

TWYFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held at Loddon Hall, RG10 9JA on Tuesday 15th March 2022 at 7.45pm.

Present: Mr C Wickenden (Vice Chairman), Mr M Bray & Mr R Mantel.

Minutes: Mrs L Moffatt (Clerk).

1. **Public Questions.** None.
2. **Apologies.** Mr R Abeywardana, Mr J Bowley, Mrs B Ditcham & Mr J Jarvis.
3. **Declaration of interest in items on the agenda.** Mr M Bray declared an interest in item 11.1 as a member of TRHA and withdrew from discussions on the item.
4. **Minutes of the meeting held on 15th February 2022** Approval of the minutes as a true and accurate record proposed Mr M Bray, seconded Mr R Mantel, motion carried unanimously.
5. **Matters arising and action points** - no items.
6. **Clerk's Report**
 - 6.1 Bank balances as at the end of February 2022. Noted.
Nat West current account £39,000.27, Unity Trust current account £51,025.36, Deposit account £6,961.07, income bonds £157,000, National Savings account £3,770.62 and Twycombe Lodge tenants deposit account £3,020.02
 - 6.2 VAT return for February 2022 - £590.63. Noted.
 - 6.3 Henderson Investment Statement. Noted.
 - 6.4 Unity Trust – report on charges for a T2 account
[15p per transaction - £26.40 September charge & £53.40 December charge] Noted.
 - 6.5 Review of signatory arrangements [note: the current signatories are: Mr J Bowley, Mrs B Ditcham, Mr J Jarvis, Mr R Mantel, Mr T Winchester & Mr C Wickenden]
Proposed Mr R Mantel, seconded Mr M Bray to add Mr M Bray as a signatory. Motion carried unanimously.
 - 6.6 Internal Audit progress update
 - 6.6.1 To consider amending the Financial Regulations 11.1 (b) to the NALC recommended £25,000 tender threshold. Proposed Mr C Wickenden, seconded Mr M Bray to **RECOMMEND to Full Council** amending the Financial Regulations 11.1 (b) to the NALC recommended £25,000 tender threshold [from £20,000]. Motion carried unanimously.
 - 6.6.2 To consider amending the Financial regulations (payments) to include appointment of RFO for credit card usage. Agreed for the Clerk to draft wording for the next meeting.
 - 6.6.3 To consider adopting a credit card usage policy [one drive folder] – carried forward.
 - 6.6.4 To consider amending the standing orders 18 (a) v contracts for tendering limit from £60,000 to £25,000. Clerk to contact the internal auditor saying that the Council are minded to keep the tendering limit at £60,000 as they feel £25,000 is too restrictive. What is the implication of this? Item carried forward pending a response.
 - 6.7 NALC Salary Award 2021/22 backdated to 01.04.21 (1.75% increase) – noted that this will be applied to the Clerk and Assistant Clerk pay.
 - 6.8 BT - receipt of dividends £24.03. Noted.
 - 6.9 SSL safety certificate for website £25 – need to move email accounts and then the package can be upgraded to Ignight Boost package £7 per month which includes a SSL certificate for the first year. [Currently paying £6.14 p/m] Noted.
 - 6.10 Data Protection Regulations update – no items to report.
 - 6.11 Review & approve Asset Register (one drive folder). Proposed Mr M Bray, seconded Mr C Wickenden to approve the March 2022 asset register. Motion carried unanimously.

- 6.12 Covid risk assessment – amended in line with Government guidance – noted.
7. **Clerk Annual Review**
 7.1 Draft appraisal policy (Sent to JB tracked changes – 14.02.22 & 01.03.22) [One drive folder] – carried forward awaiting draft amendments from Mr Bowley & Mr C Wickenden.
8. **Documentation of Part 2 (confidential) discussions**
 8.1 To make a recommendation to approve the amended Standing Orders [one drive folder]
 Discussion took place on the sentence: “Evidence must be presented to substantiate a point of view and this evidence must also be recorded.” Mr R Mantel reported that ‘Local Council Administration’ by Charles Arnold Baker reports that minutes should be kept to a minimum. He raised concern over the complexity this might add to taking the minutes and suggested omitting the line.

 Discussion also took place on re-wording the final sentence: ”An encrypted copy of the minutes will be stored, by the clerk, on the Councils records. All councillors will be able to access this minute, however it will be confidential to the clerk and others.”
 It was agreed to defer the decision until more members of the committee are present.
9. **Quarterly internal checks** (JD & RM) – date to be arranged.
10. **Review of Policies**
 10.1 Investment policy (JJ - One Drive Folder) – carried forward.
 10.2 Code of Conduct – to consider adopting the LGA model code 2020 (one drive folder) – Mr Mantel and the clerk to check as to the Code of conduct approved by WBC.
11. **Grant Requests** [one drive folder]
 11.1 TRHA – carried forward pending a report from Mr Jarvis.
 11.2 Keep Mobile [*note – second grant application in the year] – Proposed Mr M Bray, seconded Mr C Wickenden to **RECOMMEND to Full Council** a grant of £650 to Keep Mobile. Motion carried nem con. Agreed to invite Keep Mobile to talk to the Full Council on their work and how they can benefit Twyford residents further.
12. **Correspondence** – all noted.
 12.1 Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund - Employer newsletter - Winter 2021/22
 12.2 Invitation to the Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund Employer Meeting 2022
13. **Items to be considered from other Committees**
 13.1 Planning and Amenities 01.03.22 – no items
 13.2 Parish Lands 08.03.22 – no items
14. **Staffing Matters**
 14.1 Assistant Clerk annual review (one drive folder) – noted. The clerk expressed disappointment that only 6 of the 15 councillors had responded with feedback on the Assistant Clerk.
 14.2 HR advice on staff contracts – carried forward.
15. **Date of next meeting** - 19th April 2022

The meeting closed at 9:10 pm.