



MELTON PARISH COUNCIL

FRM(20)M03

FINANCE, EMPLOYMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council Finance, Employment and Risk Management (FERM) Committee held via Zoom on Wednesday 9 December 2020 commencing at 19:00.

Present:

Cllr Mrs B Abbott
Cllr Mr B Banks (in the Chair)
Cllr Mr N Brown
Cllr Mrs C Gradwell
Cllr Mr A Porter
Cllr Mr C Taylor

Absent:

None

In Attendance:

Mr W J Grosvenor *Clerk and Executive Officer to Melton Parish Council*
Mrs P Alder *Assistant Clerk and Management Officer to Melton Parish Council*

	PART ONE – OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
20.24	TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE There were no absences.
20.25	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
20.25.01	To receive Amendments to the Register There were none.
20.25.02	To receive Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in Respect of Items on the Agenda There were none.
20.25.03	To receive Declarations of Non Pecuniary Interest in Respect of Items on the Agenda There were none.
20.25.04	To consider Full / Partial Dispensations for Pecuniary Interests Declared It was noted that there had been no requests for dispensations.

20.26	<p>OPEN FORUM FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO TALK TO COUNCILLORS</p> <p>There were no members of the public present.</p>
20.27	<p>TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to agree the minutes of the FERM Committee held on 14 October 2020 (Minutes FRM(20)M02 and FRM(20)02 CONFIDENTIAL previously distributed).</p> <p>Proposed by: Cllr Taylor Seconded by: Cllr Brown</p>
20.28	<p>TO CONSIDER FINANCIAL AND INTERNAL CONTROL MATTERS</p>
20.28.01	<p>To consider the Management Accounts – 1 April 2020 to 30 November 2020</p> <p>(Papers FRM(20)28.01 and FRM(20)28.01a-g)</p> <p>The Assistant Clerk reported on the Council’s financial position as at the end of period 8 of 2020/21. Gross income received was £297,182 including Community Infrastructure Levy monies (CIL) of £183,667. Without CIL, the income was £113,515. Expenditure for the period to 30 November at £88,262 was 66.7% of the annual revised budget for the year. In terms of cash resources as at 30 November, cash in the Council’s bank accounts totalled £586,776. After adding £719 in respect of refundable VAT and deducting £5,120 for the contingent liability in respect of the tenant’s rent deposit, the total liquid assets amounted to £582,375, including CIL monies totalling £496,639 and a further £839 held in reserve for WWI Heritage Fund / Behind the Name / WW2 memorial. It was confirmed that the work to the WW2 memorial will be done in early March 2021. The general reserves total £84,896, a decrease from £102,672 at the end of August.</p> <p>It was AGREED to NOTE the report.</p>
20.28.02	<p>To consider the budget report</p> <p>(Paper FRM(20)28.02)</p> <p>The Clerk explained that no changes to the budgetary provision for the current year had been made since prior to Full Council on 18 November. However he outlined the following changes that may be made prior to the next meeting of Full Council on 13 January 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase provision for the tree risk assessment due to be carried out in the first 3 months of 2021 by c£2k depending on the quote that is accepted; this expenditure can if required be charged to CIL. • Receipt of a further £1,334 from Government via East Suffolk Council in terms of compensation for the second lockdown (relates to rateable value of premises). • Increase budget for rental income to reflect additional rebate not claimed. • Domain hosting could increase by £200 for upgrade depending on decision in relation to the report at Item 20.30.03 below. • There is no budgetary provision for the <i>Quiet Lanes</i> project. This may need to be provided after discussions at Planning and Transport Committee and Full Council. As currently proposed, the Melton scheme will require 4 signage posts @ £600 each, although grant aid might be available. <p>In respect of the <i>Quiet Lanes</i> project Cllr Gradwell felt a business case will need to be made out in relation to any use of CIL. Cllr Abbott suggested that it might at least in part be possible to mount the signs on existing posts (although lighting columns and telegraph / electricity poles cannot be used).</p>

	<p>The matter of budgetary provision for a fete in the summer of 2021 was raised. After discussion it was concluded that it would be safer to plan for one in 2022, as hopefully the existing pavilion will be demolished / a building site in the summer of 2021. This will be further discussed by Recreation Committee at its meeting on 6 January 2021.</p> <p>It was AGREED to NOTE the report.</p>
20.28.03	<p>To further review as necessary arrangements for Budget and Projects Working Group to meet on Thursday 7 January 2021 at 2pm</p> <p>The Clerk reminded Members that this meeting was in the diary and would take place if necessary, depending on the final tax base information forthcoming from East Suffolk. That was not expected until after 1 January so any decision on a meeting would of necessity, be at the last minute.</p> <p>The position was NOTED.</p>
20.28.04	<p>To consider a proposal in respect of the appointment of the Internal Auditor for 2020/21</p> <p>All Members having had an opportunity to consider detailed proposals from <i>Trevor Brown CPFA Internal Audit Services</i> in respect of the provision of internal audit services to the Council for 2020/21, the appointment was discussed. The Clerk reported that he was satisfied with the proposals (which were amplified in the course of a long telephone conversation) and recommended the appointment. Members confirmed that view.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to formally appoint <i>Trevor Brown CPFA Internal Audit Services</i> as the Council's Internal Auditor for year ending 31 March 2021.</p> <p>Proposed by: Cllr Porter Seconded by: Cllr Brown</p>
20.28.05	<p>To consider a new fixed price energy plan (Paper FRM(20)28.05)</p> <p>The Council's fixed price energy plan with British Gas for the electricity supply for 17 Riduna Park ends on 11 February 2021. The owners of Riduna Park have confirmed that occupants of the Park are free to change supplier if they so wish, and hence the Assistant Clerk produced a report setting out a range of options for a new 3 year fixed term contract which had been previously distributed. The prices quoted in the report were indicative, correct on the date and time they were issued, but subject to change as the market fluctuates. The average consumption is c5,000 units a year (which includes the upstairs tenants who are recharged for their metered usage together with 50% of the energy used in the lobby). Following extensive discussion, and particularly in the light of the price fluctuation, it was AGREED to delegate the final decision to the Assistant Clerk, subject to the submission of a Delegated Decision report to the next meeting of FERM Committee in February 2021.</p>
20.28.06	<p>To receive an update on land divestment from East Suffolk Council</p> <p>The Clerk reported that he had signed the contract for the transfer of the 21 parcels of land from East Suffolk Council to Melton Parish Council in 2 phases – Phase 1 as soon as completion could take place and Phase 2 on 31 March 2021. However it was subsequently discovered that the Hall Farm Road public open space, whilst having one asset number in East Suffolk's Property schedule, was reflected in two parcels of land as far as H M Land Registry is concerned. Therefore the contract needs to be slightly amended and the Clerk has spoken to the responsible officer at East Suffolk who will instruct the East Suffolk solicitors accordingly. The position was NOTED.</p>

