

# HILDENBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Pavilion and Recreation Ground – Riding Lane – Hildenborough – TN11 9HY

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**Finance Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024 in the Village hall  
Committee Room at 7.30pm**

## MINUTES

**PRESENT:** Cllr A McNeil (chair) Cllr M Coles Cllr I Sklavenitis

**ALSO PRESENT:** S Moore (RFO)

**APOLOGIES:** No Apologies

### 1. Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 1 November 2023

These were agreed as a true record.

### 2. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

### 3. Expenditure review 2024/25

Broadly in line with budget. Tree surgery has been less than expected and there are a number of small underspends. The pavilion budget of £25k is not going to be spent this year, it was agreed to move this budget line to an earmarked reserve for use on the pavilion. The Earmarked reserve of £30k for tree work also remains.

### 4. Draft budget 25/26

#### 4.1 Project proposals

The following projects are recommended to be included in 2025/26 budget:

Highways improvements £8,000

Drainage £5,000

Recreation ground play equipment improvements £25,000 (incl. S106 £15,000)

Recreation ground perimeter path £75,000 (incl. S106 £55,000)

Landscaping £5,000

Additional bins £2,000

Picnic tables and planters £2,000

Total £122,000

#### 4.1.2 Budget 2025/26

It was agreed the budget be put forward to the Parish Council and It was recommended the current year's precept is increased by 2% for the 2025/26 budget. This was agreed to be sufficient to accommodate the above projects and to cover price rises in other areas.

## 4.2 Salary review (confidential minute)

### 5. Review Club Rents

I Sklavenitis declared an interest in the Hildenborough Gardener's Society. All rents to remain the same for 2025/26.

### 6. Review of bank accounts

The bank accounts were reviewed. A McNeil commented that there is over £85,000 in Unity Bank at the moment as we recently received the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the precept. It was agreed to:

1. Transfer £15k to the Nationwide Account
2. To look into opening a new bank account
3. **During the year I Sklavenitis and C Wynne were added as signatories to Unity Bank and K Dobson and C Lewis were removed. It is recommended the signatories continue the same for 2025/26 namely Cllrs A McNeil, M Coles, I Sklavenitis and Wynne also the Clerk, to remain as Admin.**
4. To ensure the Nationwide signatories are in line with the Unity signatories.

### 7. Review of Risk Assessment

This is recommended for acceptance by the Parish Council

### 8. Review of Financial Regulations

The Financial Regulations have been updated in accordance with the 2024 Model. The following changes were discussed and agreed:

Section 5.6 For contracts estimated to exceed £100,000 including VAT, the Clerk shall seek formal tenders from at least three suppliers agreed by the council OR advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.

The council sought advice from SLCC on this matter and it was thought reasonable given the current level of funds.

Section 5.15 Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:

- the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair of the Council, for any items below £500 excluding VAT.
- a duly delegated committee of the council for all items of expenditure within their delegated budgets for items under £3,000 excluding VAT.
- the council for all items over £3,000

Such authorisation must be supported by a minute (in the case of council or committee decisions) or other auditable evidence trail.

Other sections remain as per the new model combined with the 2023/24 regulations.

The revised regulations were recommended for acceptance by the Parish Council.

### 9. Donations/Sponsorship/Subscriptions

The following donations are recommended to organisations who provide support to the village and/or its residents:

Victim Support	£200
The Counselling Centre	£250
Hildenborough Conservation Group for Insurance tba	
Hospice in the Weald	£500
St John's Church	£1,500
Air Ambulance KSS	£250
West Kent Mediation Service	£200
Hildenborough Foodbank	£1,000
Baby Umbrella	£200
Hildenborough Primary School (OPAL Project)	£1,250

The remaining £500 plus is being retained to cover further requests.

#### **10. Use of Direct Debits (for EDF, Castle Water, NEST, Corporate Card and VOXI), BACS and CHAPS**

It is recommended the Council continue to use direct debits, BACS and CHAPS when relevant.

#### **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE 4.2**

One scale point raise was agreed for the RFO.

It was noted that a Local Government Services pay award has been agreed for all staff and that it has been back dated to 1 April 2024.

It is recommended the office allowance for staff should be increased in line with CPIH inflation as at September 2024, 2.6%.

The CPIH rate has been used as it more directly equates to the costs the Parish Council are trying to approximate and it was recommended this rate is used going forward.