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## Hollinswood and Randlay Parish Council

Chairman of the Committee: Cllr H Unwin Clerk: Katrina Baker MBE MILCM

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### FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020 at 7.30p.m. via Zoom.

**Present:** Councillor H Unwin  
Councillor S Unwin  
Councillor S Vaughan-Hodkinson  
Councillor C Turley  
Councillor L Ricketts  
Councillor S Snell

**In Attendance:** Katrina Baker, Clerk

**FA20/627 Welcome**

Councillor H Unwin welcomed members to the meeting and thanked them for attending. Members were reminded of the format for Zoom meetings.

**FA20/628 Apologies**

Councillor V Holt

**FA20/629 Declarations of Interest**

None, over and above the registered list.

**FA20/630 Minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

It was proposed by Cllr Vaughan-Hodkinson and seconded by Cllr Snell, with one abstention, all were in favour and thus it was

**RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 8th June 2020 are a true record and they will be signed at the next meeting.**

**FA20/631 Matters Arising from the Minutes Committee and Partnership Meetings**

As discussed at the last meeting, a series of Committee and Partnership meetings have been arranged to take place before Full Council and to be in preparation for September.

**FA20/632 Finance & Governance Matters**

a) Risk Management and Emergency Planning

Members had monitored and reviews the Risk Management Policy in May 2019 and completed a Risk Assessment which covered the Aims and Objectives with details of procedures, monitoring and audit, insurance and business continuity.

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In March 2020, an enhanced risk assessment was completed, which related to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

**RECOMMENDED that the Risk Management Policy and Risk Assessments be confirmed as adequate and appropriate and that continued monitoring will take place. This will be a standard item on each Finance & Audit Committee meeting in order that Members are kept up to date particularly in periods of excessive change, such as we are experiencing due to Covid-19.**

b) Aged Analysis

As we move towards the new invoicing system, via Edge Facilities Package, the Aged Analysis will be automatically produced by the system.

However, at this time, the AA includes outstanding amounts relating to the use of the community buildings prior to March 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020, when we closed due to the pandemic. Many of the contract users have now brought their accounts up to date. However, there are some that remain unpaid that will continue to get regular reminders. We are grateful to those who have been able to pay and it will be a requirement of returning to use the buildings in September, that accounts are clear or special permission has been granted.

c) Internal Audit Report

Hollinswood & Randlay Parish Council has employed the services of LightATouch, a company dedicated to Internal Audits and approved by Littlejohn's External Auditors. It has been necessary to undertake the Audit remotely and the Auditor had thanked the Clerk and Finance Manager for their help in providing all the necessary information for the audit to be completed. This had been undertaken at an earlier date than originally planned. A copy of the Audit report had been circulated to all Members and the Chairman pointed out a few statements contained in it.

- All transactions for 2019/20 were recorded on Advantage Software and its continued use will provide the Parish Council with an effective system of recording financial transactions and budget information.
- Confirmation has been obtained of good practice and compliance with the Transparency Code 2015 from the Council's website.
- Good practice that is being followed – use of AdvantEdge Software; aware of the requirements of GDPR; registered with ICO; financial input is up to date and easy to follow; income correctly recorded; budgeting process is detailed and thoroughly monitored throughout the year; each invoice is checked by the RFO and two Councillors, bank reconciliations are checked and reported monthly; the council takes an active scrutiny role; the insurance is appropriate; HMRC and PAYE payments are paid

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regularly; the Asset Register is up to date and VAT reimbursement claims are submitted to HMRC on a regular basis.

There was a recommendation that the Minutes of a Finance & Audit Committee meeting should list the number of payments made and an overall amount of total expenditure approved at each meeting.

The following was brought to the attention of the Committee.

It had been confirmed that the Risks of the Council had been reviewed during 2019/20, but these were not found to be in the Minutes and is a requirement of the External Auditor. This will result in the Council having to answer 'No' to assertion 5 of the AGAR. This is reflected in a 'No' on the Annual Internal Audit Report.

The 2019/20 AGAR requires the Auditor to check that the Council has correctly provided proper opportunity for the exercise of public rights in accordance with the regulations. Whilst this was confirmed and a copy available, there is no evidence to prove it was on the website at least one clear day before the 30 day period. It should be noted that compliance will be resolved at the time of posting the Notice for the Exercise of Public Rights 2020.

The Finance Officer had checked that the Asset Register is correct, details of new purchases and disposals were accounted for when completing Box 9 of the AGAR.

The Website Accessibility Regulations 2018 have been considered by the Parish Council as part of the arrangements for a new website which will comply with the Regulations along with assurance that it will remain compliant with the Transparency Code 2015.

It was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by the Vice Chairman and all members were in favour that the report be accepted and that thanks be extended to the Auditor, Rose and the Clerk for their work to prepare this useful report and associated documents. Members confirmed that the dates for the Exercise of Public Rights will be Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> July 2020 to Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

**RECOMMENDED that Hollinswood & Randlay Parish Council completes the AGAR as clearly advised by the Internal Auditor and that the dates for the Exercise of Public Rights be confirmed as Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> July 2020 to Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020.**

d) End of Year Accounts, AGAR and supplementary evidence

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All the documents will be published on the Website from 27<sup>th</sup> July 2020. This will include the Explanation of Variances. The Council had been praised for the end of year accounts which had resulted in only one explanation being necessary, that of an increase in the precept.

### **FA20/633 Other Matters**

#### Revised Budget

The Clerk reported that it had been very useful to approve a revised (Coronavirus) budget in April and that it would be good to re-assess and monitor this during August in preparation for September.

#### Employment of a 'new' Internal Auditor

The Clerk wished to record that the employment of a different internal auditor had been very positive and a useful experience.

### **FA20/634 Date of the Next Meeting**

An additional meeting will take place on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2020 at 7.30pm via Zoom.

The next meeting of the Committee will be determined as part of the Schedule of Meetings to be agreed at Full Council.

There being no further business, the Members asked the Clerk to pass on their thanks to the Finance Manager and then the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.10pm.

Signed ..... Date .....