



CLERK'S REPORT

BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED

Agenda Number	Item	Time
1.	<p>Apologies for absence & housekeeping</p> <p>Apologies have been received from Cllr. Bushell.</p> <p>The meeting is recorded for internal minute taking purposes only and is not available to the public.</p>	1 min
2.	<p>Disclosure of interests</p> <p>Recommendation: - To deal with any disclosure by Members of any disclosable pecuniary interests and interests other than pecuniary interests, as defined under the Plaistow and Ifold Parish Council Code of Conduct and the Localism Act 2011, in relation to matters on the agenda.</p> <p>None received at the time of preparing this report.</p>	2 mins
4.	<p>Public participation</p> <p>Recommendation: - To receive and act upon, if considered necessary by the Council, comments made by members of the public in accordance with relevant legislation and Plaistow and Ifold Parish Council's Policy. Questions, or brief representations can be made <u>either in person, or in writing provided they were sent via email to the Clerk no later than 4pm Wednesday 14th July 2021</u>. Public Participation shall not exceed 10 minutes, unless directed by the Chairman. A speaker is limited to 5 minutes.</p> <p>None received at the time of preparing this report.</p>	10 mins
5.	<p>To receive reports from County and District Councillors</p> <p>Recommendation: - To give an opportunity to receive an update from Councillors at a District and/or County level on business and activities that affect Plaistow and Ifold Parish and the local area. <i>Appended to the Agenda at A and B and published on the website.</i></p> <p>Councillors Duncton and Evans' reports can be accessed via the Parish Council's website. Councillors and members of the public are encouraged to read their reports in advance of the meeting to reduce the overall meeting time for additional Covid security purposes. Councillors Duncton and Evans</p>	

will provide verbal updates and answer any questions based on their reports at the meeting.

6. **Financial Matters**

5 mins

1. Order for Payments

Financial Report for June - July (up to 08.07.2021) See [Appendix C](#). Includes income and expenditure since the last Council meeting on 23.06.2021.

Recommendation: -

- a. To review the Order for Payments
- b. Resolve to authorise the expenditure listed

Please refer to the Clerk's verified and authorised [expenses](#). Please note the date error at 1. Secured Signing; this should read June and not April.

The agreed Order for Payment will be circulated for signing after the meeting via Secured Signing and uploaded to the website.

As part of a broader overhaul of the Council's internal control systems currently being undertaken by the Clerk, the Order for Payment has been updated to clearly note monthly, regular payments made by the Council as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation. Additional routine signatories have been added to the document: two (2) Members who are not bank signatories and the Chair of the Finance Committee. These amendments provide a robust evidenced scrutiny of Council finances.

2. Financial Steering Group (FSG) update

Recommendation: -

- a. To note the minutes of the final FSG meeting.
- b. To consider the end of Quarter 1 budget report.

Councillors and members of the public are encouraged to read the FSG's minutes, in conjunction with the end of Quarter 1 budget spreadsheet, in advance of the meeting. Both documents are available on the Parish Council's website. It is also recommended to refer to these documents during the meeting.

- c. To approve the recommendations of the FSG.

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- e- d. To approve any recommended movement of unspent/available amounts to other budget headings/earmarked reserves.

The recommendations of the FSG for approval are set out at item 6, pg. 2 - the movements regarding several budget headings.

- d- e. To note the reviewed Bank Reconciliations.

Please refer to item 4 (pgs. 1-2) of the FSG minutes for a full explanation. The verified documents will be available on the Parish Council's website in advance of the meeting.

Apologies for the lettering error above.

3. To receive a PWLB application update

It has been confirmed that the Council's PWLB application, which was initially submitted on 18th February, was mislaid by the MHCLG. A further copy was provided by West Sussex Association of Local Councils (WSALC) 9th April, which was also lost. Following a further intervention by WSALC in mid-June, advising that the Council would have no other choice but to seek the assistance of Gilian Keegan MP in the matter, the application was found and expedited. On 1st July, the MHCLG sought further information/clarification on some matters. Please refer to [Appendix 1](#) of the FSG minutes, which includes the Council's responses to the questions raised.

