**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY, 23RD SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 7.30PM AT CHURCH FARM**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs. Mrs. M. Moore (Chairman), R. Mitchell, R. Roud and D. Thornewell

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllrs. T. Bishop (Borough Council Meeting), Mrs. C. Bell and Mrs. A. Oakley

**APPROVAL AND SIGNING OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 20th MAY 2024**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 20th May 2024 be **APPROVED AND SIGNED** by the Chairman.

**MATTERS ARISING**

(i) **Office Solar Panels**

The Clerk reported that the 34 solar panels have now been installed on the Parish Council Office and Committee Room building and the account has been settled.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Gary Jiles: **Quotation for Repair to Roof at George Holding Centre**

Kent Asphalt Ltd:

The Clerk reported that there is a leak through the roof at the Doctors’ Surgery at the George Holding centre and two quotations have been received for the repair, as follows:-

Gary Jiles Building Contractor £1,200.00

Kent Asphalt Ltd: £1050.00 plus VAT

After discussion it was **AGREED** that the quotation from Gary Jiles be **ACCEPTED** on the basis he has recently carried out repairs to the Pavilion roof at South Ward Playing and managed to source the unusual tiles. **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**FINANCIAL MATTERS**

(i) **Reappointment of Internal Auditor for 2024/2025**

It was **AGREED** that we re-appoint Auditing Solutions Ltd to carry out the Internal Audit for 2024/25. It will be necessary to appoint a new Internal Auditor for 2024/2025 as Stuart Pollard is retiring.

(ii) **Internal Audit 2023/2024 – Final Report**

Cllr. Thornewell had read through the Final Internal Audit Report and the following action will be taken:-

(a) **Financial Regulations** – The Chairman will draft these based on the NALC model Financial Regulations, the updated version.

(b) **Precept 2024/2025** – The total Precept figure of £487,614 was retrospectively recorded in the Full Council minutes on 5th June 2024

(c) **East Malling Village Hall Charity** – It was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** for the Financial Year 2024/2025 all transactions relating to the East Malling Village Hall be extracted from the final figure on the AGAR.

(d) **Initially of Invoices** – It was **AGREED** that we will continue to have all invoices initialled by Councillors who have signed the cheques.

(e) **Village Hall Hire Rates** – To be reviewed by the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee

(f) **Salary Scales** – Salary Scales for all Staff on the NALC Scale will now be recorded in the Finance and General Purposes Minutes, as follows:-

Clerk - Scale 57, Assistant Clerk – Scale 29, Handyman – Scale 27 and Caretaking/Supervisor – Scale 27

(g) **Asset Register** – this is in the process of being prepared and updated at present.

(iii) **Annual AGAR and Accounting Statement – Audited**

Cllr. Thornewell as Parish Council Chairman had read the report by Mazars in respect of matters needing attention for the 2025/2026 Financial Year being:-

* Confirmation that the financial transactions relating to East Malling Village Hall Charity will be extracted when preparing the AGAR for 2024/2025.
* It was noted that the Fixed Assets Register needs to reconcile with the figure in the AGAR. This will be done whilst updating the Asset Register as previously mentioned.

(iv) **Risk Assessment** – Financial Regulations will updated by the end of this Financial Year.

The Clerk was asked to make enquiries for a Fireproof Cabinet to hold the Parish Council Deeds and related document

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY** – Meeting that took place with representative of CCLA on 30th July 2024.

Cllr. Thornewell reported that he, the Clerk and Assistant Clerk met with a representative of CCLA with a view to setting up an Investment Strategy which seemed straightforward. Cllr. Thornewell **PROPOSED** that an initial investment of £25,000 be made and necessary application form be completed by the Clerk. **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**STAFF MATTERS**

General discussion took place regarding the additional workload in the Parish Council Office.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Clerk reported that Helen Grant MP has requested a Meeting with Councillors which has now been confirmed as the 24th October 2024 in the Committee Room, Church Farm at 3.30p.m.

It was made clear that only matters relating to East Malling can be discussed with Helen Grant MP as she represents the Maidstone and Malling Constituency.

The Clerk was requested to seek a meeting with Trista Osborne MP for Chatham and Aylesford where Larkfield Matters can be discussed.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** Monday, 21st October 2024

**CLOSURE**

The Chairman declared the Meeting closed at 8.50p.m.

Chairman

21st October 2024