

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ASHURST WOOD FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING held on Tuesday 17th November 2020 at 7.00 pm via Zoom.

PRESENT: Cllrs: Phillips (Chairman), Forbes, Haite, Spoor and Tyrell

IN ATTENDANCE: Samantha Booker (Responsible Finance Officer (RFO))

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 0

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

1. **Public Questions** – None
2. **Apologies for absence** – Cllr Draper
3. **To receive Declaration of Interests from Members in respect of any matter on the Agenda**
– None
4. **To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held 13th October 2020**
The minutes were approved as an accurate account of the meeting.
5. **Clerk's Report** – The Clerk's report was received.
6. **Audit** - It was noted that the External Audit report was delayed due to COVID-19. It is expected to arrive at the end of November. The draft copy of the Internal Auditors report was received, and discussed. It was agreed that the information added to the asset register seems very useful and should be adopted. The other changes to the reporting system have been sent to all Council members for consultation and this matter will be discussed at the next Finance and Administration meeting.
7. **Budget 2020/21** – The draft budget for 2021/22 was discussed in full, and the following points were agreed taking into account 2020/2021
 - 7.1. Staffing (4000) – Salary increases for 2021/2022 assuming a 2% steps and 2% scale increase the budget was set to £38,000 to reflect.
 - 7.2. Building Maintenance (4024) – Increased to £1,500 to cover the cost of re-pointing needed on the Council office.
 - 7.3. Insurance (4025) - Reduced to £1,100 due to fixed three year term for Office insurance.
 - 7.4. Website & Publicity (4027) – Increased to £1,000 to allow for any “access” compliance
 - 7.5. Election Costs (4030)- Line will may be removed as monies held in reserve.
 - 7.6. Youth Club Wages (4040) – Increased to £4,100 to cover pay increases. It was noted that regardless of any decision for rest of 2020/2021 it was assumed that the club can open in 2020/2021
 - 7.7. Audit (4057) – Increased to £750 to allow for inflation cost from Auditor.
 - 7.8. Grants / General (4065) – Increased to £1,500
 - 7.9. Grant: Ashdown Conservators (4066) – Reduced to £0 as we have contributed for 3 years.
 - 7.10. Additional Income (donation/grants/s106 inc.) – Tittle changed to include all grants received from outside bodies.
 - 7.11. PV Feed-in tariff income (1065) – Increased to £2,000
 - 7.12. Interest Received (1090) Reduced to £100.
 - 7.13. Community Transport (4064) – Due to COVID £0 this financial year, but it is hoped this can be resumed asap therefore budget will remain as per 2020/2021

- 7.14. Street Lighting Mtnce (4200) – Increased to £1,450.
- 7.15. Dog Bins (4230) – Increased to £800.
- 7.16. Street Furniture (4240) – Reduced to £750 as fewer anticipated purchases.
- 7.17. Community Equipment / Road Safety (4241) – Increased to £7,000 to allow for a pathway to be created at Wall Hill Bends. A 0.9m path will not be allowed by MSDC Legal Dept. Richard Speller suggested widening the road on the other side of the cottages. MSDC will write to both cottages to ask them to cut their hedges. A meeting between Cllr Phillips and Mr Speller will take place on Friday 20th November 2020. A new curb will cost around £200 per meter,. The budget suggested allows for a matching level with West Sussex Highways..
- 7.18. Street Lighting supply (4250) – Increased to £620.
- 7.19. War Memorial (4260) – No change. It was noted that Cllr Tyrell has seen that the pointing may need attention. This will be inspected by Councillors.
- 7.20. S106 (1062) – Remains at £0. Mid Sussex Council will receive monies coming in from the Wealden House Development, but it is not known when this will be received.
- 7.21. Staffing John Pears (and office) (4302) – Increased to £2,400 to cover wage increase.
- 7.22. John Pears RMA (1000) – Reduced to £1,000 as the pavilion has not been used this year.
- 7.23. John Pears Cleaning Contract (1010) - reduced to £0 for above reasons.
- 7.24. Ashstock / summer events (3000) – Reduced to £0 as it is not known when this will resume.
- 7.25. Event Staffing (3005) - £500 to be budgeted for Christmas Market 2021.
- 7.26. Sports Event (3010) – Line to be removed as this will not go ahead again.
- 7.27. Christmas Market (3020) – Increased to £450 to cover any expenses that may be incurred.
- 7.28. Allotments (5000) – The costs of allotments will be approximately £12,000 with an assumption that £6,000 could be covered by grants, therefore budget for 2021 / 2022 increased to £6,000.
- 7.29. Election Reserve (5004) – Increased to £2,000.
- 7.30. Summer Events/Events Reserve (5006) - £2,000 to be held in reserve for 2022.
- 7.31. Repairs and Cyclical Maintenance (5007) – Increased to £1,000.

If the precept was increased from £69,500 to £70,000 then reserves at the end of 2022 would be 43% of precept. The budget recommendations will be put to the Full Council.

- 8. **The budget for Dors Patch** – The budget has been increased to allow for replanting.
- 9. **Any other items for reporting or inclusion on future agenda** – None.
- 10. **Date of next meeting** – 15th March 2021 (if there are significant Tax base or MSDC/WSCC Council tax changes that necessitate a Budget review meeting in January / February will be convened).

The meeting closed at 8.15pm

Chairman.....

Date.....