

**COCKING PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING**  
**4 MAY 2021, 6.30PM**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Miss F Russell (Chair), Mrs Elliott-Renney, Mrs J Jackson, R Marks and D Summerfield.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** G Burt, Clerk to the Council  
Dis Cllr G Macara (Until Minute 6)

*The Chairman of the Council 2019-21 Cllr Miss Frances Russell opened the meeting.*

1. **To elect the Chairman of the Council and to receive the Declaration of Office**

The Council **RESOLVED** that Cllr Miss F Russell be elected Chairman of the Council for the ensuing municipal year. Cllr Miss F Russell later signed the statutory declaration of acceptance of office.

2. **To elect the Vice Chairman of the Council and to receive the Declaration of Office**

The Council **RESOLVED** that Cllr D Imlach be elected Vice Chairman of the Council for the ensuing municipal year. Cllr D Imlach later signed the non-statutory declaration of acceptance of office.

3. **Apologies**

None

4. **Declarations of Interest**

Members and officers were invited to make any declarations of pecuniary and/or non-pecuniary interests that they may have in relation to items on the agenda and were reminded to make any declarations at any stage during the meeting if it then became apparent that this may be required when a particular item or issue was to be considered. Cllr D Summerfield declared an interest as a Member of the Village Hall Management Committee.

5. **Questions from Visitors**

None

6. **To receive reports from County & District Cllrs.**

Dis Cllr Gordon Gordon Macara had sent a written report in advance, circulated to all Councillors and joined the meeting. Cty Cllr David Bradford would not be seeking re-election.

7. **To consider any applications for cooption. (The Council still has one vacancy.)**

None

8. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the 12 April 2021, previously circulated were agreed as a correct record and signed later by the Chairman.

#### **9. Matters Arising from the Minutes**

None

#### **10. Planning**

Comments on applications received since the last meeting were **RESOLVED** as set out in Appendix A.

#### **11. Highways Updates**

- a. Footpaths & Footways – nothing to report.
- b. Cycleways – nothing to report.

#### **12. Updates on Parish Matters**

- a. Playground – continued to be well-used.
- b. Village Hall – had reopened and would be hosting a Polling Station.
- c. Broadband – cables were now going in to the north of the village and should go live in July.
- d. Defibrillator – had been kindly fitted on the southern side of The Blue Bell, (where it was covered by existing CCTV) by an electrician f.o.c. The Clerk would register its presence with the ambulance service and also see what training could be arranged for interested villagers.
- e. Newsletter - ongoing.
- f. Cllr Richard Marks reported on alternative solutions to the flooding bus shelter at The Croft.
- g. The Chairman reported that the Post Office was due to reopen the following day.

#### **13. Finance**

- a. Payments since last meeting were **RESOLVED** and any receipts NOTED – Appendix **B**.
- b. The Receipts and Payments accounts to the 31 March 2021 were **RESOLVED**.
- c. Bank Reconciliation to 31 March 2021 was **RESOLVED** – Appendix **C** and the corresponding bank statement was subsequently initialled by Cllr Miss Russell.
- d. The 2020-21 Internal Audit Report had been received - Appendix **D**. Members were pleased to see that once again no matters of note had been raised.
- e. **RESOLVED** that Section 1 (Annual Governance Statement) of the 2020/21 Annual Return be approved - Appendix **E**.
- f. **RESOLVED** that Section 2 (Accounting Statements) of the 2020/21 Annual Return be approved - Appendix **F**.
- g. Under the Transparency Code, Councils with a turnover (income or expenditure) of less than £25k in the year just finished did not have to submit their accounts etc to External Audit (although they still had to complete the same paperwork.). However, Councils finding themselves in this position could elect to send them to External Audit if they wished. Members considered that sending accounts to External Audit, showed that the Council

was transparent and open and gave reassurance to residents that the accounts were being fully scrutinised. **RESOLVED** to send the 2020-21 accounts to the External Auditor even though they were not required to.

- h. **RESOLVED** that R. S. Hall & Co. be reappointed to undertake the Internal Audit for the forthcoming year 2021-22.

**14. To confirm appointments to outside bodies**

The following appointments were **RESOLVED** accordingly.

Chichester District Association of Local Councils (CDALC) – Chair & Vice Chair.

West Sussex Association of Local Councils (WSALC) – Chair & Vice Chair.

Village Hall Committee – Cllr Imlach

North West Forum - Chair & Vice Chair.

North Chichester County Community Committee - Chair & Vice Chair.

Landfill/Gravel Liaison Group - Cllr Imlach.

Midhurst Area Cycling (MAC) – Cllr Imlach.

PathWatch - Cllrs Marks and Mr P Craig.

