



## **Winnersh Parish Council**

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### **Minutes of a meeting of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held in the John Grobler Room on Tuesday 29 OCTOBER 2019**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs F Breedlove; P Fishwick; G Harper; R Shepherd-DuBey and J Southgate.

P Stoneman (Clerk) and A Lambourne (Admin and Finance Officer - RFO).

#### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllrs. P Bray and A Caston.

#### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest in relation to any items on the agenda.

#### **3 PUBLIC SESSION**

There were no members of the public in attendance.

#### **4 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 30 APRIL 2019**

Item 6.2 - Review of Policies: The Clerk advised that he had liaised with Cllr Harper and Cllr Southgate and was in the process of making some minor changes to the policy index, including removing the date the original policy was created and including a 'review by' date.

#### **5 DONATIONS AND REFERRALS**

5.1 A grant application had been received from ‘The Link Visiting Scheme’ and the Committee **RESOLVED** to award £150. The Link provides a befriending service for people throughout Wokingham ensuring that many elderly people who are lonely or isolated receive a weekly visit from one of the volunteers. Currently, twenty people from the Winnersh area benefit from the service.

5.3 The organisations that had been awarded grants in 2019/20 are set out below:-

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Award</b>	<b>Date Awarded</b>
ReadiBus	£2250	30/4/2019
Keep Mobile	£1750	30/4/2019
<b>Total (Community Transport)</b>	<b>£4,000</b> <b>(19/20 budget £4,000)</b>	
Home Start	£400	30/4/2019
Me2	£100	30/4/2019
Wokingham Job support Centre	£500	4/6/2019
CAB	£1,000	30/7/2019
Berkshire Vision	£150	30/7/2019
Wokingham Veteran Tree Association	£100	30/7/2019
The Link Visiting Scheme	£150	29/10/2019
<b>Total (Grants)</b>	<b>£2,400</b> <b>(19/20 budget £3,000)</b>	

5.4 There were no referrals from other Committees.

## **6 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN**

6.1 The Committee reviewed the Internal Audit Plan (FO3) and considered it fit for purpose subject to any comments from the Internal Auditor. **ACTION:**  
**CLERK**

## **7 GRANTS POLICY**

7.1 The Clerk presented a draft Grants Policy and it was agreed that, subject to some minor changes, that a **RECOMMENDATION** be made to Full Council that it be adopted.

**ACTION:**

**CLERK**

7.2 After the Policy had been adopted, the Clerk would inform all the organisations that had recently applied for grants that no further applications would be considered until a grant application form had been completed. **ACTION:**

**CLERK**

## **8 E-MAIL**

8.1 The Committee considered the options of using email accounts with ‘@winnersh.gov.uk’ extensions that could be provided by IT QED using Microsoft 365, at a monthly cost of £3.30 per email account. Free to use accounts provided by the current broadband provider, Plusnet, were also considered.

8.2 Cllr Southgate advised that whilst the email accounts provided by Plusnet could use the extension '@winnersh.plus.com' it was possible to use an alias to appear as '@winnersh.gov.uk'.

8.3 The Clerk advised that Plusnet did not recommend the use of the 'free' email accounts for a Council as data storage was limited to 1GB across all the Councils email accounts. Plusnet also advised that archiving was limited to one month and that email was more likely to end up in 'Spam' compared to the Microsoft 365 option.

8.4 The Clerk was asked to check if Plusnet could increase the amount of data storage and, if so, at what cost. If the storage capacity could not be increased the Committee agreed the use of the Microsoft 365 Option through IT QED. **ACTION:  
CLERK**

## **9 PHONE SYSTEM**

9.1 The Clerk informed the Committee of the problems being encountered with the Parish Office phone system, including the poor quality of the line and cordless phones and the unreliable voicemail system.

9.2 It was agreed that a corded phone should be tried and that an engineer from Plusnet be asked to check the line if the corded phones did not improve the situation.

**ACTION:  
CLERK**

## **10 ALLOTMENT DEPOSITS**

10.1 Cllr Harper provided an update on the number of deposits being held and recommended that 33 plot holders have their deposits returned amounting to £1,149 if the decision of R&A Committee was to cease the practice of holding deposits. The balance, where works had been completed to clear uncultivated plots, and where former plot holders had moved away and could not be contacted would be put into the revenue account. The Committee agreed this course of action.

**ACTION: RFO**

## **11 SOLAR**

11.1 Cllr Harper advised that the Solar power system was now working as it should and that there had been a significant increase in energy production. There were three solar panels that were not operating, and consideration would need to be given about the future maintenance and repair of the system to ensure it operated at the optimum level.

## **12 SAGE ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE**

12.1 Cllr Southgate advised that, following some recent changes he and Cllr Obileye had made, SAGE should be able to provide the reports required by the Council.

- 12.2 Cllr Fishwick suggested that a Working Group be set up to evaluate whether SAGE was able to provide the reports without manual adjustments and to consider the benefits of moving to RBS accounting and bookings software. The Committee agreed and asked that the Working Group report back to the next meeting on 28 January 2020 with a firm proposal. It was agreed that the Working Group would consist of Cllrs Fishwick, Breedlove and Southgate supported by the Clerk and RFO.
- 12.3 Cllr Breedlove requested that the accounting software provided by the Xero Software Company also be considered as part of the evaluation.

### **13 ACCOUNTS FOR Q1 AND Q2**

- 13.1 Accounts for Quarter 1 were reviewed and would be **RECOMENDED** to Full Council for acceptance.
- 13.2 Accounts for Quarter 2 were reviewed, and it was agreed that some clarification was required by the RFO and that should be represented to F&GP before Q2 could be recommended to Full Council for acceptance. The Committee requested that the following information be provided:-

1) An explanatory note against 'Services (WH)' - £1,682, showing that this was a net figure made up of expenditure and two credits from Thames Water and Castle Water. It was noted that the item included gas, electric and water and that these would be identified separately in future.

2) The cost of the computer purchased for use by the Clerk would be allocated against the F&GP project code.

3) Allotment transitioning costs of £3,485 be broken down with an explanatory note.

**ACTION: RFO**

### **14 BANK ACCOUNTS**

- 14.1 The RFO updated the Committee on the bank accounts held with UNITY bank and NatWest bank and the Committee agreed to transfer all the funds from NatWest to UNITY and to close the two NatWest accounts.
- 14.2 The RFO advised that UNITY bank offered a Debit/Corporate card and the Committee agreed that the RFO should apply for this with a maximum credit limit of £150. Where purchases exceeding £150 were necessary, authority would need to be sought from two Councillors to increase the limit on an 'as required' basis.
- ACTION: RFO**

### **15 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR**

- 15.1 The Clerk presented a quotation from Claire Connell for auditor services in 2019/20 and the Committee agreed to accept the quote for the sum of £600.
- 15.2 The RFO advised that the external auditor had reviewed the AGAR and had responded with no comments or concerns.

**16 CORRESPONDENCE**

- 16.1 The Clerk advised that a quotation had been received from the Councils insurer to provide insurance cover for the recently installed height barrier. The increased premium of £8.83 for the year was agreed.

**17 ANY OTHER ITEMS CONSIDERED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN**

There were no urgent items.

**18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING - TUESDAY 28 JANUARY 2020**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 22:10