



MELTON PARISH COUNCIL

FRM(17)MO5

FINANCE, EMPLOYMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council Finance, Employment and Risk Management Committee held on Wednesday 11 October 2017 commencing at 19:00 at Riverside Office, Robertson's Boatyard, Lime Kiln Quay, Woodbridge IP12 1BD.

Present:

Cllr Mrs B Abbott
Cllr Mrs C Gradwell
Cllr Mr A Porter (*ex officio*)
Cllr Mr C Taylor
Cllr Mr J West (Chairman)

Absent:

Cllr Mr N Brown

In Attendance:

Mr W J Grosvenor *Clerk to Melton Parish Council*

	PART ONE – OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
17.59	TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Brown.
17.60	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
17.60.01	To receive Amendments to the Register There were none.
17.60.02	To receive Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in Respect of Items on the Agenda There were none.
17.60.03	To receive Declarations of Non Pecuniary Interest in Respect of Items on the Agenda There were none.
17.60.04	To consider Full / Partial Dispensations for Pecuniary Interests Declared It was noted that there had been no requests for dispensations.
17.61	OPEN FORUM FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO TALK TO COUNCILLORS There were no members of the public present.

17.62	<p>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to agree the minutes of the Finance, Employment and Risk Management Committee held on 9 August 2017 (Minutes FRM(17)M04 previously distributed).</p> <p>Proposed by: Cllr Taylor Seconded by: Cllr Abbott</p>
17.63	<p>TO CONSIDER FINANCIAL AND INTERNAL CONTROL MATTERS</p>
17.63.01	<p>To consider the Management Accounts – 1 April 2017 to 30 September 2017</p> <p>(Papers FRM(17)63.01 and FRM(17)63.01a-e)</p> <p>The Clerk reviewed the financial position as at the end of the half year. In periods 1 – 6, 105.2% of budgeted income was received and 44.8% of budgeted expenditure incurred. As at 30 September, after allowing for unpresented cheques, cash in the Council’s two bank accounts totalled £123,552.31.</p> <p>All the precept income for the year was now received. Budget adjustments agreed by Full Council at the September meeting were incorporated into the accounts and, on that basis, expenditure continues to be in line to produce a budgeted overspend of c£25k at year end. Apart from that, there was nothing that needed to be highlighted in the accounts at this stage, and following a brief discussion on points raised by members, the reports were NOTED.</p>
17.63.02	<p>Update on External Audit of the accounting Statements for 2016/17</p> <p>The Clerk reported receipt on 3 October of the Notice of Conclusion of Audit. There were no matters raised by the auditors and the audit was clear and unqualified. The Annual Return, now that the audit opinion has been given, will be presented to Full Council on 8 November, and a minute is required to be made to show that the Annual Return, including the audit certificate, is approved and accepted by the Council. The Clerk had already published the Annual Return and Notice of Conclusion of Audit on the Council’s website, and the Notice itself is also displayed on the Council’s notice boards.</p>
17.63.03	<p>To consider the External audit arrangements for 2017/18</p> <p>(Paper FRM(17)63.03)</p> <p>This paper set out, for information, the external audit arrangements that will apply in the year ending 31 March 2018. The new auditor is PKF Littlejohn LLP. The audit fee is likely to remain unchanged provided that the Council complies with all the audit requirements, although with expenditure exceeding £100k, it is possible that it will rise to £400.00. The report also flagged up the impact of the Local Government Transparency Code in relation to detailed publication requirements on councils with income or expenditure over £200k pa. Melton will need to start preparing for compliance as its turnover (with CIL monies) rises.</p>
17.63.04	<p>To consider arrangements for Budget Working Group</p> <p>The Clerk advised Members that it was now time to start preparing the budgets for 2018/19, as well as reviewing current budgets and spend for the second half of 2017/18. Dates suggested were either Tuesday 7 November or Wednesday 8 November starting at 2pm. As before invitees will be the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Chairs or Deputies of Committees.</p>

17.63.05	<p>Update on Investment arrangements</p> <p>The application form for the deposit account with the Ipswich Building Society together with the cheque for £50k were ready, and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman arranged to go to the Woodbridge branch to open the account on Wednesday 18 October. Cllr Martin will also have to attend to present her ID so the account can then be made live.</p>
17.63.06	<p>To consider applications for grant giving 2017/18 (Paper FRM(17)63.06)</p> <p>Members considered the single application for grant assistance from an organisation working with Melton residents. After discussion it was RESOLVED to make recommendation as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leiston, Saxmundham and District Citizens Advice Bureau: £250 <p>Proposed by: Cllr Porter Seconded by: Cllr Taylor</p> <p>That left £250 in the grants budget. Following further discussion it was RESOLVED to recommend the ring fencing of that sum to help set up a dementia café, possibly at the Burness Parish Rooms, later in the year.</p> <p>Proposed by: Cllr Porter Seconded by: Cllr West</p> <p>The Clerk to submit these recommendations to Full Council on 8 November for ratification.</p>
17.63.07	<p>Melton Public Access Defibrillator – update (Paper MPC(17)87)</p> <p>Cllr Porter gave the Clerk a cheque from the Melton WI for £1,360.00 in respect of a quotation for a Powerheart G5 AED received from Cardiac Science Ltd. This covered the cost of the equipment and delivery, but was net of VAT. The Clerk to order the equipment, to be delivered to Cllr Porter’s address.</p>
17.63.08	<p>Government consultation on Precept Referendums (Paper FRM(17)63.08)</p> <p>As in the previous year, the Clerk wished to alert Members to the fact that in the current round of consultation on the matter of precept referendums, where increases are deemed by Government to be excessive, the threat of referendum is not this year limited to larger councils. Thus all local councils are potentially affected by any outcome that leads to mandatory precept referendums being imposed.</p>
17.63.09	<p>Referral from Full Council: Review of Financial Regulation 4.5 to increase the level of delegation to the Clerk to commit expenditure in emergencies (Paper FRM(17)63.09)</p> <p>Arising from the recent need to commission emergency repairs to the bus shelter in The Street, Full Council has asked FERM Committee to consider increasing the financial limit of the Clerk’s powers under Regulation 4.5 to authorise revenue expenditure in an emergency, from £1,000 to £2,500. Following discussion, the Committee agreed with the recommendation, subject to the Clerk consulting the Chairman as soon as practicable after the emergency (as is required at present).</p> <p>FERM Committee’s recommendation will go back to Full Council on 8 November to agree the amendment of the Council’s Financial Regulations.</p>

