

**MINUTES A MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE OF BRENCHLEY PARISH COUNCIL ON
MONDAY 30th JULY 2018 IN MATFIELD PAVILION AT 7.30pm**

Present

Councillors C. Woodley (Chairman) presided, A. de Guingand, D. Batty, R. Wickham, Ms. C. Brooks (Clerk).

1. To accept apologies for absence

None.

2. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 17 April 2018 were approved and duly signed as an accurate record by the Chairman.

3. To record declarations of interest on any item on the Agenda

Members are reminded that if any have a *prejudicial* interest in an agenda item, this should be declared at the start of the meeting.

Personal interests could be declared at this point or, alternatively, could be declared at the time a specific item is being discussed if that member wishes to speak on the item in which s/he has a personal interest. In case of doubt about such an interest Councillors have been advised to contact the Monitoring Officer before the meeting.

None declared.

4. Internal Audit Report

The end of year 2017/18 Internal Audit report had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting.

The Clerk highlighted the comments regarding Risk (see agenda item below) and in relation to information published regarding Policy recommendations. The Clerk stated her continued willingness to manage payroll herself but advised the Committee of the need for regular scrutiny of this process by Councillors. The auditor's comments regarding GDPR in relation to email addresses had already been investigated by the Clerk and information circulated on the difficulties this would pose. The Committee accepted that it would be not possible currently to oblige Councillors to use generic email addresses, although these had been available for some time, and that all Councillors had received guidance on their GDPR responsibilities from the Clerk.

The Audit Plan and Findings were discussed at length, with some comments noted:

1. The Chairman clarified that the Policy and Management Group Terms of Reference covered the work of the Clerk but that a separate Panel of Cllrs. Woodley, Wickham and Mrs. Butler, had been previously convened for the purpose of HR issues.
2. Risk – see below
3. Bank reconciliations were regularly provided and the Clerk reminded Councillors of their responsibility in authorising the Annual Governance return, to scrutinise the bank account. The Clerk is able to provide breakdowns of any cost centres at any time and recommended to Councillors that these were requested periodically as a cross-check.
4. Assets – it was suggested that "Land at Seaton" should in future be known as "Cooksfield" in memory of Mr. Norman Cook who bequeathed the land to the Council. The Asset Register is being considered with data still to be obtained, it is intended that Graeme Stevenson, co-opted member of the Policy and Management Committee, will attend to this.

5. Insurance

The Clerk had advised that it would be prudent to obtain quotes from several brokers as it is the end of the Council's 3-year contract with Aviva. Cllr. Woodley and the Clerk had attended a meeting with Came and Co. the brokers, and have added some cover to the standard amounts:

ADD cover for - Contents at £10,000 (this is for the contents of the Pavilion such as chairs, tables, kitchen items)

AMEND cover for - Gates & Fences from £1,221.70 to £2,072.70 (this is to add the value of the new JVMG gates purchased last year)

Office Contents (what is in the cupboard at the Pavilion) is covered already up to £5k.

As the renewal is due on the 1st October it would be necessary for the Full Council to attend to this decision. Quotes had been requested for both 1 and 3-year contracts.

RESOLVED to recommend to the Parish Council that they consider the renewal quote and select the Council's insurers for the following year/s

6. Risk

Following a number of recommendations from the Internal Audit report the Clerk had reviewed the Council's existing Risk documentation.

6.1 Risk Register

The Clerk had circulated a draft High-Level Risk Register, extracted from the previous Risk Management Action Plan, covering Governance, Finance and Business Continuity only.

The Clerk had also circulated a new suggested Finance and Governance Risk Register containing the most relevant risks.

Cllr Batty would consider the draft Finance and Governance risks and provide a further draft by the Finance Committee meeting in November.

6.2 Risk Assessments

The Clerk had circulated a template for property and assets Risk Assessments which can be used for each area (these will be on the website in due course). Risk Assessments are the responsibility of the Policy and Management Committee and Councillors would be asked to complete draft Risk Assessments of their particular land/asset area for scrutiny/amendment by the P&M, which will agree the list of Risk Assessments required. For this reason, the P&M Group will in future be minuted.

6 RFO Update

6.1 Bank Reconciliation

The Clerk had circulated these monthly and remind the Committee that it is advisable for a Councillor to occasionally scrutinise the accounts.

6.2 Invoices

The Clerk had reminded the Full Council that invoices should be scrutinised before authorisation; they are made available at the meetings, or scans can be sent on request.

6.3 VAT

The 2017/18 refund has been received in the sum of £ 7,691.84.

6.4 Brenchley Charities

The Clerk reported that the current bank balance of John Downer is £788.24.

NOTE: Cllr. Woodley, Cllr, Wickham and the Clerk, being Trustees of the Charity, noted this.

The Matfield War Memorial Bank account will shortly be closed after payment of the funds to Burselms for their recent work

6.5 Unbudgeted expenditure

The Clerk reported that there are already some amounts over £500 which are unbudgeted although there is more than enough in reserves to accommodate these:

Allotment gates £500

6.6 Cashbook

The Clerk provided the current cashbook by cost centre and some queries were discussed, including the 119% spend on Sundries, which was due to the repairs on the bus shelter and the purchase of the gazebo. All other cost centres were reasonably within spending for this time of the financial year and no concerns were raised.

A nominal ledger for the NDP had been provided to the administrator Paul Spedding. The budget for the next phase of the neighbourhood plan had not yet been revised.

6.7 Accounts Payable for July

A list had been circulated and invoices were scrutinised by Cllrs. Batty and Woodley who would authorise the payments.

7. Date of next meeting – tbc November 2018