



## **Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Thursday, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2022 at 7pm at Cuxton Library**

N.B. This meeting was held online due to a positive Covid test. The meeting commenced at 19:22 p.m. due to technical issues with Microsoft Teams.

**Present:** Cllr Thorley (Chair), Cllr Hutchfield, Cllr Wilson, Cllr Burley and Cllr White.

**In attendance:** Mr C. Jensen, Clerk

There were no members of the public present.

### **1) Apologies for absence**

None.

### **2) Declarations of Interest (DPI, conflict of interest and personal interests) and alterations to the Register**

None.

### **3) Minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 - for approval**

Cllr Thorley stated the minutes were very brief but as the meeting was held over 12 months previously, they were all that were available.

*It was resolved to accept these minutes as a true record of the meeting.*

### **4) Review of Finance and Staffing TOR (Terms of Reference)**

Cllr Thorley advised the Finance and Staffing Committees were originally joined and at that time it was in the Council's best interests to have a joint committee to oversee both elements. Cllr Thorley suggested the Committees should be separated and Cllr Hutchfield stated that by separating the Committees, authority could be delegated to the Staffing Committee to recruit, if required.

*Cllr Hutchfield proposed the Finance and Staffing Committees be separated, Cllr Wilson seconded the proposal and all Cllrs present agreed the Committees now be separated. The separation of the two Committees would be ratified at the next Full Council Meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022.*

#### **a) Review of Finance and Audit Terms of Reference (TOR)**

Cllr Thorley read the Terms of Reference and amendments were made. References to staffing matters and the Staffing Committee were removed and added to the Staffing Committee TOR. The membership of the Finance and

Audit Committee would remain unchanged.

*Cllr Wilson proposed the Terms of Reference be amended as stated. Cllr White seconded the proposal and all Cllrs present agreed. The Finance and Audit TOR would be ratified at the next Full Council Meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022.*

**b) Review of Staffing Committee Terms of Reference (TOR)**

Cllr Thorley read the Terms of Reference and amendments were made to the Staffing Committee TOR. References to staffing matters were added from the previous joint Finance and Staffing Committee TOR.

*Cllr Wilson proposed the Terms of Reference be amended as stated. Cllr Burley seconded the proposal and all Cllrs present agreed. The Staffing Committee TOR would be ratified at the next Full Council Meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022.*

**5) Membership of Staffing Committee**

As Cllr Thorley had left the Staffing Committee, minute reference no. 32 from Full Council Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2022 refers, Cllr Thorley put the membership of the Staffing Committee to the group and a discussion was held. Cllr Wilson stated she had previous experience conducting staff reviews and offered her services to join the existing Councillors: Hutchfield; Porter and Reynolds on the Staffing Committee. All the Councillors present at the meeting accepted Cllr Wilson's offer. *This would be ratified at the next Full Council Meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022.*

**6) Review of management of risk of banking payments made on-line from when the previous clerk left the post in March 2022 until July 2022**

Cllr Thorley requested this item was minuted as she was tasked with dealing with payments after the previous clerk had left the post. Cllr Hutchfield stated minute no. 208 of the full council meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022 delegated authority to Cllr Thorley to pay invoices and amend bank mandates accordingly. Cllr Thorley stated she maintained and updated a spreadsheet of payments during the period March 2022 to July 2022 and provided this to councillors at all full Council meetings during this period as a true record of payments made. The locum clerk was requested to forward invoices received to Cllr Thorley for payment until the bank altered the mandate to reflect the new clerk's details. Cllr Thorley was concerned two items had not been submitted for payment during this period, either because the invoice had not been received or had not been forwarded for payment. The invoices have since been paid when identified as missing.

**7) Review of Reserves Policy**

Cllr Thorley advised this policy had previously been reviewed in September 2020. Cllr Thorley read the Reserves Policy. Cllr Hutchfield requested the clerk review the Council's Reserves and Budgets and report his findings to the next Finance and Audit Committee Meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

*Cllr Hutchfield proposed the Terms of Reference be amended as stated. Cllr White seconded the proposal and all Cllrs present agreed. The TOR would be ratified at the next Full Council Meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022.*

**8) Outstanding payments for 2021/22 budget requiring adjustment of 2022/23 budget e.g., HMRC**

Cllr Thorley referred to documentation from Cllr Hutchfield to Whiffen's, the Council's payroll provider dated 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022, which advised of an underpayment to HMRC for the tax year 2021/22. Cllr Thorley advised the liability was cleared on the same date but the Council's payments under its' HMRC budget code for 2022/23, on the Rialtas accounting system, included the payment made for tax due for the previous tax year in the sum of £934.94. The clerk advised he was investigating payments made to HMRC in this current tax year regarding tax liability. Cllr Hutchfield suggested the HMRC budget be adjusted to reflect the payments which would become due in tax year 2022/23. Cllr Thorley suggested the Parish Council budgets for both HMRC and Pensions be added to the agenda at the full Council meeting scheduled for 20<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

Cllr Thorley stated payments made to Indeed for Recruitment in March 2022 were not paid until April 2022, fiscal year 2022/23 but related to items for fiscal year 2021/22. Cllr Hutchfield suggested the Recruitment budget code for 2022/23 be increased to ensure it was not showing as overspent, as £100 had been allocated at the start of year 2022/23 for Recruitment and £135 had been spent to date. Cllr Thorley recommended the Recruitment budget be adjusted and an additional £50 moved from the General Reserve to the Recruitment budget to ensure it was not showing as overspent.

