

MINUTES OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2016

PRESENT: Cllr. Goodchild (in the Chair), Bunyan, Holmes, and Veitch.

APOLOGIES: Cllrs. Clifford, Rook and Swann.

Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying:

Members are required to declare any interests, dispensations, predetermination or lobbying on items on this agenda. Members are reminded that changes to the Register of Interests should be notified to the Clerk.

**48/16: Banking Arrangements:**

The Clerk reported that we had been notified that the Tenterden branch of HSBC was closing for business on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2017. She had spoken to Cllr. Swann whose opinion was to stay with HSBC. It was proposed by Cllr. Goodchild, seconded by Cllr. Holmes and agreed that the banking arrangements for all accounts remain with HSBC with the exception of daily deposits, petty cash and the Inland Revenue payments, being through the Lloyds current account. The Clerk confirmed that we do not incur charges for banking at Lloyds but agreed to check that was not dependant on turnover.

**49/16: Internal Finance Check:**

Cllr. Swann had confirmed that the internal finance check had been completed and everything was in order.

**50/16: Authorisation of payments made after the November meeting:**

A list of payments made after the November meeting, is filed with these minutes.

**51/16: Cheques for Payment:**

Cheques for December were signed for payment as per the list filed with these minutes. It was proposed by Cllr. Goodchild, seconded by Cllr. Holmes and agreed to authorise payment of the cheques as presented.

These included:

Policy and Resources	£10,818.63
Burial and Properties	£ 3,462.00
Economic & Community	£ 1,000.00
Environmental Management	<u>£ 2,398.91</u>
Total	£17,679.54

In response to a question from Cllr. Veitch, Cllr. Holmes confirmed that the Transport Accessibility Group met regularly to discuss transport services in the rural area.

**52/16: Staffing & Contracts:**

Cllr. Veitch reported to Members on the appointment of the new Deputy Clerk which had been delegated to herself and Cllr. Goodchild to oversee. She explained that the position had been advertised in the Wealden Advertiser for two weeks at the end of October and had also been placed on the Parish Council and KALC websites. As a result we had received seven applications. The candidates were shortlisted to four and interviewed on Wednesday the 16<sup>th</sup> November. The newly promoted Clerk had attended the interviews as an observer but did not participate. All interviewees were asked questions from a list prepared by Cllrs. Veitch and Goodchild and were scored numerically on their responses. After deliberation and consultation with the Clerks, it was decided that Mrs Laura Larkin was the most suitable applicant and would be offered the position. Cllr Holmes proposed that Mrs Laura Larkin be appointed as Deputy Clerk from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017, this was seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed.

Draft contracts had been prepared for consideration by the Committee for the Clerk and Deputy Clerk based on the NALC model contract. Cllr. Veitch drew particular attention to the sections relating to salary, sick pay and notice of termination of employment. After a full discussion it was proposed by Cllr. Holmes, seconded by Cllr. Goodchild that the draft contracts as agreed by this committee be checked by the Management Consultant to ensure they comply fully with employment legislation prior to signing.

As a result of preparing the contracts it had been noted that we did not have a policy on sickness and absence, with this in mind a draft policy had been prepared, this was tabled and discussed by Members. It was proposed by Cllr. Veitch, seconded by Cllr. Goodchild and agreed that the draft policy be accepted and added to our list of current policies, a copy of which is filed with these Minutes.

The Clerk advised Members that the terms of her contract required her to return all council property on her retirement. She reminded them that she was still in possession of the laptop purchased in 2011. It was agreed that due to advances in technology, the equipment was no longer required by the Parish Council and could be gifted to her subject to the removal of all sensitive information.

**53/16: Payroll:**

The Clerk reported that we had been contacted by Moorepay, our payroll provider to consider upgrading our current contract with them to a fully managed online system. We had been informed that our current system would eventually be phased out. The differences between the two systems were explained. There was a small increase in cost for the new system but it was generally felt that the benefits gained would negate this. After discussion Cllr. Goodchild proposed that the proposal from Moorepay be accepted, this was seconded by Cllr. Veitch and agreed.

**54/16: Contracts:**

- a) The specification for the Grounds Contract was tabled with a few amendments as suggested by Cllr. Swann. Cllr. Veitch suggested that to comply with the planning condition for Wilkes Field, an addition was needed to include the reptile receptor management plan. Cllr. Bunyan stated that Cllr. Swann should be congratulated on his thoroughness of his review of the specification. It was proposed by Cllr. Holmes, seconded by Cllr. Goodchild and agreed that the specification with a few minor amendments be sent out for tender to the prepared list of contractors.

It was confirmed that the contract would be renewed from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2017 and would run until 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020. A contractor's tick list had also been devised to assist the current contractors comply with the specification.

- b) The Clerk reported that the street lighting energy contract currently with Haven Power is still under discussion with the government appointed consultant, but hopes it will be resolved shortly.

**55/16: Grant Applications:**

- a) An application had been received from Home-Start South West Kent for a financial contribution of £1,200, which is the amount required to support one family in the parish. The organisation relies solely on charitable trusts and individual or corporate donations for funding. They provide support and practical help to disadvantaged families with young children. Members discussed the application, it was proposed by Cllr. Holmes, seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed that with regret Members could not support the application.
- b) An application for £206 was received from Cranbrook Farmers Market for assistance towards the cost of radio advertising. Members felt that the Farmers Market contributed to the economic vibrancy of the town, with this in mind Cllr. Holmes proposed that a grant of £200 be awarded, this was seconded by Cllr. Veitch and agreed.

**56/16: Promotion of Parish Council:**

Cllr. Holmes reported that the presentation for the new magazine was still a work in progress and in the light of Cllr. Clifford apologies this evening, the item would be deferred until the next meeting.

**57/16: Five Year Plan & Budget:**

Due to the cancellation of the last Economic and Community Committee meeting, the budget proposals and five year plan for that committee were being considered this evening. Members agreed that the suggestion by Cllr. Swann of increasing the amount for grant allocation to £8,000 was advisable. Cllr. Holmes proposed that the Economic and Community Budget 2017/2018 as filed with these Minutes be agreed. This was seconded by Cllr. Goodchild and agreed.

The Five Year Plan for Policy and Resources was discussed, no changes were made, a copy of which is filed with these Minutes. The Clerk confirmed that the street lighting maintenance contract is automatically rolled over each year unless terminated by either party. A review of the Caretakers rent and salary was discussed with the decision taken that no increases were necessary. The Clerks salary and that of the new Deputy Clerk had been reviewed and agreed at the previous meeting. The budget for the Neighbourhood Development was discussed, Cllr. Warne had estimated costs to be around £49,000. With £7,500 already put aside and £9,000 available in grant funding it had been suggested that £16,250 be allocated each year over the next two years to cover the current estimated expenditure. Members fully discussed the budget figures for Policy and Resources, the General Account and the Transfer of Reserves, copies of which are filed with these Minutes.

Cllr. Goodchild proposed that the Policy and Resources Budget 2017/2018 and the General Account Budget 2017/2018 as filed with these Minutes be agreed. This was seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed. Cllr Bunyan also thanked Cllr. Swann for all the hard work he puts into the preparation of the budget sheets to allow for such detailed discussion.

**58/16:** Items for Information:

Cllr. Veitch reported that at the recent Parish Chairman's meeting, they were told that business rates, which are set by the government are to be increased, this will have implications to both TWBC and ourselves in respect of the car parks.