



COLNEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

Highfield Park Office
Highfield Park Visitor Centre
Hill End Lane, St Albans
Hertfordshire AL4 0RA

Village Office
83 High Street
Colney Heath
Hertfordshire AL4 0NS

Tel: 01727 825314 Email: clerk@colneyheathparishcouncil.gov.uk

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday 11th July 2019, 7.30pm Highfield Park Trust Office Atrium

PRESENT: Cllr K Slaughter, Cllr P Cook, Cllr H Brazier, Cllr C Hathaway, Cllr R Solts and L Chaplin – Clerk/RFO

APOLOGIES: None required

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

After discussion between the members Cllr Solts was proposed by Cllr Cook, seconded by Cllr Hathaway and unanimously elected to serve as Finance Committee Chair for 2019/20 with Cllr Hathaway as Vice-Chair.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

- The terms of reference were discussed line by line and changes were made - look at the terms of ref and add changes in here including the two options for the Environment issue.
- Noted the potential co-option onto the Environment Committee which would be going to Full Council. After researching the proposal and recommendation prior to going to Full Council it was noted that in Section 4b of CHPC Standing Orders that members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the council. (LGA Act 1972 s102 (3) would recommend that if members of the public are resolved to be co-opted then the delegated budget returns to Full Council control and the committee is made a working party or sub-committee which does not need to be clerked and where a recommendation report by the members can be sent to Full Council. It was suggested that two options be put into the Terms of Reference for when the decision was made.
- The question of voting by ex-officio members at Committee meetings was discussed and it was unanimously **RESOLVED** by all those present that only members of Committee would have a vote in any matter and this would not include the ex-officio Chair of the Council.
- All changes were **RESOLVED** to be presented to Council.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES - 21st February 2019

- Previous recommendation of this Committee to request a vision for Roestock Park would be going to Full Council along with recommendations for visions for Gloucester Park and Horseshoe Field from the Environment Committee.
- It was discussed previously for the Clerk/RFO to be issued with a corporate credit card. This was again proposed by Cllr Solts and seconded by Cllr Hathaway unanimously **RESOLVED** by all present. The card application process would be commenced, a £5k limit would be noted and a credit card policy would be written and presented to Full Council prior to the card being activated.

ACTION: FINANCE OFFICER/RFO

- The legal matters were discussed and a debate on conflict of interests followed. Several issues were raised, and the Clerk advised members to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer if there were questions on technical points regarding conflicts.



COLNEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

Highfield Park Office
Highfield Park Visitor Centre
Hill End Lane, St Albans
Hertfordshire AL4 0RA

Village Office
83 High Street
Colney Heath
Hertfordshire AL4 0NS

Tel: 01727 825314 Email: clerk@colneyheathparishcouncil.gov.uk

During the debate it was reported that CHFC were not a membership club and were subletting the pavilion, this would need to be investigated as a requirement of the lease and low rent.

- Cllr Hathaway gave background on Christmas Lights to the new members.

4. BUDGET REVIEW

- RFO presented the Q1 report and ear marked reserves report and all variances above 25% were discussed. Members were given the opportunity to ask questions on each page before proceeding.
 - Committee were given figures on the cost of the Clerk overtime versus a new Assistant to the Clerk at a 3:1 hourly rate and ratified that the savings on appointment were cost neutral and noted a cost saving.
 - The Finance Committee proposed £1k honorarium payment to the Community Bus Co-ordinator £500 would be from the Council and £500 from County Councillor John Hale who the Clerk had already secured funding from. This was **RESOLVED** unanimously by all present. This payment was resolved and budgeted for in 2019/20 by Full Council.
 - It was **RESOLVED** to pay St Mark's Church £1500 maintenance grant for the closed graveyard 2019/20 by all present. This payment was resolved and budgeted for in 2019/20 by Full Council.
 - An honorarium for the NPSG Volunteer Co-ordinator of £1500 was proposed by Cllr Solts and seconded by Cllr Hathaway, this was **RESOLVED** by all present with the exception of Cllr Cook who abstained.

ACTION: RFO

- All three bank account statements were checked and signed.

5. INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2019/20

- A copy of the internal audit was reviewed and the three items from the audit summary noted were discussed and explained as follows :
 - VAT issue was addressed and is claimed on time monthly, there has been an issue on VAT this year which was noted by the Finance Officer who has continued to deal with Rialtas as it was their staff member who came to close the system down at year end. VAT had been reclaimed for a second time for March 2019. This will be highlighted to internal audit on the next visit. It has been resolved on the Omega system but is still to be resolved with HMRC. Members requested that this was noted and made clear for next year's audit report. Also to ensure the person closing the system down at year end uses their own log in.
 - 2019/20 budget was ahead of schedule and managed appropriately within deadlines. The budget meeting for this Committee will be in mid-October for the budget Council meeting on 7th November 2019.
 - Land Registry matters continue to be a slow process as not as much time can be dedicated to chasing the progress with lawyers, it was hoped with the new Assistant to the Clerk that this work would be able to progress especially the Common actions required.



COLNEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

Highfield Park Office
Highfield Park Visitor Centre
Hill End Lane, St Albans
Hertfordshire AL4 0RA

Village Office
83 High Street
Colney Heath
Hertfordshire AL4 0NS

Tel: 01727 825314 Email: clerk@colneyheathparishcouncil.gov.uk

- It was noted that the Finance Committee thought this was a good audit and the action plan would to be continue with the good governance and transparency shown. No further action was needed at this time.

