

MARKET LAVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Mrs Carol Hackett, 23 Orchard Close, West Ashton. Wiltshire. BA14 6AU.

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VAT Registration Number: 296 9715 35

Minutes of the **Management & Finance (M&F) Committee Meeting**
Of the Parish Council
Held on Tuesday 3rd December 2019
At 7.15pm in the Old School, Market Lavington

Councillors Present: Cllr Padfield (Chairman), Cllr Davis, Cllr Osborn and Cllr Myhill.

In attendance: Carol Hackett (Parish Clerk).

	AGENDA ITEM
19/20-221	Apologies for Absence Cllr Steele had sent apologies due to personal commitments, which were accepted.
19/20-222	Declarations of Interest and Dispensations to Participate a) Cllr Osborn declared a financial interest in agenda/minute number 19/20-227 (the Chairman's allowance formed part of the budget for 2020/21), and agenda/minute item 19/20-225 (he was editor of the Village Magazine). b) There were none.
19/20-223	Minutes of Council Committee meeting The minutes of the Management & Finance committee meeting held on the 6 th June 2019 having been previously circulated to Councillors, were approved and signed as a correct record (proposed Cllr Padfield, seconded Cllr Osborn). Cllr Davis abstained from the vote as he had been absent from the last meeting.
19/20-224	Adjournment for Public Discussion (maximum of 5 minutes) The meeting was adjourned and resumed at 7.19pm.
19/20-225	Updates on Matters discussed at previous meeting/s a) Specific Parish Council website / individual Parish Councillor Emails - To review suitability and cost of options available – The Clerk referred to the report circulated to Councillors with the agenda papers which provided details of three website providers that had been contacted and information received. Cllr Davis also provided details of one further provider for consideration. Following a full discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Myhill seconded by Cllr Padfield and unanimously agreed to seek approval from Full Council for the following recommendations – <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To approve use of the website template provided by TEEC Ltd, and enter into a contract with them to provide the migration service, approx. £300, and annual support package, approx. £10 per month (migration service will transfer existing updated Parish Council information from the Village website to the new website, and upload any additional information as required. Enquiries will also be made regarding the possibility of migration of information from the existing Old School website).• To approve application for use of the 'gov.uk' domain name.• To approve use of the domain name www.marketlavington.gov.uk and individual Councillor emails i.e. colin.osborn@marketlavington.gov.uk b) Emergency Plan – The Clerk referred to the recent Flood Warden training event she had attended during which the topic of Emergency Plans had also been discussed. Following a full discussion and taking into account the advice received at the training event, it was agreed that the best approach would be to focus the Emergency Plan on providing details of what equipment and facilities are available in the Village, how they can be accessed, known problem areas for access by emergency vehicles, and a directory of key contacts – ACTIONS – Clerk to draft an initial Emergency Plan document for further consideration by Councillors.
19/20-226	Accounting package for Parish Council Accounts The Clerk noted that over recent years the amount of accounting transactions for the Parish Council

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	<p>had been steadily increasing, and this was very likely to continue. Also, the registration of the Parish Council for VAT had led to additional work, and pressures on the existing use of excel spreadsheets to manage the Parish Council finances. She then referred to the information received for the main specific Town/Parish Council accounting package used by a large number of Councils – Rialtas, which had been circulated to Councillors with the agenda papers. The Clerk anticipated that use of the Rialtas accounting package would save a considerable amount of administration time, as it had the facility to automatically generate budget reports, annual audit returns, quarterly VAT returns etc. whereas currently these are all produced by extracting and further analysing various information from the spreadsheets. Following a full discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Myhill seconded by Cllr Padfield and unanimously agreed to seek approval from Full Council for the following recommendations –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To approve purchase of the Rialtas Alpha accounting package for use at the start of the next financial year 1/4/20 (purchase of accounting package, initial set up at premises and training £520 plus mileage. Ongoing annual support and maintenance Single User Licence £124 per annum).
19/20-227	<p>2020/21 Parish Council budget</p> <p>The Clerk referred to the draft budget circulated to Councillors with their agenda papers, noting that the OSH and HRAF Committees had previously met and agreed their draft budgets, with the remaining budget having been compiled using estimated figures, based on the actual spend for 2018/19, and the spend-to-date for 2019/20, adjusted as considered necessary. It was noted that the 'tax base' figure provided by Wiltshire Council, and used to help calculate the precept requirement, had decreased for 2020/21. Councillors reviewed all the figures in detail, taking into consideration the ongoing regular commitments of the Parish Council, and allocating additional amounts where considered appropriate, as well as budgeting for new equipment and projects in the village, many of which had been identified by parishioners. A key concern of the Parish Council and parishioners alike was highway safety, both through the centre of the village and on Spin Hill / Ledge Hill / Broadway. It was therefore recognised that the Parish Council needed to be in a position whereby it could contribute financially to any approved highway safety improvements, as was often the requirement from Wiltshire Council. Following a full discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Davis seconded by Cllr Osborn and unanimously agreed to seek approval from Full Council for the following recommendations –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To approve the proposed draft budget for 2020/21 as amended at the M&F committee meeting – Total payments £67,888 Total receipts £67,886.50 (copy provided to all Councillors), To approve the precept requirement for 2020/21 of £64,030 £64,030 divided by 765.86 (tax base) = £83.61 band 'D' charge (an increase of £10.27 / 14% from 2019/20) To approve an increase in the OSH Cleaner's hourly rate from £8.60 to £8.90 (3% / 30p per hour increase)
19/20-228	<p>Other M&F Committee business</p> <p>Cllr Davis questioned what the policy was regarding the level of 'general reserves' that the Parish Council should have – ACTIONS – Clerk to check the advice received from the Internal Auditor and detail in the meeting minutes.</p> <p><i>General reserves – Position as detailed by Internal Auditor as at 31/3/19 (extract from Internal Audit Report):</i></p> <p><u><i>Finally, in this area, we have examined the status of the Council's reserves noting that in total they have increased from £28,002 as at 31st March 2018 to £34,709 at 31st March 2019. We also note the existence of funds earmarked for specific purposes totalling £7,399 and funds for restricted purposes totalling £3,573 leaving a General Reserve balance of £23,737, at 31st March 2019, which equates to approximately four months' revenue spending (based on average spend for the four years preceding 2018-19 where expenditure was unrepresentatively high due to the Old School restoration project). We consider this appropriate for the Council's ongoing revenue spending.</i></u></p>

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	With the revenue spending detailed in the Auditor's report being calculated using the four years preceding 2018-19, it should be noted that our regular average spend will have increased since then i.e. increased wages, website, utility costs, additional regular costs etc. It is suggested therefore that it would be prudent to ensure our reserves are kept towards the higher end of the range of recommended 'General Reserve' levels of between 2 – 6 months.
19/20-229	Date of next Meeting To be arranged as needed.
19/20-230	Closure of meeting There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.35pm

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