

MINUTES

**HERSTMONCEUX PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES (FGP) COMMITTEE
Tuesday 9th November 2021 7.30 p.m.**

Councillors in attendance: Cllr Alder, Cllr Angear, Cllr Kenward (Ch).

Ex-Officio – None

Clerk/RFO in attendance – Clare Harrison

Members of the Public - 0

No	Agenda Items	Action
1. FGP_2021.11.01	TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE The meeting opened at 19.32, the Chair reminded all that the meeting was being recorded. Apologies had been received from Cllrs: Stewart; Porter; Harding. Apologies were accepted.	Apologies recorded
2. FGP_2021.11.02	DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS Declarations of Member's Interests were as declared at beginning of this administration term. There were no Declarations specific to this agenda.	
3. FGP_2021.11.03	DISPENSATION REQUESTS There were none.	
4. FGP_2021.11.04	PUBLIC QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS RELATING TO ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA There were no members of the public present.	
5. FGP_2021.11.05	PERSONNEL – To receive any report(s) from the Personnel Committee for noting or action <i>A resolution will be made to exclude press and members of the public in the event of making any staffing decisions being made in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions t Meetings) Act 1960</i> The planned meeting had been unable to go ahead due to inquate numbers. A further date will be set.	
6. FGP_2021.11.06	FINANCE MATTERS To Recommend to Full Council for Approval the following: Month end reports – 31 st October 2021 i. Bank Reconciliations Reconciliations of all banks had been circulated prior to the meeting.	All recommendations to FCL for approval

ii. Barclaycard Reconciliation
Reconciliations of the Barclaycard had been circulated prior to the meeting.

iii. Bank Summary
The Bank Summary had been circulated prior to the meeting.

iv. Reserves Balance and Transfers report
The Reserves Balance has been circulated prior to the meeting.
There were no transfers to report on as at 09.11.2021.

v. Cost Centre report
The Net Cost Centre report had been circulated prior to the meeting.
Cllr Kenward advised that the Highways Christmas Tree invoice costs for this year would be taken from the Enhancing the Service Centre CostCode1123.

Cllrs had no questions about the above financial reports. All documents were **Proposed** to be **Recommended to Full Council** for approval by Cllr Kenward, seconded Cllr Alder. **All in favour.**

vi. Payments and Receipts November 2021
All payments and receipts had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Clerk presented this month's payments totalling £ 9,044.71 and receipts totalling £ 27,226.60

The Clerk advised of the following additional payments to be added to this month's Payment of Accounts:

- ESALC for Full Council Finance Training w/Keith Robertson September 29 2021, £250 + £50 VAT
- 2 x invoices from Uniserve – one Microsoft subs £80.60 + £16.12 VAT and one Website domain renewal £33.64 + £6.73 VAT.
- Michael Salvage Tree Surgeon – urgent tree works £185.00 + £37 VAT

It was **Proposed to Recommend to Full Council** by Cllr Kenward seconded by Cllr Alder that the presented payments and receipts lists, plus the additional payments as noted, be **Approved. All in favour.**

FGP_2021.11.06_
AMi

Additional matters:

- i Consider any quotations for work on behalf of Herstmonceux Parish Council
- Children's Play Park safety netting replacement
- Allotment Fence – Phase 1

Quotes had been sought for the above works.
An initial quote had been received on 24.09.2021.
A further quote had been received on 20.10.2021.
An approached third company has not responded.
A fourth company made a site visit but declined to submit a quote

A fifth quote had been received for some of the works but had not itemised.

The Committee carefully considered the information regarding the challenges presented in obtaining quotes for these works. The Committee considered the detail of the received quotes for the netting works to the Children's Play Park and fencing works proposals for the allotment boundary

Clerk to seek clarification for Allotment quote from SJ Fencing that cost already includes digger, or if not, what the additional cost would be.

Allotment Fencing:

Following careful consideration of the detail provided, the FGP Committee proposed to **Recommend to Full Council** to accept the quotes from SJ Fencing, subject to clarification of digger costs.

Proposed by Cllr Kenward, seconded by Cllr Angear **All in favour.**

FGP_2021.11.06_
AMii

Children's Play Park Netting:

Following careful consideration of the detail provided, the FGP Committee proposed to **Recommend to Full Council** to accept the quotes from SJ Fencing.

Proposed by Cllr Alder, seconded by Cllr Kenward. **All in favour.**

ii Rec Footpath lighting works environmental impact assessment

The Clerk informed the Committee about the received guidance both from the Bats Conservation Trust and from a local ecological consultancy firm (who had declined an invitation work with HPC regarding a formal assessment, due to an un-explained conflict of interest). Both organisations had been helpful both on the phone and in writing and advised use of the Bat Conservation Trust Guidance Note 08 / 18 paper – Bats and Artificial lighting in the UK. The Clerk reported that the Grounds WG had been forwarded both the document, and the written communication from the Conservation Trust and the Arboricultural and Ecological consultants. The Grounds WG had been asked to assess the proposed low level lighting scheme against the guidance offered in the document and then report back to the clerk for the Council records and to update local residents.

FGP_2021.11.06_
AMiii

iii Any other quotations or amended costs for Working Group agreed projects

The Clerk requested permission to purchase the Parish Council Handyman a petrol leaf blower. The cost would be attributed to CostCode1016 (Grounds Equipment) which has £750 in the budget. Blowers have been researched and costs start at £90 for a decent battery operated one up to <£200 for a petrol operated machine. Grounds WG would be asked to make the model choice with the Handyman.

