



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee
Wednesday 26 May 2021
7.30pm**

Present: Cllrs Ken Peters (Chairman), Graeme Acraman, Barry Barnes, Craig Gale, Dave Homer and Roy Margetts.

In Attendance.

G Burt, Clerk to the Council.

69/21 Chairman's Announcements.

The Chairman advised

1. That Cllr Craig Gale had inspected the relevant bank statements prior to the meeting.
2. Of the COVID precautions in place.
3. That the meeting was being streamed to the internet.

70/21 Apologies.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Edna Bengier and Paul Berry due to prior engagements. On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters, seconded by Cllr Craig Gale, **RESOLVED** that the apologies and reasons given be accepted.

71/21 Declaration of Interests and notification of change to members' interests.

Cllr Craig Gale declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Minute 79/21(c) being a Trustee of the applicant.

72/21 Public Session (Members of the Public may speak for up to 3 minutes at the discretion of the Chairman).

None.

73/21 Minutes.

The minutes of 28 April 2021, previously circulated, were taken as read. On the proposal of Cllr Barry Barnes seconded by Cllr Dave Homer, **RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved and signed as a correct record.

74/21 Matters Arising.

None.

75/21 To Approve Payments and Note Receipts.

Details of payments totalling £61,260.97 for April 2021 were previously circulated – Appendix A. On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters, seconded by Cllr Graeme Acraman, **RESOLVED** that the payments be approved and any receipts noted and published on the Council's website accordingly.

76/21 To note Bank Reconciliations.

On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters, seconded by Cllr Graeme Acraman, **RESOLVED** the following Bank Reconciliations be approved. (The corresponding statements had earlier been initialled by Cllr Craig Gale.)

Current Account to 30 April 2021	- Statement 408 – Appendix B
Business Reserve Account to 30 April 2021	- Statement 318 – Appendix B
Bonus Saver Account to 30 April 2021	- Statement 93 – Appendix C

77/21 To consider any expenditure recommendations from other Committees over and above current budgetary provision.

None.

The Chairman highlighted the need for future project costs to include preliminary professional fees.

78/21 2020-21 Accounts.**a) To consider any matters in raised in the final Internal Audit Report and agree suggested response.**

On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters, seconded by Cllr Craig Gale, **RESOLVED** the responses (to the points raised) as set out in Appendix D.

b) To note and consider the final accounts by budget.

The detailed income and expenditure for the year 2020-21 was NOTED.

Members considered a report by the Clerk which highlighted some of the reasons why the Council appeared to have overspent during the year, and suggested changes to improve future budgeting reliability. In particular, it appeared that significant capital projects distorted the revenue budgets. On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters, seconded by Cllr Craig Gale, **RESOLVED**

- i. Request changes to the accounting package to separate out revenue and capital expenditure more clearly.
- ii. Consider increasing General Reserves for the start of the next financial year.
- iii. Ensure that there are specific or adequate budgets to meet professional advice costs in order to move projects forward.

79/21 To consider grant applications.

- a) On the proposal of Cllr Graeme Acraman, seconded by Cllr Craig Gale, **RESOLVED** that a grant of £850 be awarded to Billingshurst Dramatic Society, under S145 of the LGA 1972 accordingly.
- b) On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters, seconded by Cllr Graeme Acraman, **RESOLVED** that a grant of £200 be awarded to St Catherine's Hospice under S137 of the LGA 1972 accordingly.

Cllr Craig Gale left the meeting.

- c) On the proposal of Cllr Graeme Acraman, seconded by Cllr Dave Homer **RESOLVED** that a grant of £500 be awarded to Billingshurst Street Pastors, under S137 of the LGA 1972 accordingly.

Cllr Craig Gale re-joined the meeting.

80/21 Highways - To consider request for continuation of highway tree planting scheme.

A resident had asked if the Council would repeat its highway tree planting scheme. It was agreed to DEFER the item, pending information on cost per tree, and whether it could tie into 2022 HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebration, which was to include planting more trees.

81/21 Public Realm CCTV – to review the specification and consider an offer from WCCTV of a free trial.

The specification prepared two years ago had been circulated. Members agreed that it remains the basis upon which to progress the scheme. It was also agreed to accept an offer from Wireless CCTV of a free trial. The Clerk would liaise with them to clarify what was being offered.

82/21 Neighbourhood Plan – to note the result of the referendum.

