



**Working for the Community in Rotherfield, Mark Cross,  
Eridge Green, Boarshead and surrounding areas**

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE  
HELD ON THURSDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2020 AT 19:30**

**As permitted by the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No.392  
this meeting was conducted online via “Zoom”.**

**PRESENT**

Cllr L Henrick (Chair)  
Cllr A Martin (Vice Chair)  
Cllr L Buck

Cllr D Hiles  
Cllr J Richardson

Cllr R Harris  
Cllr J Kitchenham

**COUNCILLORS ABSENT**

None

**ALSO PRESENT**

Cllr G Watson-Smith, Cllr A Moore, Adam Hardy (Council Administrator)  
& Trevor Thorpe (Parish Clerk and RFO)

**1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -**

**a) To elect a Vice Chair for this Committee.**

The Chair informed the committee that a resolution to appoint the Vice Chair of this committee had been made at the Annual meeting of the Council on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020. Cllr Adrian Martin had been elected Vice Chair.

**b) Review changes recommended to this Committee's terms of reference.**

The Chair proposed the following amendment to the Terms of Reference relating to the membership structure of the committee.

*“Membership shall consist of: -*

- The Chair and Vice Chair of the Council who are “ex officio” voting members” of all Council Committees.*
- The Chairs of all Committees (Highways, Lighting & Transport, Planning & Building, Recreation & Burial, Communications & Social Media) and up to three other councillors.*
- A quorum shall consist of the Chair and four other members.”*

It was **RESOLVED** that these amendments be accepted. **Council Administrator** to produce and publish amended Terms of Reference.

**c) Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85).**

None

Clerk: Trevor Thorpe, 82 Fermor Way, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 3BJ

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**d) Declarations of personal, prejudicial and disclosable pecuniary interests on items on the agenda, and updates to members' register of interests.**

Section 10 (2) c (vi) of the Parish Council's Code of Conduct provides dispensation regarding Councillors setting council tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

**e) Update regarding matters arising and action items from previous meetings.**  
Nothing to report.

**2. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS: -**

**2021/22 Budget and Precept.**

**i. Review budgets presented by the Council's Committees.**

Budget and nominal ledger reports for each Committee have been made available to Councillors prior to the meeting.

BUDGET HEADING	AGREED 2021/22 TOTAL BUDGET £	Less ESTIMATED UNDERSPEND 2020/21 £	ADJUSTED TOTAL FOR FUNDING £
<b>Council Administration</b>	£52,101.00	£0.00	£52,101.00
<b>Communications and Social Media</b>	£8,275.00	£3,000.00	£5,275.00
<b>Capital Projects – Highways</b>	£15,000.00	£15,000.00	£0.00
<b>Lighting</b>	£19,250.00	£6,500.00	£12,750.00
<b>Highways</b>	£19,100.00	£5,000.00	£14,100.00
<b>Capital Projects - Recreation and Burial</b>	£6,502.00	£0.00	£6,502.00
<b>Recreation Ground and other open spaces</b>	£19,826.00	£0.00	£19,826.00
<b>Burial Grounds</b>	£11,000.00	£5,000.00	£6,000.00
<b>War Memorial</b>	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
<b>Surgery</b>	£4,000.00	£0.00	£4,000.00
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>£155,054.00</b>	<b>£34,500.00</b>	<b>£120,554.00</b>

Cllrs Moore & Hiles left the meeting.

**ii. Review, agree and adopt combined Parish Council total budget.**

It was **RESOLVED** that the figures above be approved and that they be presented to Full Council for ratification and adoption.

**iii. Agree the Precept for 2021/22 to be considered for final agreement by the Full Council.**

It was **RESOLVED** that the precept required is **£120,554.00** and that this figure be presented to Full Council to consider approval and submission to Wealden District Council.

Clerk reminded the meeting that the final approval of the Precept can only be made at a meeting of the Full Council. The deadline advised by Wealden District Council for receipt of the Parish Council's signed official precept notification is Friday 15<sup>th</sup> January. It was therefore agreed that the 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021 Planning and Building Committee meeting is to be redesignated as a Full Council meeting to permit a decision to be made. **CLERK** to note.

### **3. OTHER ITEMS**

**To review the following:** -

- i. **Cost centres and account codes.**

It was agreed that committee Chairs would review and advise Clerk of any changes required

- ii. **Accounting software used by the Council.**

The Clerk informed the committee that after speaking to other Clerks in the area that all are using the Rialtas software and it is considered the best for managing local authorities of all sizes. Multiple report options are available and it was agreed that the Clerk would investigate different reporting formats.

- iii. **Financial Regulations and changes suggested to section 4.1 regarding delegated spending power.**

The Chair had circulated the following proposed amendment ahead of the meeting:

*"4.1. Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:*

- *the council for all items over £5,000*
- *a duly delegated committee of the council for items of £5000 or below; or*
- *the Clerk, in conjunction with Chair (or Vice Chair) of Council or Chair (or Vice Chair) of the appropriate committee, for any items of £1000 or below. This authority is not to be used in a manner so as to bypass the Council or Committee."*

It was **RESOLVED** that this amendment be adopted. **Council Administrator** to update and publish amended Financial Regulations.

### **4. Urgent issues for noting or inclusion on future agenda.**

- Cllr Richardson raised the possibility of including a local nature charity in the grants for the next financial year.
- Cllr Harris thanked Cllr Henrick & Martin for their hard work in preparing for this meeting.
- Cllr Kitchenham asked about building works at Sunnybank on Station Road Rotherfield. It was reported that enquiries had been made through Cllr Dixon (Wealden District Council) and it was confirmed that no planning permission was required for these works.
- The Clerk asked if the Council wanted to renew their subscription to Rotherfield and Mark Cross Parish News. It was **AGREED** that the subscription be renewed and that the council wished to pay £20 for the year – spending will be authorised under delegated powers.

**5. Date of next meeting**

Thursday 15th April 2021 at 19:30. Details of venue and meeting format to be advised.

**6. Public forum.**

None

.....Chair.....Date

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