20.29	TO CONSIDER EMPLOYMENT MATTERS
20.29.01	Staffing report Nothing to report.
20.30	TO REVIEW RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES
20.30.01	Risk Register (Paper FRM(20)30.01) Members of FERM Committee reviewed the Risk Register updated for December 2020. It was AGREED to add the risk of the Pavilion project being delayed / thrown off track as a new Low Risk to be monitored. Otherwise the report was NOTED .
20.30.02	Data protection Risk Register The Assistant Clerk updated Members as requested on hard drive encryption issues. The hard drives are stored in the office safe when not in use. The Council's ICT Advisor has said that they cannot be encrypted and purchase of new ones at c£65.00 each would be needed. A discussion took place on whether encryption was really needed; the primary need was to ensure that the data was safe from fire and flood. The Assistant Clerk advised that all documents in the future are being stored on OneDrive, thus using cloud storage and these can be accessed from remote locations. It was AGREED that the office would talk to the ICT Advisor about procuring additional hard drives so that one of each pair can be stored off site to minimise any risk of data loss.
20.30.03	Business continuity planning – cloud based storage systems update and report on recent cyber attack, recovery and resilience The Assistant Clerk presented her findings in respect of work done in relation to the above areas. These may be summarised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents are now stored on OneDrive (see Minute 20.30.02 above). This also makes it easier to share documents. • The Finance software is not cloud based. This needs to be borne in mind when looking at future solutions e.g. <i>Omega</i> and <i>Scribe</i>. • Both the recent cyber attack and the security certificate issue were investigated and reports sent contemporaneously to Councillors. The facts and issues in each case were set out and reviewed. In terms of options for greater resilience these are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the arrangements as they are and monitor and review • Consider alternatives • Place email hosting with a separate provider e.g. Microsoft • Having the Council's own server maintained by NetWise (this would be very expensive). In discussion there was a consensus to remain with NetWise. Email storage could be increased by payment of £20 per additional Gb., or by upgrading to a newer theme at a one-off cost of £199. Alternatively on payment of £400 a year instead of £300, the upgrade is free, and the Premium package will double storage capacity. It was AGREED that the Assistant Clerk will bring a written report to the February 2021 meeting of FERM Committee setting out costed options regarding upgrades and resilience.

20.30.04	<p>Fire risk assessment (including PAT testing) compliance update for 17 Riduna Park</p> <p>This was commissioned as it is a statutory requirement under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005. It was carried out on 12 October by Guardian Fire Safety Management Ltd. A detailed report was subsequently provided and the following key actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A written emergency evacuation procedure (proportionate to the size of the building) is required. <i>The Assistant Clerk has this in hand.</i> • Fire safety training including training in the use of fire extinguishers. <i>This was NOTED.</i> • Notices are required above all alarm call points. <i>This has been done.</i> • Lone working issues – a policy is required. <i>This will be required as well for the auditor and will be drafted by the Clerk.</i> • Weekly testing of all call points and records maintained. <i>This is already done.</i> • Fire exit safety signage is allegedly non-compliant. <i>This is disputed by the installer and Riduna Park.</i> • Office equipment needs to be PAT tested. <i>This has been done.</i> <p>The report was NOTED.</p>
20.31	TO CONSIDER GOVERNANCE MATTERS
20.31.01	<p>Report of Decisions Made by Clerk under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 (Paper FRM(20)31.01)</p> <p>It was AGREED to ratify the delegated decisions made by the Clerk in respect of (1) commissioning a Fire Risk Assessment at a cost of £325.00 and (2) commissioning PAT testing at a cost of £55.00.</p>
20.32	<p>TO CONSIDER A REVISED FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT PUBLICATION SCHEME (Paper FRM(20)32)</p> <p>The Clerk introduced this report, previously distributed. A short covering report provides a link to a Model Publication Scheme recently issued by the information Commissioner’s Office which can be adopted without modification by any public authority without further approval. As things stand the Council routinely publishes all the information in the classes set out in the list on page 2 of the Model Scheme.</p> <p>Following discussion it was RESOLVED to recommend the Model Publication Scheme to Full Council for adoption.</p> <p>Proposed by: Cllr Banks Seconded by: Cllr Gradwell</p>
20.33	<p>FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN’S URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>There was no urgent business.</p>
20.34	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 10 February 2021 at 7pm via Zoom. There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.25.</p>