The Committee was pleased that the plan had received an overwhelming endorsement from electors, despite the low turnout. NOTED.

83/21 Any Other Matters for Information Only.

None.

84/21 Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 23 June 2021.

Meeting closed at 8.15pm.

Chairman

Date

List of Payments made between 01/04/2021 and 30/04/2021

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Authorized Ref</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
01/04/2021	Horsham DC	012860	124.00		Bin emptying
06/04/2021	Saxon Wield Homes Ltd	DD	70.29		Garage rental
06/04/2021	Sainsbury's	CARD	13.20		Emergency loo rolls
06/04/2021	Netcom IT Solutions	DD	545.86		IT support
11/04/2021	A272 Design	012868	641.40		May TWEET + legal notice
11/04/2021	G Burt	012872	20.00		Oil drum / bin / Manor Fields
12/04/2021	SSE	012851	87.31		Street lighting energy
12/04/2021	Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd	012852	1,479.60		20-21 close + 21-22 support
12/04/2021	Drainline Southern Ltd	012853	14,016.00		OW works Daux Av area
12/04/2021	Wightman & Parrish Ltd	012854	164.64		Public toilets kit/supplies
12/04/2021	Billingshurst CCC	012855	1,912.00		Various
12/04/2021	Ellis Whittam	012856	4,832.82		H&S + HR support 21-22
12/04/2021	WSALC Ltd	012857	2,126.97		WSALC + NALC sub 2021-22
12/04/2021	Horsham DC	012858	5,551.75		NDR+Council Tax: Loos + 83a HS
12/04/2021	G Burt	012859	90.00		Pigeon holes for office
12/04/2021	Horsham DC	012860	304.00		Bin emptying all sites
12/04/2021	Mulberry & Co	012861	126.00		Training x3
12/04/2021	Gary Steer Builders Ltd	012862	4,600.00		Demolish/remove skatepark
12/04/2021	G Burt / Alexandru F Ilies	012863	2,664.00		Reimb / fence contractor
12/04/2021	Alexandru F Ilies	012840	-2,664.00		CHEQUE REJECT BY BANK/CANCEL
14/04/2021	Restream Inc,	CARD	14.26		Restreaming service
15/04/2021	Tennant UK Cleaning Sol.	DD	156.72		Sweeper service
16/04/2021	Network One	DD	209.93		Phone charged etc.
19/04/2021	PWLB	10831.25	10,831.25		PWLB / 83a High St
22/04/2021	POST OFFICE	CARD	239.75		Stamps
23/04/2021	Post Office	CARD	132.00		Postage
23/04/2021	EE & T Mobile	DD	11.24		Mobile phone
26/04/2021	Siemens Fin Serv	DD	160.80	Copier rental	Siemens Fin Serv
29/04/2021	PWLB	BACS	10,128.52		PWLB / BCCC Imps.
30/04/2021	NatWest	BACS	1.97		Bank interest
30/04/2021	NatWest	BACS	-1.97		Incorrect entry
30/04/2021	NatWest	BACS	19.60		Bank charges
30/04/2021	Sussex Land Services	SO	2,328.11		GM - April
30/04/2021	Tennant UK Cleaning Sol.	DD	322.95		Sweeper service
Total Payments			61,260.97		

Current Bank A/c

Cash Received between 01/04/2021 and 30/04/2021

<u>Date</u>	<u>Cash Received from</u>	<u>Receipt No</u>	<u>Receipt Description</u>	<u>Receipt Total</u>
14/04/2021	A272 Design / Village TWEET	BACS	Planter sponsorship	78.00
14/04/2021	Aurac Sound + Vision	BACS	Planter sponsorship	78.00
08/04/2021	Deacon Crickmay	BACS	Cleaning JM March 2021	1,025.34
19/04/2021	Hayman Hospitality / Whispers	BACS	Planter sponsorship	150.00
15/04/2021	HMRC	BACS	VAT refund Q4 2020-21	5,488.79
26/04/2021	HMRC	BACS	Overdue refunds from 2020-21	18,473.57
29/04/2021	Horsham DC	BACS	Precept 2021-22 Part 1	204,389.50
26/04/2021	Hosham DC	BACS	CIL 2020-21 2nd 1/2	35,997.11
15/04/2021	Jengers Craft Bakery	BACS	Planter sponsorship	78.00
14/04/2021	Kings Head	BACS	Planter sponsorship	78.00
13/04/2021	NatWest	BACS	Compen. for stopping cheque	75.00
30/04/2021	NatWest		Bank interest	1.97
15/04/2021	SJ Robinson / Pet Pooch Boutiq	BACS	Planter sponsorship	78.00
Total Receipts				<u>265,991.28</u>

