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Community Way
Croxley Green
Rickmansworth
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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
HELD Online using ZOOM secure video conference
ON THURSDAY 30 APRIL 2020

Present: Cllr Gallagher – In the Chair Ryan Bennett – Clerk to the Council
Amanda Gardiner - Administrative Assistant

Present: Cllrs Benner, Cole, Mitchell, Montague and Walker

In Attendance: Cllrs Tobin and Wallington

Voting Members: 6

Members of the Public: 0

FA1499/20 **Apologies for Absence**

All Members were present.

FA1500/20 **Declaration of Interests**

Cllr Walker declared a pecuniary interest in item FA1504/20 invoice for £13 to Croxley Hardware.

FA1501/20 **Representations from the Public**

No representations were made in writing to the Clerk.

FA1502/20 **Minutes**

The Minutes under review for this meeting were those of Thursday 27 February 2020.

Resolved:

- That the Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 27 February 2020 are approved and signed by the Chairman.

FA1503/20 **Matters Arising**

No matters arising.

FA1504/20 **Monthly Accounts**

The Clerk brought Member's attention to the following payments for the previous months:

Month 11 (February)

4013/101 – Rent (£100) – annual payment to Three Rivers District Council.

4020/101 – Misc. Establishment Costs (£364) – cost of skip to clear rubbish from the office and depot.

4020/101 – Telephone & Fax (£498) – cost includes the monthly phone bills, plus quarterly broadband bill. Broadband switched to cheaper tariff.

4251/102 – Election Expenses (-£2,987) – clerical error in transferring Election Expenses from EMR to Main Account, should show as £2,987. Accountants will rectify before Annual Accounts closed.

4008/103 – Training (£555) – cost of Trailer training for Ranger. Ranger unable to attend due to shoulder injury, but full costs incurred as outside free cancellation window.

4042/103 – Equipment Maintenance (£104) – cost of parts for annual maintenance of handheld equipment.

4200/107 – Councils Charity Expenditure (£541) – payment to RSPCA Southridge Animal Shelter from funds raised at Dog Show 2019.

4963/199 – F&A Project - PSCSO (£7,375) – quarterly cost of PCSO in Croxley Green.

4622/211 – Poppies on The Green (£250) – donation to Royal British Legion for the provision of poppies for lampposts on The Green and New Road.

4629/211 – Allotment for Preschool childr (£68) – cost of compost to fill the new raised bed.

4976/299 – Defibrillators (Maint.) (£1,259) – annual maintenance contract for defibrillators which includes quarterly inspections, 24/7 support and replacement of pads after use.

Month 12 (March)

1080/101 – Miscellaneous Income (£4,020) – income received from Cllr Steve Drury Locality Budget. Clerical error in inputting payment to accounts system, should show £2,010. Accountants will rectify before Annual Accounts closed.

4008/101 – Training (£350) – cost of CiLCA to submit completed coursework. Clerk will be seeking for this to be refunded.

4012/101 – Water Rates (£387) – cost of monthly waste water charge plus 6 monthly water bill.

4020/101 – Misc. Establishment Costs (£161) – cost of office blind and increased order of drinking water in case of supply issues during COVID-19 Lockdown.

4037/103 – Grounds Maintenance (£2,552) – cost of additional fencing along Mill Lane and boundary of Weston Wood to prevent parking on the verge.

4605/211 – Events – Christmas Lights (£98) – cost of electricity for the lamppost Christmas Lights and Christmas Tree Lights.

Members noted the provisional accounts for Month 12.

Members discussed creating a COVID-19 earmarked reserve to fund activities that could support the residents of Croxley Green.

Resolved:

- That the Management Accounts for Month 11 (February) be approved and signed by the Chairman.
- That the Schedule of Payments for Month 11 (February) be approved and signed by the Chairman.

[Due to a pecuniary interest, Cllr Walker did not vote on this item]

FA1505/20

Live-Streaming Council Meetings

The Clerk introduced the topic of live-streaming council meetings to ensure that virtual meetings were as open and transparent to the public as an ordinary off-line meeting would be. The Clerk explained that he felt by streaming meetings on

YouTube this would help the council to expand its reach into the community, prevent anyone from accessing the meeting who wished to cause a disruption and still allow those members of the public to make representation to do so.

Some Members raised points against this proposal including that:

- Councillors would not be aware of who or how many people were watching proceedings.
- A member of the public could take a clip of part of a Council meeting out of context and misrepresent a Councillor.
- Council did not have an obligation to provide this level of access.
- They had privacy concerns about streaming on YouTube.

The Clerk informed members that the office would not be able to screen people on entry, nor bar anyone who wished to remain anonymous, and that anybody with access to the 'Zoom' meeting could record it and upload it to the internet without the consent of Cllrs.

Following feedback from Members the Clerk presented an amendment to the motion. Members agreed to the proposed amendment and replaced the 2 existing recommendations with one:

- That Croxley Green Parish Council does not live-stream its meetings at this time, but members of the public can join the Zoom meeting if they request to do so through the Clerk prior to the meeting.

Resolved

- That Croxley Green Parish Council does not live-stream its meetings at this time, but members of the public can join the Zoom meeting if they request to do so through the Clerk prior to the meeting.

FA1506/20

Enabling Attendance at Council Meetings – Carer's Allowance

Cllr Cole introduced the topic of a carer's allowance for Councillors. Councillors may not be able to attend Council meetings due to caring responsibilities and the cost of sourcing an alternative carer may be prohibitive and may put off some from standing to be a Councillor. A carer's allowance could enable Councillors to pay for an alternative carer, to enable them to attend Council meetings. Cllr Benner shared information from Hawkhurst Parish Council who investigated implementing an allowance scheme. They had found that current legislation prevents Parish Councils from offering a carer's allowance to specific Councillors but might permit a general allowance that could be open to all Councillors.

Resolved

- That the Clerk conducts research to determine if options for providing allowances (specifically Carer's Allowance) to Councillors are permitted.

FA1507/20

Closure

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.13 pm