

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICIES & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
OF BARTON-LE-CLAY PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL
ON MONDAY 28th FEBRUARY 2022 COMMENCING AT 9.05PM**

Present: Councillors Mrs B Thomas (Chairman), Mr J Paxton (Vice-chair), Mrs G Gardner and Mr J Selley

In attendance: Mrs C Callen (Clerk)

Minutes: Mrs C Callen

21/536 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – There were none received.
It was noted that Councillor Channon was absent.

21/537 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – There were none.

21/538 MATTERS ARISING

Re **Minute 21/495.10** – At the February Full Council meeting, the NALC briefing on the OFCOM consultation re review of the postal service regulation 2022-27 was raised and deferred to the committee meeting for further discussion. Unfortunately, the deadline for a response to NALC was 17th February. NALC will now formulate their response based on the details they highlighted in their publication shared with members on 10th February.

Re **Minute 21/480** – Following discussion at the last meeting regarding the planting scheme as part of the Queen's Green Canopy – the Clerk is still awaiting an update from Central Beds Council. This will be carried forward to the next committee meeting.

The Clerk advised that the National Joint Council for Local Government Services have now agreed the pay award for 2021-22. The pay scales will be subject to a 1.75% increase, backdated to 1st April 2021.

21/539 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE POLICIES & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 31st JANUARY 2022

A copy of the minutes was provided to members ahead of the meeting. Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** the approval of the minutes of 31st January, **SECONDED** by Councillor Paxton **with 3 in favour and 1 abstention**.

21/540 TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Clerk has prepared a draft document based on guidance from NALC/SLCC and to support the Council's Internal Controls requirements, as highlighted last year. A copy was provided to members ahead of the meeting. Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** approval of the Risk Management Strategy version 1.0, **SECONDED** by Councillor Selley and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

21/541 TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR POLICIES & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The draft Terms of Reference have been drawn up by the Clerk, in line with the format previously agreed for Committees, for adoption at Full Council. A copy was provided to members ahead of the meeting. Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** approval of the draft Terms of Reference, **SECONDED** by Councillor Paxton and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

21/542 TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE DRAFT DELEGATION TO EMPLOYEES POLICY

As part of the Terms of Reference for each committee being agreed, the Clerk has also drawn up a Scheme of Delegation Policy for the office staff to formalise their responsibilities, as recommended by SLCC. A copy was provided to members ahead of the meeting. Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** approval of the draft Delegation to Employees Policy version 1.0, **SECONDED** by Councillor Selley and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

21/543 TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY

The Clerk has undertaken the bi-annual review of the Policy and highlighted proposed changes in yellow. A copy of the revised document was provided to members ahead of the meeting.

Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** approval of the updated Document Retention Policy version 2.0, **SECONDED** by Councillor Paxton and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

21/544 TO CONSIDER HOLDING A COMMUNITY SAFETY EVENT IN THE VILLAGE IN CONJUNCTION WITH SAFER CENTRAL

The Clerk met with the Safer Communities Officer from Central Beds Council to discuss an event on 16th February. Due to the low attendance at the Maulden event, they would like to look at having stalls at the next Parish event. Unfortunately, they cannot attend the Jubilee weekend but are interested in having a stand outside the Village Hall if the Horticultural Show event goes ahead in September. This item will be discussed further once a decision is made regarding the progression of the Horticultural Show.

21/545 TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE ANNUAL REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS OF SYSTEMS OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The Clerk presented a draft review, which was provided to members ahead of the meeting for discussion. After consideration, Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** to approve the Annual Review of Effectiveness of Systems of Internal Control 2021/22, **SECONDED** by Councillor Selley and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

21/546 TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN, INTERNAL AUDIT TERMS OF REFERENCE AND INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRAMME

Details were provided to members ahead of the meeting. The Internal Auditor was appointed in 2020 based on a three-year term costing £130pa. An interim Audit was completed in January. The Year End Closure has been arranged for 21st April and then the Internal Auditor will complete their review in April/May.

Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** approval of the Annual Audit Plan, Internal Audit Terms of Reference and Internal Audit Programme, **SECONDED** by Councillor Selley and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

21/547 TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE PURCHASE OF A DISPLAY BOARD

The purchase of a display board is suggested, to be used by the Council when promoting the work it does at events, such as the up-coming Jubilee Picnic. A table-top type is recommended, Details of two types were provided ahead of the meeting for consideration. The version provided by Viking is made of aluminium and would provide greater strength and space for coverage.

Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** approval to purchase the display board from Viking at a cost of £127.00 plus VAT, **SECONDED** by Councillor Selley and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

21/548 TO RETROSPECTIVELY APPROVE THE COST FOR THE CLERK TO ATTEND THE PARISH ONLINE TRAINING SESSION

The Clerk has booked to attend an online session on the use of Parish Online, a mapping tool provided free with the Council's Insurance. Initially this was advertised as a free session on 24th February but they have now clarified that a cost of £15 plus VAT is payable. This software will be very useful for producing maps for the Parish Council for Neighbourhood Plans, Contract works, events, etc. Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** retrospective approval of the cost of £15 plus VAT for the Parish Online training session, **SECONDED** by Councillor Selley and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

21/549 TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE REINVESTMENT OF THE HAMPSHIRE TRUST BUSINESS BOND

Notification of maturity on 23rd March of the Hampshire Trust 1 Year Business Bond Issue 45 (0.70%) has been received. The balance for reinvestment is £85,385.99, including accrued interest of £593.55.

The Parish Council have a policy for low risk and to reinvest for no more than one year to retain liquidity. There are limited options available for investing public sector funds and to ensure they are covered by the government protection guarantee up to £85k.

The Hampshire Trust are offering 1 Year Business Bond Issue 49 at 1.21% (2 Year Business Bond Issue 41 at 1.30%). The return from the CCLA Public Sector Fund where the Council has £100k+ invested is currently much lower, at c.0.3% (fluctuates).

Councillor Gardner **PROPOSED** approval to reinvest the capital funds £84,792.44 in the 1 Year Business Bond, with the maturing interest returned to the Council's current account to keep the

capital invested under £85k. This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Paxton and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

21/550 ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE OR FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA

The Clerk has obtained a quote for the completion of the Electric Installation Certificate Report for the Parish Office and Sports Pavilion, which were due in 2021 (5yrly). The previous electrician appointed in February 2021 has failed to undertake the reports. In addition, the electrician has quoted for the replacement of the two faulty electric heaters in the Parish Office, which were again approved last year but not undertaken.

Members agreed for the works to go ahead as soon as possible. The cost total for the works of £876.28 plus VAT will be retrospectively approved at the March Full Council meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.42pm