Footpath Warden – Naomi Barnett

Defibrillator monitoring – Cllr Jane Elliott-Renney

**15. To reaffirm the Council's Standing Orders.**

**RESOLVED**

**16. To Reaffirm the Council's Financial Regulations.**

**RESOLVED**

**17. Any Other Matters for Information**

None

**18. Date of Next Meeting**

Due to the ending of powers to hold virtual meetings, but social distancing measures still being in place until at least the 21 June, it was **RESOLVED** not to hold a meeting in June. This was because the Village Hall was very small and some Cllrs may still be shielding.

**Monday 4 July 2021 6.30pm**

*The meeting closed at 7.14pm*

Chairman:

Date:

## APPENDIX A

| Ref. No                     | Address                                     | Details   | Comment  |
|-----------------------------|---|---|--|
| SDNP/21/02<br>145/TCA       | Whitegate Bell<br>Lane Cocking<br>GU29 0HU  | Notification of intention to<br>prune back to previous points<br>1 no. Conifer hedge.   | NO OBJECTION   |
| DC/TU/QO<br>M5G7TUN2<br>L0Y | Mill House Mill<br>Lane Cocking<br>GU29 0HJ | Rear extensions to ground<br>floor and first floor. Demolish<br>existing garage and relocate<br>new garage with storage over. | <p>Whilst the Council notes and welcomes some down-scaling of the original application, it considers these to be insufficient for it to change its previous comment, which therefore it wishes to sustain. <b>OBJECTION</b> for the following material reasons:</p> <p>The proposed new garage (with residential / possibly holiday accommodation over) by virtue of height, mass and design will be at variance to the prevailing form of development in the area and therefore represents an overdevelopment of the site which will be detrimental to the amenities of the (Conservation) area (within the South Downs National Park) and neighbouring properties.</p> <p>The proposed external staircase to the holiday let will lead to overlooking, representing a further diminution to the amenities of neighbouring properties.</p> <p>The proposal will increase traffic onto this already inadequate largely single track unadopted access road and therefore be to the detriment and safety of other highway users.</p> |

## APPENDIX B

| INCOME & EXPENDITURE SINCE LAST MEETING TO 04 MAY 2021 |                                    |           |                      |                |               |                |
|--|------------------------------------|-----------|----------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| DATE   | PAYEE                              | CHEQUE NO | DESCRIPTION          | GROSS          | VAT           | NET            |
| 04/05/2021   | Mulberry & Co                      | 911       | Training - JJ        | £42.00         | £7.00         | £35.00         |
| 04/05/2021   | WSALC Ltd                          | 912       | NALC + SSALC sub     | £139.19        |               | £139.19        |
| 04/05/2021   | Air Ambulance<br>Kent Surry Sussex | 913       | Grant                | £100.00        |               | £100.00        |
| 04/05/2021   | 4Sight Vision Suppo                | 914       | Grant                | £100.00        |               | £100.00        |
| 04/05/2021   | G Burt                             | 915       | Clerk salary - April | £220.15        |               | £220.15        |
| 04/05/2021   | HMRC                               | 916       | Clerk Tax - April    | £54.80         |               | £54.80         |
| 04/05/2021   | R.S. Hall & Co                     | 917       | 20-21 Internal Audit | £180.00        | £30.00        | £150.00        |
|  |                                    |           |                      | <b>£836.14</b> | <b>£37.00</b> | <b>£799.14</b> |

**APPENDIX C**

| <b>BANK RECONCILIATION</b>               |           |                  |
|--|-----------|------------------|
| <b>AS @ 31 MARCH 2021</b>                |           |                  |
| <b>CASHBOOK</b>                          |           |                  |
| Balance brought forward as at 01/04/2020 |           | £10,990.44       |
| Add Total Receipts                       |           | 13,567.00        |
| Less Total Payments                      |           | (15,595.86)      |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                             |           | <b>£8,961.58</b> |
| <b>BANK</b>                              |           |                  |
| Lloyds Treasurers A/C (31/03/2021)       |           | 14,414.60        |
| <b>Less unrepresented cheques</b>        |           |                  |
| 853                                      | £450.00   |                  |
| 901                                      | £219.95   |                  |
| 902                                      | £55.00    |                  |
| 904                                      | £36.00    |                  |
| 906                                      | £1,610.77 |                  |
| 907                                      | £2,717.12 |                  |
| 908                                      | £219.95   |                  |
| 909                                      | £55.00    |                  |
| 910                                      | £89.23    |                  |
|  |           | -5,453.02        |
| <b>Plus unrepresented deposits</b>       |           |                  |
|  |           | 0                |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                             |           | <b>8,961.58</b>  |

**TALLY**

**APPENDIX D**

**COCKING PARISH COUNCIL  
INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

**INTRODUCTION**

An internal audit of the Parish Council's financial records for the year 2020/2021 has recently been completed. The audit included all financial transactions for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 inclusive.