17.64	TO CONSIDER RESOURCES MATTERS
17.64.01	<p>New website – update</p> <p>The Clerk reported further liaison with <i>Suffolk Cloud</i>. However it has not so far been possible to identify resources to build a new website using <i>Suffolk Cloud</i> software. The greater the degree of customisation required will increase the cost of support. It has not been practicable to host the meeting as intended between <i>Suffolk Cloud</i>, the Clerk and Cllr Gradwell. However the Clerk is arranging training which will be undertaken in October / November, after which a clearer idea of the work involved will be known.</p>
17.65	TO CONSIDER EMPLOYMENT MATTERS
17.65.01	<p>Clerk to the Council including workload issues</p> <p>The workload continues at a high level with new areas of work arising regularly, but currently is manageable. The discussion then broadened to cover staffing and financial resources for the Council as a whole (see Minute 17.65.02 below).</p>
17.65.02	<p>Staffing Review</p> <p>The Clerk referred to a note which he had distributed the day before the meeting, setting out the projected end of year position, based on the first six months of the year and the latest revised budgets. The projections showed that an allocation of £25.3k from reserves will be needed this year to give a balanced budget; whilst the Council's overall reserves are adequate, earmarked and restricted reserves will only leave an unrestricted reserve of c£19k. Additional concerns raised were (1) the lack of any information on business rates liability (provision of £2k only is made in this year's budget and the overall cost, including for 2016/17, might well be more) and (2) the possibility that the Council might have to find some funding to contribute towards the drainage in the lower field. There was a strong consensus that this must now be done as quickly as possible. In discussion Cllr Porter suggested that CIL monies might have to be considered for drainage works; however in relation to the appointment of an additional member of staff he felt that it would be premature to consider any appointment until the Council had permanent accommodation on a more affordable basis. The Clerk advised that SALC was developing a clerking service to support councils in difficulties, and also that as time passed, and the needs of the Council developed, the original proposal, job and person specification will need to be revised. It was AGREED to review the matter in a year's time.</p>
17.65.03	<p>Village Handyperson – Phil Donoghue</p> <p>The Clerk reported that Phil continues to provide excellent value for money. The asbestos removal from the bus shelter in The Street will be completed on 13 October, after which he will install a new plywood ceiling and repaint. As soon as the oak posts are procured he will install them around the green on which the village sign stands. Regular duties of litter clearance, repairs and maintenance are carried out to a high standard.</p>
17.66	TO REVIEW RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES
17.66.01	<p>Risk Register (Paper FRM(17)66.01)</p> <p>Members of FERM Committee reviewed the Risk Register updated for October 2017. It was AGREED to make no changes to the risk ratings at this time.</p>

17.66.02	<p>Hire of field – risk issues update</p> <p>There were no live risk issues to report. The use of part of the playing field (in front of the pavilion) by Circus Petite in September resulted in some damage to the grass caused by grazing animals; however this is now recovering. The proposed Forest School hire of the woodland for one afternoon a week in term time from September for pre-school children has not materialised.</p>
17.66.03	<p>Drainage project update</p> <p>The Clerk reported that, subsequent to the issue of the specifications and plans to three specialist contractors, he had had a site meeting with one, and was optimistic that he will receive prices from all three in the next few days.</p>
17.67	<p>TO CONSIDER DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN</p> <p>Cllr Gradwell reported that she was working on the first draft of a business plan based on the model used by Rodborough Town Council. It would include headline plans for the next three years as well as information on the context and structure of the Council.</p>
17.68	<p>TO FURTHER CONSIDER FUTURE OPTIONS FOR MELTON VILLAGE FETE</p> <p>Cllr Gradwell has put her name forward to manage the fete project in 2018. Points made were:</p> <p>Lack of local knowledge and people – however she has contacts who do Would prefer not to have a Fete Committee but just working groups She will talk to people to finalise a date and an action plan. The possibility of a fete Christmas Party on the first Friday in December 2017 was discussed. Cllr Porter to organise.</p>
17.69	<p>TO CONSIDER GOVERNANCE MATTERS</p>
17.69.01	<p>Report of Decisions Made by Clerk under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014</p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>
17.70	<p>TO REVIEW THE VILLAGE HALL PROJECT</p> <p>The current position was discussed. No further actions are planned until after the Neighbourhood Plan referendum on 7 December. The Business Plan will need to include details of the project going forward and spend to date.</p>
17.71	<p>EMERGENCY PLAN</p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>
17.72	<p>FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN’S URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>
17.73	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 13 December 2017, commencing at 19:00, at Riverside Office, Robertson’s Boatyard, Lime Kiln Quay, Woodbridge IP12 1BD.</p> <p>There being no further business the meeting closed at 21:15.</p>