

**Locum Clerk to the Council/RFO: Shaun Jones**  
**Chairman: Cllr Mark Underwood**

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Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held at 6:00pm on **Monday 19 October 2020** via Zoom Video Conferencing.

**Present:** Cllrs Parkhurst, (Chair), Clarke and Jones  
**Apologies** Cllr. Gouge;  
**In** Shaun Jones Locum Clerk; Cllr. Underwood  
**attendance:**

**F14.20/21 RECEIVE APOLOGIES & REASONS FOR ABSENCE – None**

**F15.20/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – None**

**F16.20/21 PUBLIC SPEAKING/QUESTIONS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS - None**

**F17.20/21 MINUTES –** The minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2020 were reviewed as an accurate record of proceedings. **Proposed FJ and seconded TC to approve – carried unanimously** and signed by the Chair.

**F18.20/21 CLERK'S REPORT AND MATTERS ARISING**

- Very little on my side. As you said we have the item later on the invoice fraud issue relating to Lyth Hill Country Park. Agenda item F22.20/21 picks up on this.
- An apology, after a weekend of getting to grips with the Scribe accounting system - which I found delightful once I had got my head around it, I managed to get Q1 fully entered covering April to June but still have to get Q2 completely entered - July to September. AP pleased to hear the fact the Locum Clerk has got this far and happy for a little extra time to bring everything up to date. We will get an interim meeting convened to properly approve all financial statements and reports. From a governance view point this is imperative, proper review at each quarter end is best practice. We are in a catch-up situation so that is where we are.

The Chair appreciated the honest report and brevity.

**F19.20/21 FINANCIAL POSITION BY COST CENTRE & CODE SUMMARY –** Report covering Q1 distributed just ahead of the meeting. Leave that as a take-away. We may have to agree on budget virement to reflect the appointment of a Locum Clerk. You will spot that, only first month caught by Q1 reporting. Questions invited but appreciated that the distribution took place very recently. AP states as the item is for noting and that the report has been produced, he encourages questions to be raised directly with SJ but copy AP in. **Noted proposed AP, seconded FJ – all in favour.**

**F20.20/21 BANK RECONCILIATION –** The Clerk shared a report noting the Working Account balance as at 30.9.20 (end of Q2) as well as all other accounts as at 31.3.20, year-end 2019/20. SJ notes an internal transfer of £11,534.09 in Q1 which most likely relates to a transfer to reserves but will delve deeper and report back.

Signed.....

Date.....

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- F21.20/21 FUNDING AGREEMENT – LYTH HILL COUNTRY PARK** – reference made to the agreement previously circulated. **Proposed AP, seconded FJ for the Clerk to sign the agreement relating to the funding in FY 2020/21 – passed unanimously.**
- F22.20/21 REPORT ON AN INSTANCE OF INVOICE FRAUD AND MITIGATION STEPS UNDERTAKEN** – Thankfully since the meeting minutes just approved from 20th July, we have contacted the Co-operative Bank and were fortunate to receive a credit of £6,150.01 as a contra to the mis-directed payment of £8,656.00 sent in November 2019. This leaves us with a shortfall of £2,505.99 and although we asked Shropshire Council to split this, based on the fact the trail was as cold as ice by June 2020 they declined. SJ will consult with the Internal Auditor to properly reflect these circumstances in the financial reporting. We also have to properly complete the original transaction and send £8,656.00 to Shropshire Council to settle their invoice. All mitigation steps are complete to ensure there is no repetition going forward. SJ also strongly suggests we move the day-to-day banking to Unity Trust Bank to benefit from full dual authority internet banking. The Financial Regulations should be reviewed to include threshold amounts, above which extra checks/steps are prescribed. Adding beneficiaries and updates should also be subject to extra checks. AP thanks the Clerk for securing the contra credit made by Co-operative Bank plc. Also SJ asked how soon could Unity Trust be brought into play? A target of 1st January 2021 is achievable so long as bank mandates are brought up to date - no small feat. MU tacks back with a mitigation step to counter the £2,505.99 shortfall and suggest we advise Shropshire Council that we are squeezed financially and that a lower figure be accepted for FY 2020/21. Such a written request should be copied to the Chief Executive. **MU proposes and AP seconds to make this request.** All in favour. No decision on accounting treatment of the shortfall made, it is hoped our appeal to SC might alter the need to. AP suggests the updates to Financial Regulations as raised should also be presented to Council in the New Year, SJ and TC to work on this.
- F23.20/21 REQUEST FOR AN ADDITIONAL BATTERY PACK FOR EGO POWER TOOL** – SJ outlines the quotation of £72.25 for an additional battery pack, **AP proposed, seconded MU to approve the expenditure. All in favour.**
- F24.20/21 PAYMENTS** – The Clerk tabled a list of payments for October for approval. For acceptance of October schedule, **motion proposed AP, seconded FJ, all in favour.**
- F25.20/21 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC** – Motion proposed MU, seconded FJ – It was unanimously resolved to exclude the press and public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 in order to allow the Council to discuss confidential matters.
- F26.20/21 CONFIDENTIAL SESSION**
- **Staffing Matters** – The Clerk brought forward an invoice received from Marches HR for approval. Hours spent and rate confirmed. **Proposed AP, seconded FJ to approve this expenditure. All in favour.**

**Meeting closed at 6:32 pm**