



FAIRLIGHT PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Finance and Administration Meeting of Fairlight Parish Council held at 7:00 pm on Tuesday 12th November at Fairlight Village Hall

Present: Councillors: S Baker, M Clarke, L Cooke, L Miller, D Pichard, G Smith (Vice Chair), S Stewart (Chair), S Whiteman

In attendance: Danielle Gould, Clerk & RFO, one member of the public was present.

24/057 Item 1. Apologies for absence. There were none.

24/058 Item 2. Code of Conduct and Disclosure of Interests

Cllr Miller declared a personal interest in item 8.

Cllr Cooke declared a personal interest in item 8.

Formal welcome for new Clerk. Chair confirmed there is now access to Rialtas (accounting programme) and accounts will be updated. Chair required that all emails are now to be sent directly to the Clerk.

24/059 Item 3. Public Questions in respect of items on the agenda

Chair reported on email sent by a member of the public regarding item 9. The email is requesting the old computer and printer be donated for use by the residents.

Chair confirms the Clerk has responded.

24/060 Item 4. Minutes of Meeting held on 2nd July.

To approve the minutes and the Chair to sign as an accurate record Chair said there is no date of minutes to be signed as he had been unable to locate the minutes of the meeting in July (before the new Councillors were in place). The June minutes have not been yet signed. Cllr Baker said if it was the meeting he and Cllr Cooke attended it was primarily about recruitment. A member of the public said they will check to see if they can find the recording of the meeting in July.

24/061 Item 5. Matters Arising from the Minutes not otherwise on the agenda Nothing to report

24/062 Item 6. To discuss and review the current year's budget Cllr. Smith

Cllr Smith confirmed DISH has been signed over to FRA and War Memorial invoice will be received shortly. Deduction from EMR this year will be £31,000, £15,000 was on new swings. We will have an under-spend on the salary budget of approximately £14,000. There will be an approximate £3500 saving on the Audit. Electricity budget is approximately £4500, the original estimate was £12,000. The French drain work on Wood Field will need to be considered. Excluding EMR paid out Cllr Smiths said he predicts the end of year expenditure will be approximately £78,000 and the predicted amount was £99,595. He said we should be ending the year with £137,000, but to consider £46,000 is CIL money from the Market Garden

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Site. We will need to allow for the French drain works at Wood Field. We will need to address that there is more than £85,000 in one bank account. We have £900 of CIL money that needs to be used by March 2025, this could potentially be used for the bark that was used for Wood Field play park. Cllr Miller suggested using the CIL money for the steps at Woodland way into Knowle Wood. Cllr Clarke said he will speak to the Principal Rights of Way Officer at ESCC. Cllr Smith confirmed CIL stands at £51,403, he predicts the EMR will stand at £84,500 at the end of the financial year.

24/063 Item 7. To discuss and consider the allocation of earmarked reserves

Discussed under Item 6. Cllr Smith showed other Councillors a spreadsheet he has created to show what is in EMR.

24/064 Item 8. To discuss issues of Village People and financial support – Cllr. Baker

Cllr Baker said the VP need support and FPC should support them financially, he proposed FPC makes a one-off contribution of £10,000 to VP that they can use to get professional advice. Cllr Smith agreed we should support VP but said he does not know where the money would come from. The Chair reminded Councillors that we are unable to make grants or donations to groups or individuals. Cllr Miller said VP would like a proper survey carried out. Cllr Baker said an on-site report has been carried out which he challenged at a meeting he was invited to with Rother District Councillors Tim Grohn and Andrew Mier, he said his proposal is not for a specific project but for the VP to use on several things. The Chair said that £10,000 might not be enough. Cllr Miller said he is concerned that even if we get the relevant information, RDC will take no action, and he believes Gem Select have been transferred to Future Homes. Cllr Smith raised the point that the site could be signed off imminently and any complaints would come under a civil matter. Cllr Smith is concerned that a lot of public money will be spent to prove something that will not be actioned. Cllr Cooke said she supports the VP but raised her concerns FPC will not achieve anything. Cllr Miller proposed we write to Gem Select requesting access to the site if that is unsuccessful, then we write to the head of RDC and see if we can gain access. **RESOLVED** It was agreed to write to Gem Select and then the head of RDC and the Chair asked Cllr Baker to forward his FOI request to the head of RDC and inform Councillors of any reply. To be further discussed at FPC meeting on 26th November.

24/065 Item 9. To agree the purchase of a new laptop, desk, chair and printer for the clerk/RFO

Previously confirmed by email Chair asked Councillors if they know of any groups in the Village who would like the old computer or the A3 printer. If more than one group responds FPC will vote on which group they go to. The Chair asked that the recipient of the old computer and printer make a donation to FPC, who will then choose a suitable charity to give to.

24/066 Item 10. CIL Funding – Cllr. Cooke Cllr Cooke proposed Councillors send their suggestions to the Clerk on which project the match CIL funding could be used on.

24/067 Item 11. To discuss transferring NatWest/Unity Trust account over to online banking

Chair recommended to move to online banking as it is a quicker process. There will be approximately a £2000 saving on stamps per annum. **RESOLVED** It was agreed to recommend moving over to internet banking to Full Council.



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24/068 Item 12. To discuss transferring payroll company

A £200 saving per annum will be made using to new payroll company. **RESOLVED** it was agreed to recommend to Full Council transferring over to Steve Maiden payroll services.

24/069 Item 13. Grass cutting contract Review of options. 1,2,3

Chair explained option 1, 2 and 3. (1) We can have two cuts a year for free, (2) six cuts a year for £2622.75 or (3) self-delivery where ESCC pay us £1311.37. Chair proposes option 1. **RESOLVED** to recommend option 1 to Full Council.

24/070 Item 14. To discuss 2025/2026 Budget – Cllr. Smith

Cllr Miller requests the budget is posted and FPC lists where savings have been made for public viewing. Cllr Smith will send budget spreadsheet to Councillors on 13th November.

Close of meeting 9.18pm.

Signed by Chair  Date 10/12/24