



A meeting of the Employment, Finance & Policies Committee was held on 16th April 2018, 7.30 p.m. Amesbury Room, Winscombe Community Centre

Committee Members Present: Mr C Ballard, Cllr J Corry, Mr A Forbes, Mr K Joyce, Mr G Lloyd, Mr V Slater, Mr J Westlake and Mr M Williamson (Chairman)
Committee members absent: Ms C Boase, Mr G Lockett and Dr P Watkins
Clerk: Mrs L Rampton
Members of the public: One

1. **To receive apologies for absence.** Apologies had been received from Cllrs Boase and Watkins
2. **Declarations of interest and to consider & decide upon any requests for dispensation from members to allow them to participate in a discussion or vote on a matter in which he/she may have a disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest.** No interests were declared.
3. **Public Participation** There was none
4. **Minute update from the previous committee meeting dated 19th March 2018.** None
5. **To carry out a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control.** The Parish Council is responsible for reviewing the Annual Governance Statement, reviewing and approving other aspects of the Council's governance framework and for approving, monitoring and reviewing the outcome of audit activity. The review was reported to be about the effectiveness of internal control rather than the process and based on the assurance of the Parish Council internal controls and management of risk along with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 and the requirement to review the system of internal control. The review of subject areas covered by the internal audit report and risk assessment of financial systems of internal controls along with previously reported external auditor opinion was considered and accepted by committee members.
It was recommended to the Parish Council that the review of the effectiveness of the system on internal control by this committee be accepted. Proposed by GLI, seconded by AF, all in favour.
6. **Review of Budget summary reports 2017/18**

Copies of the bank reconciliation, bank statements, statement of accounts and a summary of budget expenditure had been circulated to members along with agenda papers. A further paper detailing sub-heads for budgets and expenditure along with % budgets spent for the 2017/18 financial year was distributed and explained to members at the meeting. It was noted that both Youth Council and Bonds detailed on the bank reconciliation were closed accounts. Areas of expenditure in sub-headings significantly breaching original budgets set had been explained in the appended paper, but main areas of note were for the Play Areas with monies having been via-ed from skate park half pipe (to be now funded through a s106 agreement) to the purchase of a Pirate Ship for Sandford play area and the carry forward from 2016/17 of £5,000 for the repair to wet-pour surface shrinkage for both Winscombe and Sandford play areas. The Clerk answered questions from councillors and Chairman and members attention was drawn to areas of expenditure highlighted where budget funding from 2017/18 should be carried forward to 2018/19 budgets.
7. **To consider recommending approval of the Annual Return for the Financial Year ended 31st March 2018 to the full Parish Council, including:**
 - i. **Parish Council Accounts for the 2017/18 financial year.**

A change to guidance issued by Parish Council External Auditors now included a requirement to submit the annual internal audit report as part of the documents for review. As the Parish Council would be required to consider the system of internal control that had been in place during the year under review (before confirming compliance with assertions 2 and 6), approval of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) should be referred to the May 2018 Parish Council for final approval following completion of the internal audit inspection on 24th April 2018.
It was recommended that the accounts for the 2017/18 financial year, prepared on a receipts and payments basis should be presented to the Parish Council for approval. Proposed by CBa, seconded by AF, All in favour
 - ii. **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement, Subject to satisfactory completion of the final two month period of the 2017/18 financial year by internal auditors, box 1 - 8 of the Annual Governance Statement is recommended for completion to the Parish Council as 'yes' and with box 9 completed as N/A.**

Proposed by KJ, seconded by AF. All members were in favour.

iii. **Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2017/18** *Subject to min 7(ii) above, the completed Accounting Statements was recommended for approval by the Council.* Proposed by GLI, seconded by VS. All members were in favour.

iv. **Section 4 – Annual Internal Audit Report to 31st March 2018** *would be completed by the auditor during final inspections for the period – visit scheduled for 24th April.* Members were encouraged to meet and ask questions of our auditor during their final visit for the last financial year.

Thanks were expressed by members to office staff for the considerable works in completing end of year accounts.

8. **To receive a notice from Parish Council Internal Auditors.** Notice had been received that Bridget Bowen, (having assisted Tim Light over the course of the last financial year) would take primary responsibility for providing internal audit work service from 2018/19 for the council. On previous visits Ms Bowen had been found to be highly knowledgeable and helpful and the committee were in favour of the proposed change. Proposed by AF, seconded by KJ. All members were in favour.

9. **To agree a payment plan for cemetery improvement works commencing 23rd April.** Payment for works totalling £37,800 plus vat would be required in three stage payments, the first of those falling due on the day works commence. The second payment due at DPC level for the new building should be released on the agreement of the Proper Officer along with two members as this was unlikely to fall in line with usual payment release at a Parish Council meeting. Final payment would be made on satisfactory completion of the works. Proposed by CBa, seconded by VS. All members were in favour. It was noted that should archaeological findings delay works at the cemetery, an additional charge of £400 per day would be incurred.

10. **To consider the current format of the annual parish assembly and to make suggestions for future changes to the meeting.** As a meeting of the parish rather than a Parish Council meeting, suggestions were invited as to how the format of this could be changed and better attendance encouraged. For the 2018 meeting, groups agreeing to update the meeting of their current works included Winscombe Community Association WinSpace Committee on plans for a new centre, representatives of the Sporting Clubs on proposals for improved facilities at the recreation ground, the Repair Café on their first year in existence, village traders and the Youth Club. The Chairman would provide a summary of Parish Council works for the year with all working group and committee chairman to submit a written report on their activities to the office before 30th April. Better publicity was encouraged through the purchase of a banner, inclusion in local newspapers and the placing of agendas into shops. Refreshments were not favoured for the 2018 meeting but would again be considered in 2019 with advance planning for that assembly to commence later this year.

11. **To consider and review Parish Council Health and Safety Policy and Risk Assessments**

Risk Assessments – it was noted that daily, weekly and monthly back-ups of the computer systems take place on site with a monthly back-up stored remotely away from site. Action Plans resulting from the risk assessments were also considered.

It was proposed that the risk assessments and H&S policy as presented are accepted for a further 12-month period. Proposed by AF, seconded by GLI, all in favour

12. **To consider an addition to the Office Assistant Job Description.** Updates were made that related to office cover in the absence of the Clerk and the issuing of meeting agenda papers.

13. **Matters for information:**

- **NSC Consultation on Education** – comment on this had been made at the March Parish Council meeting, although on further examination, subject to planning approvals expansion plans for both Winscombe and Sandford Primary Schools had been included in action plans. The Parish Council would again consider the matter at the April meeting.
- **Village Shops** – concern was expressed for the future of shops in the parish should these not be properly supported by parishioners.

Meeting Closed: 9.15 p.m.

Date of next meeting: Monday 6th August 2018

Signed _____ (E,F&P Chairman)

Date _____