WALFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Finance Committee Meeting

Held Wednesday 10th April 2024 at 7:30pm
At Walford Village Hall

Present: Councillors: Berry – Chairman, Akers, Vine, Warburg, Petersen.
In attendance: N Richmond (Clerk).

1. **Apologies for absence:** - Cllr Terry reason accepted.

2. **Declarations of interest and written requests for dispensation**: - None made.

3. **Adoption of Minutes of previous meeting:** - It was **resolved** to adopt the minutes of the meeting held on 10th January 2024 as a true and accurate record and they were signed by the chairman.

4. **Public participation session**:
   No members of the public were present.

5. **Financial information: -**

5.1. To approve and sign bank statements and reconciliation up to 31st March 2024.
The bank reconciliation was checked and signed by Cllr Vine and approved by the meeting.

5.2. To review and consider the year to date accounts.
Cllr Warburg suggested that the income from the Herefordshire Council Parish Lengthsman scheme be moved to the top of the Budget vs Actual accounts and be described in that way to match the notes accompanying the accounts which was agreed by the meeting. Cllr Vine requested that the negative variance figures be shown in red to make it easier to see where spending over budget had occurred. This was agreed and the clerk will make the changes to be presented to full council next week.

5.3 To approve the appointment of Jayne Dunstan to carry out the internal audit.
Cllr Akers proposed that Jayne Dunstan be appointed to carry out the internal audit. Cllr Vine asked what qualifications Jayne had. Cllr Berry advised that she is a qualified accountant who carries out internal audits for other parish councils and is a parish councillor herself. Cllr Warburg seconded the proposal and all voted in favour.

5.4 To consider a draft AGAR.
The draft Annual Governance Statement sections 1 & 2 were discussed. Cllr Warburg pointed out that in section 2, Total Borrowings should be zero and 11a should be a 'No'. This was agreed by all. The clerk advised that having corresponded with PKF Littlejohn to address all the issues raised in previous years AGAR's he saw no reason why council should not answer 'Yes' to all the governance questions in section 1. The risk register having been updated, the KBCL performance management checklist having been regularly carried out and published on the council website along with a fresh independent risk assessment he did not foresee the same issues with PKF this year. On that basis with the amendments it was agreed to present the draft Governance statements to full parish council, albeit they won't be signed until after the internal audit is completed.

5.5 To consider what reserves to propose to WPC.
Both the clerk and Cllr Berry had proposals on what reserves to declare. It was not possible to reach a consensus to present to WPC so it was decided that Cllr Berry would prepare a report to be circulated, acknowledging that there is still plenty of time before the accounts are published for full council to consider and approve a proposal.

6. **Payments: -**

6.1. To consider and approve the payment on appendix 3.
Cllr Akers proposed that the payment be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Petersen and all voted in favour.

6.2. To ratify the payments on appendix 3.
Cllr Akers proposed that the payments be ratified. This was seconded by Cllr Petersen and all voted in favour. Cllr Berry expressed concern over the level of spending on Microsoft 365. The clerk believed that there might be two licences. Cllr Akers said that issues had occurred when attempting to change the licence previously held by Cllr Berry when he acted as stand in clerk.

7. **KBCL Performance Management Checklist**
   To review and sign the checklist following the 23rd March 2024 inspection.
   Cllr Vine asked about the turnover figures provided by Riversea Holdings. The clerk said that he had asked for a set of accounts from Riversea but had yet to receive them. Cllr Berry advised that the spreadsheets provided to council were the same used to prepare the Riversea accounts and council had no reason to question them. Cllr Vine said that provided the figures year on year were in line with expectation there was no need to question them unless significant differences emerged. The checklist was approved and signed by Cllr Petersen and the clerk with a handwritten note that they were signed at the meeting today as evidenced in the minute of the meeting.

8. **Policy Review: Financial Regulations.**
   Council Financial Regulations require updating. Advice from HALC is that substantially new regulations are imminent from NALC so this was noted and it was agreed that a review will take place when the new regulations are published.

9. **Items for the next agenda (no discussion).**
   Year end accounts and AGAR.
   Council insurance

10. **To consider the date and venue of the next meeting.**
    It was agreed to hold the next meeting during the first week of June.

The meeting closed at 9.12 p.m.

SIGNED ______________________ DATE 9/10/24