

Aylesford Parish Council

Policy and Resources Committee

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting held via Zoom link on 2 February 2021

Present: Councillor Balcombe (Chairman) and Councillors Beadle, Ms Dorrington, Mrs Gadd, Gledhill, Ludlow, Rillie, Shelley, Smith, Sullivan, Walker, Winnett and Wright.

In Attendance: Neil Harris (Clerk) and Melanie Randall (Assistant Clerk and Finance Officer)

Apologies: Councillor Hammond, Ms Oyewusi, and Ms Papagno.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies of Absence from Councillors Hammond (unwell), Ms Oyewusi (work commitment) and Ms Papagno (personal commitment) was received, and the reason for absence agreed.

2. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest additional to those contained in the Register of Members Interests.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 January 2021

It was **Agreed** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 January 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed.

4. Accounts for Payment

The Council considered the Payment Schedule attached to the Agenda and Councillor Shelley proposed and Councillor Mrs Gadd seconded and it was **Agreed** that 23 payments totalling £14456.74 be made.

5. Law and Order - CCTV in High Street, Aylesford

The Clerk reported that the Council had been informed by Q-Tec who are offering a new cheaper option for a CCTV camera that they had purchased the sim card for the camera and they were being pushed for a start date for the camera being used as a demo.

6. KALC

There had been no meeting of the KALC Area meeting since the last meeting of the Committee.

7. TMBC Parish Partnership Panel

There had been no meeting of the Panel since the last meeting of the Committee but that the next meeting was this Thursday.

8. Council Vacancies

It was **Noted** that the current vacancies on the Council were as follows: -

Aylesford South - 1.

9. Public Convenience Review – Aylesford Toilets

The Clerk reported that he had informed TMBC of the Council's decision that it would not take over the toilets as proposed by TMBC and that the Council should seek reinstatement of the site in accordance with the Lease Agreement. TMBC have confirmed that they will close the toilets on 1 April and then undertake the reinstatement works prior to handing back the land in May.

10. Appointment of Internal Auditor for 2021/22

The Clerk reported that the Council must appoint an Internal Auditor for each financial year. Kent County Council has acted as the Council's Internal Auditor for many years and have provided an effective and satisfactory audit during that time. The KCC audit process provides for 2 visits a year and they are proposing a charge of £502.50 per visit a total of £1005 per year. This is an increase of 1.5% on last year. It was **Agreed** that KCC Internal Audit be appointed as the Council's Internal Auditor for the financial year 2021/22.

11. Internal Audit Report

The Council considered the Internal Audit reported to the Committee. The report was a very good report but raised three issues. The Clerk reported that the latest version of the Financial Regulations was now on the website and that Members were receiving quarterly reports and one was on the Agenda for the last meeting. The Chairman reported that salaries and wages was being considered at the next Staffing Committee. It was **Agreed** to note the report.

12. Notice Boards

The Clerk reported that Greenbarnes have informed the Council that it expects to deliver the Notice Boards to the Council on the week beginning 15 February.

13. Rugby Club Lease

The Clerk reported that the Council had received a request from Aylesford Bulls Rugby Club to renew their lease so that it starts again with a 99-year lease period. They were making this request because a full 99-year lease would help them and the Netball League to secure funding for their extension plans and obtain grant funding to make this achievable. During the Pandemic the Rugby Club as a business have suffered making significant losses due to the loss in revenue during this period. They have asked the Council for support in funding any legal costs incurred in extending the lease. The Council's own legal costs for the extension would be approximately £620 so one would assume the Rugby Club's would be similar though they have given the Council no estimate of cost. However, with the change being only a revision to 99 years consideration could be given to using just the one firm of Solicitors thereby saving costs for both parties. It was **Agreed** that the Council would be happy to extend the lease back to the original 99 years and that they would be happy to support the Rugby Club by funding their legal costs possibly by using one firm of Solicitors.

14. Ferryfield and Cemetery Gates Opening and Closing Arrangements

The Clerk reported that the Council had received a request from the current gatekeeper for the Ferryfield and Cemetery gates that the Council review the payment made for the opening and closing of these Gates. The current rate was £7 per day and has been for the last 2 years. If Members were minded to increase the rate the annual financial impact for the Council would be £365 for £1 increase and £187.50 for a 50p increase. It was **Agreed** that rate for the opening and closing of the Ferryfield and Cemetery gates be increased by £1 to £8 per day.

15. CPRE Membership

The Clerk reported that the Council has been a member of the CPRE for a number of years and the annual renewal of the Council's membership has come forward. The annual Membership fee is £50. It was Agreed that the Council renew its annual membership of the CPRE at a cost of £50.

16. Duration of Meeting

7.30pm to 7.47pm