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

**took place at 7.30pm on Monday 8th April 2024**

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

**MINUTES**

**Present**: Cllr D Coote, Cllr M Facer, Cllr D Fraser, Cllr C Gilson, Cllr A Lambert, Cllr G McAra, Cllr P Piper,

Cllr J Travers (Chairman) and Cllr Watts.

**In attendance:** S Hurr, Town Clerk, M Haywood, Deputy Clerk and two members of the public.

**F/144/23 Chairman’s Announcements:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting

**F/145/23 Apologies for Absence:** Apologies had been received from Cllr D Merritt.

**F/146/23 Declarations of Interest:** None.

*Meeting halted for Public Participation Session*

**F/147/23 Public Participation Session:** No questions asked.

*The meeting was reconvened.*

**F/148/23 Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 11th March 2024:** The minutes were proposed as an accurate record and agreed by all present.

**F/149/23 Matters Arising and Review of Actions from those Minutes:** The Clerk confirmed that she was still awaiting responses from some Councillors regarding their availability to join a Playground Working Group.

**Action:** The Clerk to seek volunteers for a Playground Working Group and organise a meeting.

**F/150/23 Financial Reports for March 2024:** The financial reports were circulated prior to the meeting. The Clerk explained that end of year finance software close-down would take place on 16th April 2024 and the internal audit for the Annual Return on 24th April 2024.

The following payments in excess of £500 were also noted:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Organisation** | **Details** | **Amount** |
| West Sussex County Council  | February 2024 Salaries  | £11,126.96 |
| Design Directive | Project Management for Lilac Cottage | £1,200.00 |
| Smith, Simmons & Partners  | Preparation of Planning Application for Lilac Cottage | £720.00 |
| SSE | Street Lighting | £829.76 |
| Hugh Alexander (Boxhill) Ltd  | St Ann’s Hill fallen tree removal | £840.00 |
| Monkey Nuts | Old Library Cleaning | £672.00 |
| Total Energies | Old Library Electricity | £2,181.63 |
| Sussex Land Works | Cemetery Maintenance | £2,568.00 |
| SSE | Street Lighting | £835.17 |
| West Sussex County Council  | March 2024 Salaries  | £10,749.67 |

**F/151/23 Bank Reconciliations**: The bank statements for March 2024 were signed.

**F/152/23 Events** **Update:** The Clerk reported the following:

The Easter Trail had been well received with over 105 children completing the trail. The total expenditure for the event was £108.80.

The Community Book Sale/Swap funds were now standing at £233.51.

**F/153/23 Curfew Garden:** Cllr Watts reported that following discussions with the Town Trust which owns the Curfew Garden, the Town Council were due shortly to sign the lease. Cllr Watts further reported that he had received quotations for £2,400 to replace the fence and remove some shrubs and proposed this expenditure, which was seconded by Cllr Piper, agreed by all present and **resolved**. Cllr Watts explained that he had asked Cllr Facer to consider how this area could be utilised as a community garden.

**F/154/23 Matters of Report:** Cllr Gilson sought clarification regarding broadband speeds and potential improvements.

**Action:** The Clerk to ascertain information regarding potential improvements to broadband speeds.

Cllr Gilson also sought clarification regarding risings from the Midhurst Green Volunteers work at The Wharf. Cllr McAra confirmed the arrangement to pile risings for twice yearly collection by Cowdray Estate for bio-digesting.

Cllr Facer raised concerns regarding the current damage being caused to the Northern Gateway sign by the constant fixings of an ‘eye’. The Chairman, Cllr Travers confirmed that the current stance by the Town Council is to leave the sign and any fixtures untouched.

Cllr McAra sought clarification regarding the completion of the works at the bus station toilets.

**Action:** The Clerk to ascertain information regarding the date for the completion of the works at the bus station toilets.

Cllr Watts reported that work on the Midhurst Vision Group garden, behind The Grange building was nearing completion.

**F/155/23 Date of Next Meeting –** 7.30pm, 28th May 2024

The meeting ended at 7.58pm.

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

**Chairman**