The audit was undertaken in compliance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015, and in accordance with the agreed and accepted Audit Plan.

Regulation 3 of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations states that the Parish Council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control which—

- (a) facilitates the effective exercise of its functions and the achievement of its aims and objectives;
- (b) ensures that the financial and operational management of the authority is effective; and
- (c) includes effective arrangements for the management of risk

Regulation 5 of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations states that the Parish Council must undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, and any officer or member of the Parish Council, if required to do so for the purposes of the internal audit shall -

- (a) make available such documents and records; and
- (b) supply such information and explanations;

The objective of the internal audit is to determine whether the accounting arrangements, procedural controls, records, and documentary evidence are adequate to ensure the accurate and timely recording of financial transactions, so as to comply with all relevant legislation and best practice.

## **SCOPE**

The audit included examination of the receipts and payments account for the year; review of spreadsheets; review of bank statements; review of supplier invoices and claims for reimbursement; review of receipts; review of agendas and minutes of meetings; review of budgets; review of fixed asset register and insurance policy; review of payroll records; confirmation that bank reconciliations and reports are prepared regularly and reviewed at frequent meetings of the Parish Council; and confirmation that the Council's standing orders and financial regulations are kept up to date.

## **FINDINGS**

- 1) Monies paid and received during the year have been accurately recorded and reconciled to the bank and cash balances.
- 2) The accounting records, minutes, standing orders and other financial information were found to be in good order.
- 3) Risk assessments were reviewed and updated
- 4) The accounting and other records were well maintained, accurate and correctly cross-referenced

- 5) The fixed asset register did not include the new defibrillator and cabinet
- 6) VAT should not be reclaimed on the payment to Zoom – they are a US company and do not have a GB VAT number
- 7) The website was reviewed for compliance with the Transparency Code

## **SUMMARY AND OPINION**

One of the functions of internal audit is to give assurance to members of the council that the financial systems are operating correctly, and can be relied upon.

In connection with my examination, and having regard to the items reported herewith, no matter has come to my attention that gives me reasonable cause to believe in any *material* respect that the regulatory requirements have not been complied with. Although errors were noted, they did not have any significant financial impact on the figures reported on the annual return.

The accounting arrangements, procedural controls, records and documentary evidence are considered to be satisfactory, and accurately record the Council's financial position.



Rachel Hall (ACA)  
27 April 2021

**Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2020/21**

We acknowledge as the members of:

**COCKING PARISH COUNCIL**

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021, that:

|   | Answer |    |     | *Yes means that this authority:   |
|---|--------|----|-----|---|
|   | Yes    | No | N/A |   |
| 1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.  | ✓      |    |     | prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.   |
| 2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.  | ✓      |    |     | made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.   |
| 3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances. | ✓      |    |     | has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.   |
| 4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.   | ✓      |    |     | during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.   |
| 5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.  | ✓      |    |     | considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.  |
| 6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.  | ✓      |    |     | arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority. |
| 7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.  | ✓      |    |     | responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.   |
| 8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.                                  | ✓      |    |     | disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.   |
| 9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.                         | Yes    | No | N/A | has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.   |
|   |        |    | ✓   |   |

\*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

04-05-2021

and recorded as minute reference:

13.e.

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman   
 Clerk 

www.cocking.org



Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2020/21 for

COCKING PARISH COUNCIL

|  | Year ending        |                    | Notes and comments  |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|---|
|  | 31 March 2020<br>£ | 31 March 2021<br>£ |   |
| 1. Balances brought forward  | 14,005             | 10,990             | Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Dec 7 of previous year.  |
| 2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies   | 13,420             | 13,567             | Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.   |
| 3. (+) Total other receipts  | 267                | 0                  | Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or levies/charges received (line 2). Exclude any grants received.   |
| 4. (-) Staff costs   | 3,431              | 3,299              | Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Includes gross salaries and wages, employees' NI contributions, employees' pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.      |
| 5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments  | 0                  | 0                  | Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).  |
| 6. (-) All other payments  | 13,271             | 12,296             | Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).  |
| 7. (+) Balances carried forward  | 10,990             | 8,952              | Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).   |
| 8. Total value of cash and short term investments                                    | 10,990             | 8,952              | The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliations.  |
| 9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets                          | 291,263            | 294,859            | The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.  |
| 10. Total borrowings   | 0                  | 0                  | The outstanding capital balances as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PHLE).   |
| 11. (For Local Councils Only) (Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charities)) |                    |                    | The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.<br>N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions. |

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2021 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practice and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

*Gregory Burt*

Date 30-04-2021

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date

04-05-2021

as recorded in minute reference:

13.F.

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

*[Signature]*