

Aldwick Parish Council

Aldwick Parish Offices 88 Pryors Lane Aldwick West Sussex PO21 4JF
Tel & Fax: 01243 263330 Email: clerk@aldwickparishcouncil.gov.uk

CHAIRMAN: Cllr Mrs L. Richardson CLERK/RFO: Sue Batey DEPUTY CLERK: Mary Halpin

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Held on Monday, 16th March 2020

at Aldwick Parish Offices.

- Present:** Cllr Mr A Smith (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Stallard, Cllr Mrs Richardson and Cllr Mrs Rufey.
- In attendance:** The Clerk, 1 member of the press, Cllr Bass and 3 members of the public.
- Apologies:** Cllr Mr R Gotheridge (Vice Chairman) - work commitments. Cllr Mrs Birch – self insulating, Cllr Mrs S Coppard – unwell, apologies accepted and approved.

The meeting was opened at 7pm

069.19f **Declarations of interest by members.**

Cllr Mrs Richardson declared a personal interest in item 7. (min no: 074.19f) as she is known to previous members of the Aldwick Community Society socially. Cllr Mrs Richardson stated that she retains an open mind and would therefore take part in the debate and voting process.

Cllr Mrs Stallard declared a personal interest in item 7. (min no:074.19f) as she attended the first public meeting held by Aldwick Community Society. Cllr Mrs Stallard stated that she did not take part in the meeting nor has she expressed an opinion and retains an open mind and would therefore take part in the debate and voting process.

The Clerk declared a personal, prejudicial and pecuniary interest as she has pledge to buy shares in the Aldwick Community Society and therefore her opinion of support is known, also members of the Aldwick Community Society are known to her. The Clerk stated that she would be leaving the meeting prior to item 7 (min no:074.19f) being heard and therefore the minutes must be recorded by a member.

- 070.19f **To approve the minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on Monday, 3rd February 2020.**
Resolved, members agreed that the minutes of the meeting of Monday, 3rd February 2020, having been circulated in advance, be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

- 071.19f **Clerk's Actions and Report**
None.

- 072.19f To receive:
- **Questions from members of the public** - Members of the public and Cllr Bass raised questions regarding item 7. The Chairman stated that all questions would be addressed under item 7, (min no:074.19f).
 - **Representations from any Councillor who has a personal/prejudicial or pecuniary interest in any of the following agenda items** – None raised.
 -

- 073.19f **Any such matters that the Chairman may wish to bring to the attention of the Committee**
The chairman had no matters to raise at this meeting.

The clerk left the meeting.

.....
Chairman

.....
Date

074.19f **That Aldwick Parish Council invest £10,000 in The Aldwick Community Society to assist with the purchase of the building and freehold, (Formally: The Ship Inn -Aldwick Street). (Members requested at the Finance Meeting of the 3rd February 2020 that a briefing/information pack be supplied prior to this meeting from the Aldwick Community Society). Proposed by the Finance Committee min no: 066.19f.**

Cllr Mrs Richardson recorded the minutes in the Clerks absence.

The Chairman welcomed the Chairman of the Aldwick Community Society and Friends of the Ship Inn (ACSFS) who was present to answer questions regarding the information pack which had been supplied prior to the meeting.

Questions and responses related to;

- The price of the premises in their present condition as a retail outlet – the Chairman of ACSFS agreed that this price might be seen to be unrealistic but was confident that this could be negotiated down and that this would have positive effects on the budget for renovations
- Fund raising – the Chairman of ACSFS related the level of funds raised by the Share Issue at the date of the meeting and that this amounted to £56,000 over a period of a few days
- The marketing strategy which members believed had omitted large areas of Aldwick including parts of Rose Green and the Marine Estate. The Chairman of ACSFS acknowledged that this needed to be remedied
- Comments from the two professional reports supplied in the pack which had both suggested a full structural survey and which did not appear to have been done despite the age of the building, the proximity to a ditch and the presence of some damp areas The Chairman responded that the damp areas had been identified and diagnosed as being a minor problem and that a full structural survey would be undertaken when negotiations were further advanced. Members present agreed that this would be an essential investigation prior to any purchase.
- Planning issues and the need to overcome delivery times and sizes of delivery vehicles – a disputed point with a present alternative planning application. Members were assured that ACSFS were clear that all planning requirements would be met and that proper attention would be paid to the Area of Special Character and the Aldwick Parish Council Design Statement and potential parking issues. However, an outstanding issue might be a crossing issue related to the initial Morrison’s planning application
- The effect of the present health and economic situation on the price, the negotiations, the process for fund raising and the potential for a successful business start -up. The response was that this could only be gauged on a day by day basis.
- The need for £10,000 from the Council considering the overall cost of the whole project. The Chairman of ACSFS explained that although this was only a small part of the totality of the outlay, it would signal confidence in a local group attempting to support the community through providing and running a beneficial asset for the community.

Following this discussion, members voted unanimously in favour of supporting the proposal and putting this to the next Council meeting although the Chairman of ACSFS was warned that due to the issues surrounding Covid-19 there was as yet, no guarantee that this would be held on the allocated date and that circumstances present at that time might further affect their decision.

The Clerk returned to the meeting and resumed taking the minutes.

075.19f. **To agree and propose to Council that the Parish Council insurance for 2020/2021 is renewed with Ecclesiastical on a 3yr agreement. The annual premium for 2020/2021 is £2008.89 and has been recommended by Came & Company, local council insurance brokers.**

The Clerk informed members that the Insurance Broker had revised the premium downward as some things listed were no longer relevant or covered in other categories. Therefore, the item now read, **To agree and propose to Council that the Parish Council insurance for 2020/2021 is renewed with Ecclesiastical on a 3yr agreement. The annual premium for 2020/2021 is £1,864.65 and has been recommended by Came & Company, local council insurance brokers.**

Members voted unanimously in favour and proposed to Full Council.

.....
Chairman

.....
Date

076.19f **To agree the bank/cash/credit card transactions report for 17th January 2020 to 5th March 2020. To agree invoices received/paid, cheque books, payroll, bank statements and accounts. (Members to select invoice numbers to carry out internal audit check and note any telephone banking transactions or credit card transactions).**

As part of the internal audit members requested to see all finance records connected to invoice numbers **1061, 1065 & 1064**. Members confirmed that invoice number **1061** had been paid by **Cheque no 3214**, invoice number **1065** had been paid by **Cheque no 3223 (Discretionary grant payment to Bognor Regis Town Youth Football Club)** and invoice number **1064** had been paid by **Cheque no 3230**. Members confirmed that the cheque stubs and invoices had been signed by two signatories and that the financial statement, bank statement (reconciliation) and invoices were in order. The transaction sheet was signed by the Chairman.

077.19f **Correspondence for the Finance Committee.**

The Clerk informed member that an email had been received from Arun District Council advising the Parish Council to close and staff work from home due to the Coronavirus (Covid 19), this is in line with HM Government recommendations.

Date and time of next meeting:

TBA @ 7pm

The meeting closed at 7.50 pm.

Meetings of the Committee are open to the public

Note that attachments are not distributed with copies of the agenda/minutes but are available for inspection with the master copy of the minutes in the Council offices.

.....
Chairman

.....
Date