6. REPORT FROM RFO ON REJECTED INVOICES

- Invoice submitted November 2018, presented to Council in December and rejected for payment. Letter sent 20 February explaining council process. Copy invoice delivered to office and further letter sent 1 July 2019.
- Invoices continue to be presented by CHVHC for 30% of gas and electricity bills but remains no agreement for this percentage.
- SA Law paid Feb £855.50, May £152.00, June £177.00 budget was £1k so £1184.50. Invoices for £1,055 & £1,042 arrived in June having been sent to the previous office (December 2018 & March 2019) asking about late payment. Would mean a total of £3281.50 and over budget. On inspection of invoices the same time detail was attached to two of the invoices. Email sent and a gesture of good will payment was made against the misdirected invoices. Members were disappointed and asked that the Council did not use this company for business in the future.

Item 7 was moved to the end of the meeting for reason of conflict of interests.

8. STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- It was agreed to reduce members and staff time that the HR and Finance Committees would be held on the same evening back to back. The next meetings were scheduled as follows:

7.00pm – 8.30pm	10 th October 2019	Finance Committee
8.30pm – 10.00pm	10 th October 2019	HR Committee
7.00pm – 8.30pm	30 th January 2020	Finance Committee
8.30pm – 10.00pm	30 th January 2020	HR Committee

9.57pm Cllr H Brazier left the meeting for reasons of close association, financial interest.

7. CHVHC CORRESPONDENCE

- Background had been provided and the options correspondence received 2 June 2019 was discussed. It was unanimously recommended that the Council remain with the previously agreed Heads of Terms as **RESOLVED** by Full Council. The gesture of goodwill payment having been paid in view of this agreement being confirmed. It was also recommended that should the agreement to proceed with the lease/licence or a response be received by Monday 16th September then the offer should be withdrawn, and the Council should reconsider their position.
- An FOI matter was discussed and members agreed that as a commercial matter linked to the renegotiation the information provided should be checked with the DPO prior to sending.

Meeting ended at 10.20pm



COLNEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

Highfield Park Office
Highfield Park Visitor Centre
Hill End Lane, St Albans
Hertfordshire AL4 0RA

Village Office
83 High Street
Colney Heath
Hertfordshire AL4 0NS

Tel: 01727 825314 Email: clerk@colneyheathparishcouncil.gov.uk

FINANCE COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Premise

The purpose of this Standing Committee is to focus on the financial and governance issues of the Council as detailed in the list of functions. All matters from this Committee will be noted by Full Council.

The meetings are open to all members but only those resolved to be members of this committee will have voting rights.

Membership

This Committee will include at least one member of the [Environment Committee and] HR Committee. These members will be decided and nominated and agreed at the first meeting of [both Environment and] HR Committee meeting[s] annually.

For 2019/20 the members of this Committee shall be Councillor Chris Brazier (Chairman of Council and ex-officio on this Committee by with no voting rights), Councillor Hilary Brazier, Councillor Peter Cook, Councillor Cecilia Hathaway, Councillor Kate Slaughter and Councillor Russell Solts. The Chair of the Committee shall be decided at the first meeting of the Finance Committee and for 2019/20 Councillor Russell Solts was elected to be Chair, with Councillor Cecilia Hathaway as Vice-Chair. Agreed at the Full Council meeting 16th May 2019 and these terms were also agreed and adopted at Full Council 16th May 2019. Amended July 2019 and presented to Council 18th July 2019.

Functions

The committee will be responsible for:

1. The Finance Committee is constituted to monitor all Colney Heath Parish Council income and expenditure.
2. The Finance Committee recommends the annual budget and parish precept to Colney Heath Parish Council for agreement.
3. The Finance Committee monitors the internal and external auditing of the Parish Council and all insurance matters.
4. The Financial Regulations of Colney Heath Parish Council govern the conduct of all financial transactions of the Council.
5. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) is responsible for the proper administration of the Parish Council's financial affairs.
6. Membership numbers are not limited but is subject to a minimum of three serving Parish Councillors. All serving Councillors may request to be appointed to the Committee.



COLNEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

Highfield Park Office
Highfield Park Visitor Centre
Hill End Lane, St Albans
Hertfordshire AL4 0RA

Village Office
83 High Street
Colney Heath
Hertfordshire AL4 0NS

Tel: 01727 825314 Email: clerk@colneyheathparishcouncil.gov.uk

7. Membership of the Finance Committee is reviewed and voted on annually at the Annual Meeting of Colney Heath Parish Council. The Committee will be quorate (3 members) and meetings will be held at least twice yearly.
8. The Finance Committee allows members of the public to address the Finance Committee meeting about items on the agenda. Members of the public may speak for 3 minutes in accordance with the Councils function. Members of the public may be excluded from the meeting if confidential business is to be transacted.
9. Items to be discussed at the meetings are limited to those that are included on the agenda for the meeting. The agenda shall be circulated by email at least three days in advance.
10. The RFO is responsible for the maintenance of any documents and records necessary for the effective fulfilment of the Committee's duties as listed above.
11. These Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee shall be reviewed annually by Colney Heath Parish Council.

Powers and responsibilities

- To monitor the Council's financial position
- To propose amendments to the Council's budget as required
- To review the Council's internal controls
- To propose the budget and precept for the forthcoming year
- To consider the end of year accounts and the annual return
- To review and propose accounting practices and systems
- To review the Council's insurance
- To review the Council's reserves
- To review the Council's assets
- To review and agree all tenders including agreement of scope of works
- To annually assess the financial risks facing the Council
- To review the governance and policies of the Council