**A Meeting of the Finance, Asset, Community and Environment Committee**

**took place at 7.35pm on Tuesday 28th May 2024**

**in the Town Council Offices, the Old Library, Knockhundred Row, Midhurst**

**MINUTES**

**Present**: Cllr D Coote, Cllr D Fraser, Cllr C Gilson, Cllr A Lambert, Cllr P Piper, and Cllr J Travers (Chairman)

**In attendance:** S Hurr, Town Clerk, and M Haywood, Deputy Clerk.

**F/001/24 Chairman’s Announcements:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting

**F/002/24 Apologies for Absence:** Apologies had been received from Cllr D Merritt, Cllr R Watts, and post the meeting from Cllr M Facer. Cllr G McAra was absent without apology.

**F/003/24 Declarations of Interest:** None.

*Meeting halted for Public Participation Session*

**F/004/24 Public Participation Session:** No questions received.

*The meeting was reconvened.*

**F/005/24 Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 8th April 2024:** In accordance with the revised procedure of signing minutes and adopting minutes at this Committee, the minutes were proposed as an accurate record by Cllr Coote seconded by Cllr Piper, agreed by all present, adopted and signed.

**F/006/24 Matters Arising and Review of Actions from those Minutes:** The Clerk provided a response from Chichester District Council regarding the installation of the new ‘Changing Places’ toilet and the remaining void previously used by MADhurst and the Town Council for storage; there had been a delay in awaiting specialist equipment and the remaining void was smaller, although the toilet cubicle walls had been removed, but the available entrance had been reduced in width by the installation of a boiler by the adjoining retail premises. The void was awaiting inspection before it could be considered for continued use by MADhurst and the Town Council.

**F/007/24 Financial Reports for April 2024:**

**F/007/24.1** Payments and receipts made in the month up to 30th April 2024: payments and receipts had been circulated prior to the meeting. Councillors sought clarification regarding the use of the term virement, which the clerk explained moving funds between budget lines.

**F/007/24.2** Total expenditure for April 2024 = £26,003.95 Excluding VAT

**F/007/24.3** List of payments in excess of £500 during April 2024 were noted as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Organisation** | **Details** | **Amount** |
| Design Directive | Project Management for Lilac Cottage | £1,500 |
| West Sussex Association of Local Councils | Annual Subscription | £1766.92 |
| Sussex Land Works | Cemetery Maintenance | £2,568.00 |
| The Safe Shop | Fireproof Cabinet | £969.00 |
| Monkey Nuts | Old Library Cleaning | £588.00 |
| Total Energies | Electricity for Old Library | £2,933.00 |
| Kieron Beattie Landscaping Ltd | Vision Group Grange Garden Walk Contribution | £3,600.00 |
| SSE | Street Lighting | £894.72 |
| DA Property Maintenance | Lilac Cottage Refurbishment | £11,867.00 |

**F/008/24 Bank Reconciliations**: The bank statements for April 2024 were signed.

**F/009/24 Events** **Update:** The Clerk reported the following: The Clerk reported that the ‘Skatejam’ had again been very well run by Rubicon Industries, and some spectacular ‘tricks’ had been performed during the course of the event.

The Clerk further reported A Pop-Up Village event had been organised to take place during half-term (29th May 2024) which would be a free event for pre-school and primary school aged children.

The Clerk requested volunteers to assist with both the Councillor table and with closing-down the market on Saturday.

The Clerk reminded Councillors that this year’s the Summer Street Party would take place on 24th August 2024.

**F/010/24 Tree Felling at the Cemetery:** Two quotations had been obtained, and it was agreed that a third was sought and therefore this item will be carried over to a future meeting.

**F/011/24 Unity Trust Bank – Savings Account:** Due to the absence of Cllr Watts who had researched accounts offered by Unity Trust Bank, it was agreed to carry this item over to the July meeting of the Committee.

**F/012/24 Reappointment of Internal Auditor:** The Clerk reported that Mulberry Local Authority Services had been thorough in their examination of the operation of the Town Council and Cllr Coote therefore proposed that they were re-appointed for 2024-25, which was seconded by Cllr Fraser and agreed by all present and **Resolved** to re-appoint Mulberry Local Authority Services as Internal Auditors.

**F/013/24 Code of Conduct Review:** The Revised Code of Conduct had been circulated prior to the meeting, but as Councillors requested further time to review the revised Code, it was agreed to carry this item forward to the next meeting of the Committee.

**F/014/24** **Insurance Portfolio:** The Deputy Clerk reported that Midhurst Town Council’s Insurance Portfolio with Hiscox Insurance Company Limited is due to renew on the 1st June 2024.  An extensive review had been completed and file notes of all email correspondence between the Deputy Clerk and Gallagher Insurance Brokers had been circulated prior to the meeting.

**F/014/24.1 Terms and Conditions of Hire – Bouncy Castles, and Hirers Liability:** The Deputy Clerk reported that stated within the Hiscox Public and Liability schedule, was the exclusion of ‘Bouncy Castles’/ Inflatables.  Further clarification with Gallagher had been sought in relation to this matter and confirmation had been received that in order to permit inflatables in the Old Library hall, the hirer would be required to ensure that the inflatable hire company had their own insurance, and provided a member of their staff to oversee the safe use of the equipment for the duration of the hire. Alternatively, the hirer would require event insurance for the inflatable, and also for this insurance to cover the responsible adults overseeing the safe use of the equipment.

Following debate, Cllr Coote proposed that this information should be included within the terms and conditions of hire of the hall as stated above, which was seconded by Cllr Lambert, and agreed by all present.

The Deputy Clerk reported confirmation that the Hiscox Public and Liability schedule includes individual/one-off hires for non-commercial events, but does not include regular hires to clubs/organisations or hire for commercial purposes, and therefore such hirers would require their own public liability insurance, and provide proof of this.

Following debate, Cllr Piper proposed that this information should be included within the terms and conditions of hire of the hall as stated above, which was seconded by Cllr Coote, and agreed by all present.

**F/014/24.2 Minimum Security Provisions:** The Deputy Clerk reported thatHiscox’s minimum-security provisions had been forwarded to Chris Harris, Project Manager for Lilac Cottage refurbishment for information. The Deputy Clerk further confirmed a site visit was in the process of being arranged with a qualified locksmith regarding the type of locks for all doors and windows which would meet the minimum-security requirements.

**F/014/24.3 Cyber/external fidelity guarantee:** The Deputy Clerk confirmed that a quotation had been requested, for an external and cyber fidelity guarantee and once a response had been received, this would be reported to future meeting of the Committee.

**F/015/24 Matters of Report:** The Clerk sought a Councillor to undertake some minor cutting-back of the hedges/bushes on the main throughfare through the Cemetery, and further reported that the scaffolding would be erected at Cemetery Lodge and Chapel in preparation for painting.

**F/016/24 Date of Next Meeting –** 7.30pm, 10th June 2024

The meeting ended at 8.33 pm.

**Signed: …………………………...........…...........………………….Date..................................**

**Chairman**