It is believed that the MHCLG misunderstood the stated net overspend as at 31.03.2022 of (£51,511.25) (pg. 9, Appendix 1). This net figure does not include the offset of the £50,000 loan applied for. With the loan in place, the net figure deficit will only be (£1,511.25). This would reduce the Council's reserves at the end of 21/22 from £41,701.26 to £40,190.01. If the loan is not approved, the expenditure included against the playpark (£55,000) would be stayed and reduce the expenditure accordingly.

The Clerk has been assured by the MHCLG that an update will be provided in advance of 14th July; therefore, the Clerk anticipates being able to provide a further verbal update at the meeting.

4. Tree surgery at Winterton Hall

Recommendation: -

- a. To note the [quote](#) from Andrew Gale Tree Surgery
- b. To consider the merits of the Parish Council meeting the whole quote.

The Winterton Hall Management Committee (WHMC) has agreed to split the invoice 50/50. Of note, the Parish Council can reclaim the VAT, whereas the WHMC cannot. The Clerk is awaiting an update from the Treasurer of the WHMC regarding the hall's financial situation given the impact of the pandemic over the last 18 months. The Council has £2,800 of its £3,000 tree surgery budget remaining.

7. Amend Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

Recommendation: -

- a. To resolve to amend the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to permit Minutes and all other official Parish Council

documentation to be signed by a secure electronic package as well as via wet signature.

The Clerk has received the following confirmation from WSALC:

Having checked with the internal auditors they don't see that it would be a problem. As long as you can authenticate that they are the agreed and signed version, how they have been signed doesn't matter, you should update your Standing Orders though to state that this is how your documents will be signed.

- b. To resolve to amend the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to permit the Chairman, in consultation with Councillors, to decide if voting will be by ~~poll~~ **use of a signed ballot** or show of hands in relation to a particular matter.

Please note the above error amendment in red.

The Parish Council's Co-Option policy provides for voting by way of signed ballot. However, standard procedure is that voting, on any matter, is by a show of hands unless the Council has provided otherwise by Standing Order. The Council's Standing Orders currently state:

Unless Standing Orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a Councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each Councillor present and voting gave their vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda. SO1(r)

Therefore, there is a disparity between the Co-Option Policy and the Standing Orders. The Clerk recommends that the Standing Orders are amended as follows:

*Unless Standing Orders **or Plaistow and Ifold Parish Council Policy** provides otherwise, voting on a question shall be by **either** a show of hands or **signed ballot**. **The default voting practice shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a Councillor, the Chair can approve voting by way of signed ballot.** At the request of a Councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each Councillor present and voting gave their vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda. SO1(r)*

- c. To resolve to amend the Standing Orders to create a Financial Committee.

Pursuant to Council resolution C/21/119, 23rd June which reinstates a Finance Committee, the Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation need to be updated. The Parish Council cannot delegate the setting of the annual

budget and Precept to any committee; therefore, the Finance Committee will retain an advisory role in these regards.

The Clerk suggests the following delegated responsibilities to the Finance Committee:

All matters (except for creating Council Policy) relating to:

- Review of Full Council budget position.
- Council Budget Preparation for Council approval
- Council Budget Monitoring
- Consideration of annual budget request of all standing Committees for recommendation to Council.
- Approval and award of grants and donations.
- Considering and agreeing action to all Internal Audit reports.
- Approval of Risk management strategy.
- Preparation of Annual Accounts for Council approval
- Internal Audit Controls
- Insurance arrangements
- Financial Regulations – for approval by Council
- Financial Risk Assessments

Standing Order 15: Committees And Sub Committees

Council

To consist of 11 members and meet regularly on the second Tuesday of the month and is responsible for the normal statutory responsibilities of the Council, including, but not limited to:

- i Setting overall budget and Precept
- ii Standing Orders
- iii Code of Conduct for Members
- iv Councillor Training v Health & Safety
- vi Major Projects
- vii Complaints and Grievances
- viii Partnership Initiatives
- ix Neighbourhood Plan
- x Liaison with Outside Organisations
- xi Staffing issues

xii Council Budget Preparation

xiii Council Budget Monitoring

xiv Preparation of Annual Accounts for Council approval

xv Internal Audit Controls

xvi Insurance arrangements

xvii Financial Regulations – for approval by Council

xviii Financial Risk Assessments

The Clerk suggests moving the highlighted items above to the Finance Committee.