*Cllr Hutchfield proposed the Recruitment budget be increased by the sum of £50. Cllr Wilson seconded the proposal and all Cllrs present agreed. Clerk to investigate and report back to the Finance Committee at the November 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.*

**9) Review of CPC Reserves**

**a) General Reserve**

Cllr Thorley suggested this item be discussed at the next Finance and Audit Committee meeting scheduled for 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022 as it would have more relevance then. Clerk to ensure this item is placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

**b) Earmarked Reserves (EMR)**

**(i) Elections Reserve**

Cllr Hutchfield requested confirmation of the clerk as to the amount Medway Council had suggested would need to be budgeted for next year's elections. The clerk confirmed the figure quoted was £3,500 and the Council's Elections Reserve was £4,000.

(ii) Woodland Reserve

Cllr Thorley stated the Woodland Reserve was £5,380 and would not be sufficient to cover the anticipated expenditure in respect of the Ash Dieback issues within the village. Cllr Hutchfield suggested the Woodland Reserve be increased to £20,000.

*Cllr Hutchfield proposed the Woodland Reserve be increased to £20,000. Cllr Burley seconded this proposal and all Cllrs present agreed. This increase to the Woodland Reserve would be ratified at the next Full Council Meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022.*

(iii) Pavilion Re-Development Reserve

Cllr Thorley stated the Reserve amount stood at £100,000 and all Councillors present agreed this figure should remain to ensure it meets with the requirements of the Football Foundation grant application.

(iv) Professional and Legal Fees Reserve

Cllr Thorley stated the Reserve amount stood at £12,746. Cllr Wilson requested clarification if this Reserve covered audits and Cllr Hutchfield confirmed it did but was also used to cover fees for the Pavilion Re-Development. Cllr Thorley asked what professional and legal fees had been paid in this fiscal year and how much more was likely to be spent. Cllr Hutchfield stated a timeline had been requested of the project manager and a meeting had been arranged with the Football Foundation to discuss the grant application, so fees paid to date were added to the original figure that had been provided within the cost of the project. The clerk advised payments made and due in respect of these fees would mean the current amount in the Reserve would be depleted. Cllr Wilson asked why monies for the architect and project manager were not deducted from the Pavilion Re-Development Reserve and Cllr Hutchfield stated the Parish Council had shown the Football Foundation it had money specifically earmarked for the build. The clerk asked for clarification if the monies paid to the architects in this fiscal year to date should be deducted from this Reserve on the Rialtas accounting system, where all receipts and payments are shown. Cllr Hutchfield confirmed this was the correct course of action when these payments were added to the Rialtas accounting system.

(v) Courts Reserve

Cllr Thorley stated this was the sum of money the Parish Council had put aside as its' contribution to the Court renovation project. Cllr Hutchfield advised discussions were ongoing regarding grants for this project and the amount in the Reserve should remain at the current level, £24,000.

(vi) Reserve for Bike Track

Cllr Thorley stated the Reserve currently stood at zero. Cllr Hutchfield confirmed the Council had received a quotation in late 2021, in the sum of £40,000 to renovate and repair the Bike Track. The clerk is trying to obtain a further quotation to repair and make good the Bike Track. Cllr Thorley questioned from where payments regarding the maintenance of the Bike Track were being deducted currently and proposed a new budget code be established for Bike Track Maintenance. Once quotations had been received then this would be discussed at the next available full Council meeting.

(vii) Play Equipment Replacement Reserve

Cllr Hutchfield suggested the name details be amended to Playground Reserve and requested the clerk contact Medway Norse to obtain an estimate for the painting of the teenage village bases and playground fencing. Once the quotation had been received the amount to be placed in the Reserve would be discussed at the next available full Council meeting. This Reserve should reflect not only the quotation cost but also monies to cover the replacement and repair of any equipment.

(viii) Rural Liaison Grant Reserve

This should not have been included as a Reserve as it was a grant so should be removed. Cllr Thorley stated the item might have to be changed to denote 'Code no longer in use'. Clerk to investigate if the Reserve can be removed or description changed.

## **10) Information Exchange**

Cllr Hutchfield confirmed a meeting had been arranged with Medway Council's Environmental Health Officer, Sarah Pinkstone, where the appropriate rules and regulations regarding the kitchen and café facilities would be discussed. Information would be shared at the Full Council meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022.

Cllr Thorley referred to the cashbook documentation, provided by the clerk for the month of April 2022 from the Rialtas accounting system. This was the first month after the previous clerk had left the post. Cllr Burley had previously checked the items and advised the clerk accordingly and Cllr Thorley confirmed payments and receipts were showing correctly.

Cllr Hutchfield advised she had a meeting earlier, 14<sup>th</sup> July 2022, with the project manager for the Pavilion Re-Development and Exolum, the oil pipeline company, as they had advised they would object to the Council's planning application. Exolum stated they had no record of the previous meeting in 2019, but Cllr Hutchfield confirmed the details and following an internal investigation, Exolum acknowledged the meeting took place. Exolum have requested they supervise the digging of an exploratory hole to the pipe, to be marked with a GPS record, so no doubt exists as to the placement of the pipeline in relation to the building. The distance from the building to the pipe must be in excess of 3.1 metres and from approximate measurements taken the distance is 4.9 metres. However, Exolum are insistent such an exploratory

