacing the Parish Council's motor vehicles would impact upon this budget.

The Clerk said that the IT project had now been completed and that the replacement vehicle project would be conducted in the new year with any decision to purchase requiring Full Council approval subject to a further review.

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The Chairman thanked the Clerk and the RFO for all their work in producing the budget figures

Policy Review 2019-20

17. The Clerk introduced this item and said that the Internal Auditor had recommended a review of the Parish Council's Standing Orders, Committee Terms of Reference and Financial Regulations.
18. The Committee discussed the proposed new Standing Orders document first. The Clerk highlighted the fact that the template document was published by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and contained all statutory items for the management of the Council's meetings, Code of Conduct and Financial controls.

The following items were discussed and agreed:

- Standing Order (SO) 3.f the public participation session should not exceed fifteen minutes unless an extension is agreed by the Chair of the meeting.
- SO 3.g no person may speak for more than three minutes without the agreement of the Chair of the meeting.
- SO 3.x A meeting shall not exceed a period of two and a half hours.
- SO 4.e The Chair of the Council may sit on any committee or a sub-committee if he so chooses.

Other items were discussed including the following:

- Section 7 Previous Resolutions.
- Section 18 Financial Controls and Procurement (reference to EU procurement regulations).
- Section 19 Handling Staff Matters.

RESOLVED: The P&R Committee recommends the draft Standing Orders to the Full Council for approval at its meeting to be held on the 9th December 2019.

Notwithstanding this resolution there is a further opportunity to discuss the document at the next Full Council meeting.

19. The Financial Regulations were then discussed. The Clerk said that these regulations are also within a template document published by NALC. The Council's current regulations were first adopted in 2006 and are considered by the Council's internal auditor to be out of date.

The following items were discussed.

- All statutory requirements such as the need to abide by the relevant Accounts and Audit Regulations and Transparency Regulations were noted.
- The Parish Council noted that employs a Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) with responsibilities separate from the role of the Clerk.
- The Parish Council noted that it employs an Internal Auditor to review its procedures and processes on an annual basis.

The following items were discussed and agreed:

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Section 4 Budgetary Control and authority to spend.

- The Full Council's approval is required for all items of expenditure above £5,000 in value.
- A Committee may approve expenditure between £1,000 and £4,999 in value.
- The RFO or Clerk may approve expenditure up to £999 in value in conjunction with the Chair and vice-Chair of the Council or Chair of a Committee.
- In case of extreme risk to the functioning of the Parish Council, the Clerk may approve expenditure up to £2,000 in value.

Section 6 Instructions for the making of payments.

- Clarification should be obtained on how the Council's officers manage use of their debit cards. Members were not happy with the wording of clause 6.18 that referred to the limits on the use of individual debit cards.
- The limit on the amount of Petty Cash to hold in the Office will be £250 (Two Hundred and Fifty Pounds).

Section 11 Contracts.

- If there is a need for additional work to complete the external audit then this should be limited to a value of £500 (Five Hundred Pounds).

RESOLVED: The P&R Committee recommends the draft Financial Regulations to the Full Council for approval at its meeting to be held on the 9th December 2019 provided a satisfactory form of words can be found to resolve the issues with clause 6.18.

Notwithstanding this resolution there is a further opportunity to discuss the document at the next Full Council meeting.

20. The Policy & Resources Committee Terms of Reference was discussed. It was suggested that the document remained fit for purpose but that there should be a clause added to allow the setting up of a Leases & Contracts Working Party as and when there was a need to review or grant a lease or contract.

RESOLVED: to amend the Policy & Resources Committee Terms of Reference to allow for the setting up of a Leases & Contracts Working Party.

21. The Seven Principles of Public Life (The Nolan Principles) were reviewed and it was agreed that they should be incorporated into the Draft Standing Orders as an appendix.

Exempt Business

18. In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press for discussion of the following personnel or confidential matters where publicity might be prejudicial to the special nature of the business.

There were no items of exempt business discussed at this meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.14pm.