Finance Committee: To consist of six (6) members, with the Chairman as ex officio Member and meet regularly every quarter, or on other dates as required and is responsible for, but not limited to, subject to full Council approval....

9. **Neighbourhood Plan update**

~~5 mins~~

Recommendation: - To receive and resolve to act upon an update from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group including any resultant unbudgeted expenditure recommended by the Steering Group.

15 mins

Councillors and members of the public are urged to read carefully the [HRA](#) and Open Letter in conjunction with one another. Both documents are available on the Parish Council's [website](#).

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is meeting on 13th July to consider the [Examiner's Open Letter](#) and decision not to recommend the Neighbourhood Plan for referendum.

The Examiner's draft report was withdrawn pending CDC undertaking a further HRA, due to Natural England stating that development in North Sussex was likely to have an adverse impact on water supply and impact the Arun Valley SPA, SAC and Ramsar due to unsustainable extraction at Hardham for mains water supply. This statement from Natural England came out of a review of Loxwood PC's Neighbourhood Plan. There is a requirement for all new housing development in North Sussex catchment to reduce water consumption to 90l per person per day, have rain water harvesting and grey water management. However, the Examiner has stated that NP's cannot include technical requirements such as these. Therefore, the Examiner has stated that our Plan cannot meet the Basic test and consequently cannot go to Referendum.

Mrs Burrell, Chair of the NPSG, has sought urgent advice from Locality and CDC to enquire what, if anything, the Parish Council can do so the NP can meet the Basic conditions test and move forward.

A full update at the meeting will be provided.

The ramifications of Natural England's statement and the HRA are far reaching and impact on many neighbouring NPs.

The Examiner has confirmed that the Parish Council has longer than seven days to respond.

10. **August full Council meeting**

Recommendation: - To resolve to vacate the 11th August meeting.

Due to holiday plans across the Council, it is recommended that this meeting be vacated.

11. **Lagoon 3**

Recommendation: - To receive an update regarding the progress of the LPA's enforcement action.

District Councillor Evans will provide more information at the meeting from CDC's Planning Meeting.

The following update has been received by CDC:

By way of a short update as to the Planning Enforcement process; Enforcement provided instruction to CDC Legal Services on this matter at the end of May 2021, once the compliance period had passed for the removal of the Lagoon (amongst other matters relevant to the farm as a whole). The Enforcement Team then undertook a further visit of the site to confirm compliance had not been achieved (a requirement of the process even though it was apparent from third hand accounts that it had not). Evidence was then collated and exhibits/witness statements prepared by the enforcement officers further to potential prosecution proceedings. These were provided to the Council's Legal Team toward the end of June and are now currently being considered in taking the matter forward.

I appreciate the desire of the Parish Councils to understand timescales for this process and I will update you further once the next course of action has been settled upon, and a timeframe for this is able to be formed.

In the meantime a report is to be presented to the Planning Committee with regard to next steps, this Wednesday, on 7 July. You can listen to the meeting live at <https://chichester.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CommitteeId=134>.

12. **Register of Interest forms**

Recommendation: - To resolve to require that all Members submitted their updated Register of Interest forms to the Clerk.

The Clerk wishes to remind all Members to make sure that they have submitted their updated Register of Interest forms as a matter of priority.

~~24~~ **Clerk's update**

13 Recommendation: - To receive general updates and resolve to act upon any matters arising.

a. Kelsey Hall event (rescheduled) on 24th July

Display material needs to be agreed, including SID data.

b. Meeting venues

For the foreseeable future, all PC meetings need to have internet capabilities to allow the public to choose to attend remotely. Unfortunately, the Kelsey Hall in Ifold does not offer this service to hall users. They are considering the feasibility of installing WIFI. However, for the time being, all PC meetings will take place in Winterton Hall, Plaistow.

c. Add Planning Tracker to website – update regarding recommendation from the Planning & Open Spaces Committee

This will depend on the recommendations of the Planning Committee which meets on 13th July. The Planning Tracker allows the public and Members to easily access Parish specific planning applications via the Council's own website. [Kirdford Parish Council](#) used this services, which is offered by TEEC –both Parish Council's website host company – for £24pa. Applications will be 'pulled across' from CDC and SDNP.