Date: 14/05/2021

Billingshurst Parish Council Current Year

APPENDIX B

Time: 15:59

Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 30/04/2021
for Cashbook 1 - Current Bank A/c

<u>Bank Statement Account Name (s)</u>	<u>Statement Date</u>	<u>Page No</u>	<u>Balances</u>
Current Account	30/04/2021	408	100.00
Business Reserve Account	30/04/2021	318	386,574.52
			<hr/> 386,674.52
Unpresented Cheques (Minus)			Amount
23/03/2021 012836	Aurac Sound & Vision Ltd	20.00	
23/03/2021 012837	Parkfield Retail Ltd	20.00	
23/03/2021 012839	Billingshurst Osteopaths Ltd	20.00	
01/04/2021 012860	Horsham DC	124.00	
12/04/2021 012852	Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd	1,479.60	
12/04/2021 012854	Wightman & Parrish Ltd	164.64	
12/04/2021 012856	Ellis Whittam	4,832.82	
12/04/2021 012858	Horsham DC	5,551.75	
12/04/2021 012859	G Burt	90.00	
12/04/2021 012860	Horsham DC	304.00	
			<hr/> 12,606.81
			374,067.71
Receipts not Banked/Cleared (Plus)			
		0.00	
			<hr/> 0.00
			374,067.71
		Balance per Cash Book is :-	374,067.71
		Difference is :-	0.00

Handwritten initials or signature on the right margin.

Date: 14/05/2021

Billingshurst Parish Council Current Year

APPENDIX C

Time: 14:00

Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 30/04/2021
for Cashbook 3 - Bonus Saver Account

<u>Bank Statement Account Name (s)</u>	<u>Statement Date</u>	<u>Page No</u>	<u>Balances</u>
Bonus Saver Account	30/04/2021	93	186,352.53
			<u>186,352.53</u>
<u>Unpresented Cheques (Minus)</u>		<u>Amount</u>	
		0.00	
			<u>0.00</u>
			186,352.53
<u>Receipts not Banked/Cleared (Plus)</u>		0.00	
			<u>0.00</u>
			186,352.53
		Balance per Cash Book is :-	186,352.53
		Difference is :-	0.00

PP
17/5/21



Points Forward – Action Plan - Final Audit

Matter Arising	Recommendation	Council Response – Final Audit
VAT due per the balance sheet at 31.3.21 was £19,763. This is due to VAT being owed for quarters 1 and 3.	This should be chased up as a matter of urgency as these VAT refunds should have been processed by HMRC by now.	Resolved / refunds received.
All Council cash is currently held with one bank.	consider diversifying risk by holding monies in more than one financial institution. I understand from the Clerk that this is currently under review.	In hand.
General reserves at year end were £82K, which represents 22% of precept. This is a little low, the NALC Practitioners Guide suggests general reserves should not fall below 25 % of net revenue expenditure.	Whilst the Council has well developed earmarked reserves, these are in the main held to support assets and capital expenditure, The council should look to increase general reserves in the medium term.	Noted. Will take forward as part of Budgeting process in Autumn.
Missed accrual of £17,044 relating to the January 2020 payroll. This accrual was missed from the 19-20 accounts. The clerk arranged for this to be processed by RBS	Given the value of the accrual, I recommended that the clerk should amend the accounts to ensure this transaction is posted to the correct year of account. This requires box 4 and 7 of the comparative 19-20 accounts to be restated, and reduced staff costs in box 4 for 20-21 to be reduced to the correct level.	Resolved. 219-20 accounts restated on AGAR.
The Council is still using cheques. I understand that plans to move to online banking have stalled this year due to the pandemic and lack of assistance from the bank.	However, this must be moved forward in 21-22, cheques are increasingly outdated, and many suppliers will no longer accept payment by cheque.	In hand.
the external audit certificate was not signed off until 2 February 2021, so the statutory deadline for publishing the audited accounts was missed. I must therefore report that the Council has not met control objective N – compliance with publication requirements 2019-20 accounts.	Late external audit signature we believe was due to an resident query that the external auditors were obliged to examine.	Noted.