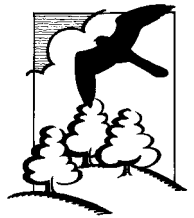


HAWKHURST PARISH COUNCIL

STRATEGY, ADMINISTRATION AND PROJECTS COMMITTEE



MINUTES

19th October 2020

Present: Cllr Taylor-Smith, Cllr Weeden, Cllr Pyne, Cllr Lusty, Cllr Green and Cllr Blake

In addition, none voting – Cllr Escombe and Cllr Appelbe

1. **ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING** - NA
2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** _NA
3. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS:** *To receive notice of personal interests, whether of a prejudicial nature or otherwise, in respect of items on this agenda, in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct. NA*
4. **MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING** – Cllr Blake noted that he abstained from vote on Parish Newsletter due to costs – Cllr Taylor- Smith proposed and Cllr Weeden seconded the approval of the minutes with the amendment – agreed unanimously
5. **OUTSTANDING ITEMS FROM LAST MEETING** - NA

6. Budget monitoring report 1st April -30th September 2020

The RFO led the discussion highlighting that we are on track but a number of potential problems

- Income supported by grants, otherwise major problems
- Extra admin costs (staff extra hours cleaning facilities)
- Grants unlikely to be available next year
- Some underspend
- But generally should be okay for year end

Cllr Taylor–Smith highlighted the potential ongoing impact of COVID 19 on income from facilities etc and on expenditure such as extra cleaning.

Cllr Taylor-Smith proposed and Cllr Green seconded the report to go to Council – agreed unanimously

7. SAP 2021/22 Budget – Discuss Council comments

Cllr Taylor-Smith introduced the debate that this is going to a challenging year and budget setting process at this point should be general rather than specific figures. Felt we should focus on core services and then build from there. Also need to identify priority projects such as Community Centre and Cemetery Restoration. The budget monitoring report indicated £8,000 extra staff costs due to extra cleaning. The income from facilities could be set at 50% of last year's income?

- Cllr Appelbe asked about accessing “Furlough funding” - Cllr Escombe explained that we were able to access the Jobs Retention Scheme this year but highly unlikely to access a new scheme
- Cllr Weeden asked about Kino lease - RFO to clarify
- Cllr Lusty felt we should budget for 50% of income without grants
- Cllr Taylor-Smith felt we had done well to tidy up issues from the past – KCC pension, cemetery etc and we need to consider staff cost plus addition 3% and the “contract Cleaning cost is unpredictable”
- Also need to consider priority of projects – Community Centre, Cemetery Restoration but defer MUGA lights key, CCTV and bring forward Cllr IT.
- Cllr Green felt some projects on back burner / hold
- Cllr Taylor-Smith did not want to be associated with an epic failure such as the past: Cemetery work, failed Community Centre and believes we need to build budget to manage the priorities.
- Cllr Green highlighted “comparisons” with neighbouring Parishes – we are lower mid table –see attached. We are lower than our near neighbours and when we compare services we should compare ourselves to Paddock Wood and Cranbrook rather than Sandhurst or Goudhurst
- Cllr Green asked are other Parishes looking at increases - Clerk with ask around informally
- Cllr Taylor-Smith highlighted that the Parish precept is a small amount of the Council Tax, so a 10% increase in the parish precept is a relative small amount and many of those on low income are exempt from Council Tax.
- Cllr Escombe noted that some in the community, not all and not just those exempt from Council Tax, are really struggling.
- Cllr Pyne felt we may need to defer some projects
- Cllr Blake felt we should postpone some projects
- Cllr Lusty felt we should focus on the community centre and promote how great it will be.
- Cllr Green raised the point of Funding for “Skate Park” at Heartenoak.
- Cllr Weeden asked when would the developer contribution be available? Cllr Escombe explained that it was still with Millwood Homes and they would release it to TWBC and then to us, if we have a project ready. The trigger is sale of houses.
- The Clerk suggested that a skate park had been raised by Cllr Appelbe before but had been knocked back. If we want to progress need to pay for design of skate park so have a project ready to access funding.

In summary:

- Focus on core services: allotments, cemetery, facilities
- Staff costs and extra cleaning costs
- Essentials – insurance etc
- Cut back on “desirables”
- Priorities projects
- Community Centre (will know costs for 2021/22 in December 2020)
- Put on hold other projects – MUGA lights, CCTV

RFO to bring back draft budget for discussion at November 2020 SAP meeting to then go December 2020 Council and January 2021 Council meeting for a decision.

8. Update on IT – MTS verbal update

Cllr Taylor-Smith highlighted that the project was originally a bid and £10,000 went forward. However, able to reduce the cost and aim to bring a report to November Council meeting.

Equipment – three options discussed last meeting and I pads came out on top – see overleaf

Capital cost		
Equipment	Description	Capital cost
Laptop x14	Basic laptops at £300	£4,200
IPad x 14	10.2 inch IPad 128 GB - £260 each	£3,653
Tablet x14	Lenovo Tab M10 ZA4G0034GB Tablet (2019) 10.1" 32GB Wi-Fi	£1,960
Note	Tablet requires ongoing support at £36 per tablet = £504 per year (4 years = £2,016)	

Software – the clerk summarised the pros and costs

Product	Pros	Costs
Board Intelligence / Bookcase	Admin – simple to set up Good support – to be tested but 24/7 telephone for admin and Cllrs Looks good for Cllr set up / intuitive / slick looking Down load report and then access Zoom embedded App based works on all equipment Option of support / joint working with Goudhurst Not supported by Microshade	Set up £0 Annual £4,800
Mod Gov	Admin – simple to set up Good support – to be tested but 24/7 telephone for admin and Cllrs A bit clunky Zoom embedded App based works on all equipment Supported by Microshade	Set up £1,750 Annual £5,000
Ibabs	Admin – simple to set up Good support – to be tested but 24/7 telephone for admin and Cllrs Simple diary view for Cllrs – click on meeting to access report Zoom embedded App based works on all equipment Supported by Microshade Best Value for money	Set up £395 Annual £2,400 (A bundle of 10 Cllrs = £100 per month x 2 = £200 per month x 12 = £2,400)

RFO asked about funding from this year's budget? It was suggested that we could use the Historic Hawkhurst funding as we cannot get an archivist to scan documents in the current situation.

Cllr Taylor-Smith proposed to make a recommendation to Council meeting in November 2020 – agreed unanimously.

9. Emergency Plan

Cllr Lusty led discussion and it was agreed to have SAP sub group of Cllr Green, Cllr Pyne and Cllr Lusty to bring back a draft emergency plan for Hawkhurst in January 2021.

Cllr Lusty to review current COVID 19 emergency plan

Clerk to circulate COVID 19 Emergency Plan and Tenterden Community Emergency Plan (done 20.10.20)

10. Review list of strategies

The Clerk raised the need to review the list – priority for a review of complaints process – next SAP meeting

Update list and add in Emergency Plan January 2021.

Circulate revised list for next meeting

11. UPDATED SAP ACTION PLAN –

Clerk asked about the external audit as has not seen any emails – RFO to chase. Clerk asked to clarify what is happening with debit card – only Cllr Whittle and Cllr Escombe

RFO to recirculate email seeking Cllrs to down load link so we can access online banking and a debit card.

12. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM COUNCILLORS:

Cllr Green suggested that we return to two monthly Committees meeting cycle to allow for actions to be delivered. Option of an emergency meeting if required. – agreed in principle and recommend to Council.

13. CLOSURE: 9:30

Signed Chairman

Date.....