

HARBLEDOWN AND ROUGH COMMON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Finance Committee Meeting held
at St Michael and All Angels Church, Harbledown
on Monday 13th October 2015

Meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m.

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| Present | Councillors John Cotterill, T Richards and R. Perham(Chairman), Mr D Frost (Clerk). |
| 01/15 Confirmation of Summons | All Councillors had received their summons to attend this meeting and the public notices had been served correctly. |
| 02/15 Alterations to the Register of Councillors' Interests and Declaration of Interest on Items on the Agenda | There were no alterations or declarations of interest stated. |
| 03/15 Apologies for Absence | There were none. |
| At this point the Chairman would have asked whether any resident of the Parish wished to address the Council or ask any question about any agenda item. There was not any resident of the Parish present, but Councillor Larkinson attended the meeting in the role of observer. | |
| 04/15 Minutes of the previous meeting | The minutes of the Finance Meeting held on the 8 th September 2015, was approved. |
| 05/15 Matters arising | Councillor Richards raised the question of the email received from a resident prior to the 8th September 2014 Finance Committee meeting. Councillor Perham said that on this occasion a resident had raised a point directly with Canterbury City Council, 'regarding Parish Councils raising funds under the Precept for a specific reason, and that reason does not go ahead.' It was established by the Clerk that Parish Councils do not have to return the funds to parishioners. The unspent funds would go into General Funds. |
| 06/15 Budget 2016/17 | The Precept requests for the year 2016/17 were discussed at length, and a vote was taken to establish whether members of the committee felt enough information was at |

hand to discuss the Precept. It was decided that enough information was available by a majority of 2 votes for and 1 against. A vote was taken to submit the Precept put before the meeting and it was resolved to submit the Precept request as attached to the next meeting of the Parish Council by a majority of 2 votes for and 1 against. The Precept has been drawn so as to give a net increase of some 1.48 per cent, compared to 2015-2016, and the adequacy of this increase was discussed at some length.

The question of the rent charged to allotment holders was discussed, and it was decided that the rent for a full - sized plot be kept at £35 (pro-rata) for the year commencing 1st January 2016. This will be reviewed at the next Finance Committee Meeting.

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| 07/15 Risk Assessment | The Risk Assessment was carefully reviewed, and it was resolved to leave it unchanged. Copy attached. |
| 08/15 Insurance Provision Review | The provisions were carefully reviewed, and it was resolved to leave the cover unchanged. |
| 10/15 Donations | It was decided that a heading for donations should be included in the 2016-2017 forecast. |

The meeting closed 10.05 am.

HARBLEDOWN AND ROUGH COMMON PARISH COUNCIL

RISK ASSESSMENT

September 2015

The following areas have been identified as items of low risk to the Council both in terms of impact and consequence:

Risk Identification (Covered by Insurance)

- The protection of physical assets owned by the council – buildings, furniture, equipment etc. (loss or damage)
- The risk of damage to third party property or individuals as a consequence of the council providing services or amenities to the public (public liability)
- Loss of cash through theft or dishonesty (fidelity guarantee)
- Legal liability as a consequence of asset ownership (public liability)

Internal Controls

- An up to date register of assets and investments
- Regular maintenance arrangements for physical assets
- Annual review of risk and the adequacy of cover
- Ensuring the robustness of insurance providers

Internal audit assurance

- Review of internal controls in place and their documentation
- Review of management arrangements regarding insurance cover
- Testing of specific internal controls and reporting findings to Council

Risk Identification (Working with others to manage risk)

- Security for vulnerable buildings, amenities or equipment
- Maintenance for vulnerable buildings, amenities or equipment
- Banking arrangements, including borrowing or lending
- Ad hoc provision of amenities/facilities for events to local community groups
- Vehicle or equipment lease or hire
- Professional services (planning, architects, accountancy, design, etc)

Internal Controls

- Standing orders and financial regulations dealing with the award of contracts for services or the purchase of capital equipment
- Regular reporting on performance by suppliers/providers/contractors
- Annual review of contracts
- Clear statements of management responsibility for each service
- Regular scrutiny of performance against targets
- Adoption of and adherence to codes of practice for procurement and investment
- Arrangements to detect and deter fraud and/or corruption
- Regular bank reconciliations, independently reviewed

Internal audit assurance

- Review of internal controls in place and their documentation
- Review of minutes to ensure legal powers are available, and the basis of the powers recorded and correctly applied
- Review and testing of arrangements to prevent and detect fraud and corruption
- Review of adequacy of insurance cover provided by suppliers
- Testing of specific internal controls and reporting findings to Council

Risk Identification (Self –managed)

- Keeping proper financial records in accordance with statutory requirements
- Ensuring all business activities are within legal powers applicable to local councils
- Ensuring that all requirements are met under employment law and Inland Revenue regulations
- Ensuring all requirements are met under Customs and Excise regulations (especially VAT)
- Ensuring the adequacy of the annual precept within sound budgeting arrangements
- Monitoring of performance against agreed standard under partnership agreements
- Ensuring the proper use of funds granted to local community bodies under specific powers or under section 137
- Proper, timely and accurate reporting of council business in the minutes
- Responding to electors wishing to exercise their rights of inspection
- Meeting the laid down timetables when responding to consultation invitation
- Meeting the requirements for Quality parish status or other accreditation
- Proper document control
- Register of members' interests and gifts and hospitality in place, complete, accurate and up to date

Internal controls

- Regular scrutiny of financial records and proper arrangements for the approval of expenditure
- Recording in the minutes the precise powers under which expenditure is being approved
- Regular returns to the Inland Revenue; contracts of employment for all staff, annually reviewed by the council, systems of updating records for any changes in relevant legislation
- Regular returns of VAT; training the responsible officer in matters of VAT and other taxation issues as necessary
- Regular budget monitoring statements
- Developing systems of performance measurement
- Procedures for dealing with and monitoring grants or loans made or received
- Minutes properly numbered and paginated with a master copy kept in safekeeping
- Documented procedures to deal with enquiries from the public
- Documented procedures to deal with responses to consultation requests
- Documented procedures for document receipt, circulation, response, handling and filing
- Procedures in place for recording and monitoring members' interests and gifts and hospitality received
- Adoption of codes of conduct for members and employees

Internal audit assurance

- Review of internal controls in place and their documentation
- Review of minutes to ensure legal powers in place, recorded and correctly applied
- Testing of income and expenditure from minutes to cashbook, from bank statements to cashbook, from minutes to statements etc. including petty cash transactions
- Review and testing of arrangements to prevent and detect fraud and corruption
- Testing of specific internal controls and reporting findings to Council

The Council considers that the above items of low risk are adequately covered by one or more of the following:

- Insurance Policy with Allianz Insurance Plc
- A regular programme of equipment maintenance
- Internal Audit control
- Provision of services by Contractors
- Standing Orders, including guidance and advice notes to Councillors
- Code of Conduct

Signed: Date 13h October
2015.....
Chairman

Signed: Date: 13th October
2015.....
Vice Chairman