Proposed acceptance of this budget spend by Cllr Alder, seconded by Cllr Kenward. **All in favour.**

The Clerk requested permission to VIRE £350 from CostCode1016 (Grounds Equipment) to 1001(GrdGeneralMaintenance) to meet the costs of the additional recreation ground works – rec hedge trim and wasteland area clearance. Quotes for these 2 jobs total £1280 and £1k is currently held in CostCode1001.

Approval to vire **Proposed** by Cllr Kenward, seconded by Cllr Alder. **All in favour.**

The Clerk requested permission to purchase 2 x Tablets for the use of Councillors. The tablets will be used by the office staff to download information, in particular planning application papers, to give to Councillors who are unable to access the information on-line, thus reducing the amount of printing, reducing costs and reducing the Council's operational carbon footprint. The Admin Assistant had researched the market and proposed purchase of the Acer ACTAB1021 10" screen / 32GB (or similar if not in stock). The tablets retail at £110 each and the cost would be attributed to CostCode517 (Office Equipment) which has £500 in the budget **Proposed** acceptance of this budget spend by Cllr Kenward, seconded by Cllr Alder. **All in favour.**

iv Urgent financial matters which cannot be held over until the next meeting – Chairs discretion
There were none

7.
FGP_2021.11.07

FINANCE OFFICER MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

i. Budget Drafting – review and discussion

The drafted budget V2 was scrutinised by the Committee. Each Cost Centre was considered. The Committee proposed and agreed to amalgamate Grounds WG and Highways WG dog and waste bin provision and emptying charges into one new Cost Centre. This would make budgeting easier as the invoices often span more than one cost centre area. Cost Code names will remain unchanged.

Amendments to be made and draft budget circulated

Other changes were noted for the Clerk to amend for the production of 2022-2023 Budget Draft 3. Amendments to be made prior to circulation to FCL for discussion and review on the 16th November.

ii. Asset Register Review

Minor changes were reported at this time such as a missing record for bollards at Denefield. However, once the rec lighting and CCTV are installed, new dog bins / accumulative total for dog poo bag dispensers and fixings; plus potential renewal of any fencing at the children's playpark and allotment and any other expenditure, the register would need updating again before the year end. It was therefore suggested and agreed by all that the Annual Review of the Asset Register be changed to annually in March in readiness for end of year reporting which would then fully support

Clerk to update document

explanations for any variance in planned budget spend in these project areas, for auditing purposes.

Clerk to amend the Risk Management Document accordingly.

- iii. Hire Charges Review update
 - Current rules
 - Rental charges and collection of - inc daily and annual rates
 - Health and Safety

Defer to December FGP agenda. Clerk to produce report

Findings from other Parish and Town Councils were explained. There was much variation between Hire Charges schemes and policies. Defer to December 2021 for Clerks report and discussion.

- iv. Website upgrade

The Clerk requested permission to progress with the upgrade of the current website to a modern template. This would further ensure all accessibility legal requirements. Costs were requested last year in anticipation of this action. The cost is £750 + VAT and there is £1250 held in this FY budget for this under CostCode507 (Website Provision).

Recommendation to FCL for approval

Budget spend / upgrade **Proposed** by Cllr Alder, seconded by Cllr Kenward. **All in favour.**

- v. Office 365

Cllr Harding had highlighted that our Office account could be used more effectively. Cllr Harding to explore further and present to FGP.

- vi. Finance training follow up – establishing of operational plan and any other ensuing action

Drafting of plan

CIL budget headings have been drafted which will form the base of the upcoming projects proposed for the operational plan which will be a focus in addition to maintaining regular services.

As of November 2021, the CIL balance was agreed to be £49144.87. As previously recommended and approved by the Committee, the balance is to be transferred to Unity Trust account ending 3260. The balance of this account is at £5098.30 therefore a total of £44,046.57 would be transferred.

Clerk to action transfer

CIL's allocated reserves are to be established and agreed within this budget setting process.

FGP - December

Proposed by Cllr Kenward, seconded by Cllr Angear. **All in favour**

8.
FGP_2021.11.08

ONGOING RISK MANAGEMENT ACTIONS, AUDIT MONITORING AND ROLLING MAINTENANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- i. Internal Auditor Recruitment
Ongoing, Clerks Report will be finalised for December FGP

Clerk's report

- ii. Payroll Provision from April 2022
Ongoing, Clerks Report will be finalised for December FGP.

Clerk's report

The Clerk updated the Committee about changes to Pensions Provision online services and that a new checking procedure would be included with FGP reports as from April 2022.

9. **RELEVANT CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED INCLUDING
AFTER THIS AGENDA HAS BEEN PUBLISHED**
FGP_2021.11.09 There was none.
10. **ITEMS FOR REFERRAL TO NEXT AGENDA**
FGP_2021.11.10 There were none
11. **URGENT ITEMS THAT CANNOT BE HELD OVER TO THE NEXT
MEETING AT THE CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION**
FGP_2021.11.11 There were none
12. **CLOSE OF THE MEETING**
FGP_2021.11.12 The meeting closed at 21.04

Date of next meeting – to be agreed