

Highnam Parish Council
Highnam ~ Linton ~ Over ~ Lassington

Finance, Audit and Governance Committee



Monday 6th December 2021 @ 14.00 Parish Hall

Present: Councillors: C Coats, V Tustin Smith W Nicol, J Smith

In Attendance: J Badham (Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer)
1 Member of the public attended.

Actions raised from previous meeting:

- New contract of Employment for Clerk to be updated showing the agreed increase from 9 to 12 hours following approval at Council in September. **Actioned.**
- Terms of Reference are out of date. **Update Actioned and attached**
- Local Council Award Scheme. **applied for Actioned**
- Risk Assessment, the current format is not clear or adequate **Action: RFO to distribute new format for review and to add the review of the insurance annually.**
- **GDPR (Data Protection Register)**
- Council is currently not registered with Information Commissioner's Office. **Details were distributed and Parish Council agreed to apply for ICO registration. Minutes 12/10/2021 Sec 7.**
- **Reserve Funds** investigating options of investing our reserve funds. Committee needs to be clear on the amount of money required in reserve for running cost. **Action Deferred to April meeting. Responsible Finance Officer to research options.**

Public Forum

- It was contended that the Environmental Working Group (EWG) and the running of the group is not legally constituted and they have no authority to spend money.
- The Tewkesbury Borough Council /HPC licence for the management of Lassington Wood is not correct as part of the wood is privately owned and they have no right to operate in this area. Action: Clerk to investigate.
- Concerns was raised about using equipment.
- It was requested that no more wooden statues should be purchased.

1. To Appoint a Chairperson

Cllr Bill Nicol was appointed as Chair following proposal from Cllr Coats, second Cllr Tustin Smith.

2. To receive apologies for absence

- All present

3. To receive declarations of Interest

- None

4. To approve minutes from the meeting held on the 29th September 2021

- Minutes were approved as a true representation of the meeting. Proposed Cllr C Coats, second Cllr V Tustin Smith.

5. Amendment to Terms of Reference

- Terms of Reference was presented. **Action: add quorum position as requested by Cllr Coats.**

6. To discuss report on 'Establishment of Committees'

- The subject of Groups, Committees and Sub-committees was discussed. This was raised previously at Parish Council meeting due to the Environmental Working Group (EWG) running practices. Cllr Coats presented a report on the subject. Following some debate, it was agreed that any restructuring would not be actioned at present but reviewed in six months' time.
- The flow chart for the EWG would be reviewed and amended. **Action Clerk to re-view and present at April meeting.**

7. To agree and approve dates for Highnam Parish council meetings for 2022

- Dates agreed and will be presented at next Parish Council Meeting.
- Meeting for the Annual General Meeting was discussed and proposal for June

8. To discuss and recommend budget for 2022/2023

- Proposed budget was reviewed and discussed. Amendments were made to Councilor Expenses, training, audit, grants and Christmas lights. It was agreed the proposed budget would be to the January 2022 Parish Council meeting.

9. To discuss and recommend precept for 2022/2023

- Current precept is £40k, this was last increased in 2018/2019 from previous precept of £37.5k which covered the 2016/2017 financial year.
- Following review of the proposed budget it was agreed to propose an increase to £50k. Council has not increased the precept to reflect the increase in population of the village following the development of Lassington Reach.

10. To agree and approve a working from home allowance for clerk

- Current office of The Old School is being refurbished; therefore, Clerk is working from home. The current allowance set by HMRC is £6 per week. Clerk does not pay tax therefore this cannot be claimed through the HMRC. Cllr Coats to propose this to Parish Council.

11. To receive clerk's report

- A lot of work has gone into preparing the budget and reviewing 2021/2022.
- Continue with ensuring we have relevant and updated policies and procedures.
- Follow up internal audit progress. **Action Clerk**

12. To discuss policy for Councillors' Allowances

- Agreed to recommend the adoption of a policy for Councillors' Allowances.

13. To agree and adopt Code of Conduct

- Code of Conduct - correct version to be proposed to council for adoption.

14.To agree dates for Council meetings in 2022

- Dates agreed and to published on Website.

15.Residual Items

None

Meeting closed 3.47pm

Next meeting will be held: 8th April 2022 @ 14.00hrs Parish Rooms

Signed

Date

DRAFT