Minutes of the Council meeting held on:

**Wednesday 20th January 2021 at 6.30pm**

(note the meeting was held virtually using Microsoft Teams)

**Present**: Cllr. G. Quinnell (Chair), Cllr. R. Mair (Vice Chair), Cllr. G. Rothery, Cllr. J. Johnson (District), Cllr. A. Hart, Cllr. G. Maynard (County).

The meeting welcomed the newly appointed PCSO Orla Lindsay, who introduced herself as the new police presence for Udimore amongst other areas. She stated that she would try to visit Udimore as often as the operational situation allowed and that she would publish when she intended to visit on the Twitter account Rother\_police#Udimore. The Chairman thanked her for taking the time to join the meeting.

1. **Apologies.**

There were none.

1. **Disclosures of Interest**.

There were none.

1. **Reports from District and County Councillors.**

Cllr. Johnson had nothing to report but Cllr. Rothery raised the on-going problem with the allocation of postcodes and Cllr. Johnson stated that he had raised the problem within Rother, but the conclusion was that it was fault of the Post Office and that the Post Office should resolve the problem.

Cllr. Maynard reported that the Covid-19 vaccination issue was being run by the NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups and at present this was predominantly the Pfizer vaccine. It was anticipated that when the AstraZeneca vaccine comes fully on-stream, it may well be rolled out to the smaller Surgeries. However vaccinations were likely to continue to be conducted at Etchingham. Local surgeries are visiting over-80’s who are home bound and it is anticipated that all over-80’s will be vaccinated by Monday. The County Council will shortly discuss its Budget and it is anticipated that they will decide to raise the Council tax by 1.9%, with an additional 1.5% for Social Services. It is also anticipated that Council Tax collection will be affected by an increase in the number of people unable to pay, due to the pandemic.

1. **Minutes from the previous meeting.**

The Council resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on the 18th November 2020.

1. **Traffic.**
2. **Traffic Calming.** It was agreed to defer discussion on the speed check until the next meeting as traffic is much reduced by the lockdown.
3. **Potholes.** The pothole problem causing broken windows at Churchfield Cottages has been partially resolved by sweeping the road, and the resident reported that she had repaired her broken windows. There is still a problem that as the edges of the potholes deteriorate stones will again be deflected onto the windows. Cllr. Maynard agreed to take this up with the Highway Steward. The Clerk is to forward details of the case so far. Cllr. Mair raised the problem of potholes in Dumb Woman’s Lane and Cllr. Maynard agreed to meet him to examine the problems.
4. **Noise.** It was agreed to discuss this at the March meeting.
5. **Speeding.** Due to reduced traffic levels the speed monitoring was also deferred until the March meeting.
6. **Planning.**

There were no Planning Notices.

1. **Finance.**
2. **Audit Report Actions.** The Clerk reported that a list of actions from the last Audit Report was published and being undertaken.
3. **Appointment of Internal Auditor.** Cllr. Hart was appointed as the Council’s Internal Auditor.
4. **Bank Statements.** The Council resolved to accept the December and January Bank Statements.
5. **Bank Reconciliation.** The Council resolved to accept the Bank Reconciliation.
6. **Payment Schedule.** The council resolved to accept the payment schedule listed below

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Payee | Net | VAT | Gross | Cheque | Notes. |
| Clerk |  |  | £734.72 | 704 | Pay |
| Uniserve South East | £60.00 | £12.00 | £72.00 | 703 | Update laptop. |
| Uniserve South East | £28.40 | £5.68 | £34.08 | 702 | Office 365 |

The Clerk’s Pay included the working from home allowance, and PAYE tax at BR rate which the Clerk undertakes to pay to HMRC.

1. **Budget v. Spend.** The Council resolved to accept the latest statement.
2. **2021/22 Budget for submission.** The Council resolved to accept the Budget of £7,000 and to submit this to Rother as the 2021/22 Precept.
3. **Playground.**

Cllr. Quinnell stated that the inspection regime for the playground was not adequate and that the council had no option but to temporarily close the playground. The inspection rules state that the playground should be inspected by a qualified inspector annually and by a competent person weekly. The costs of the inspections are £68.50 plus VAT if done in June and July as part of a regular round of inspections, or for a one-off inspection, the sum of £236.00 plus VAT. The Council resolved to arrange to carry out the immediate repairs and to then book a specialist inspection as soon as possible; this should include a sum of £30.00 for a checklist designed at the main inspection to be used weekly. It was suggested that the council should attempt to raise funds for the repairs and inspections and to consider spending the donation from the Earmarked Reserves.

Cllr. Quinnell agreed to raise this via Facebook. Cllr. Rothery agreed to put the details of the Fundraising on the website and Cllr. Johnson agreed to look into the Rother Small Grants Scheme.

1. **Grants Procedure.**

The Council resolved to accept the new Grants Procedure and the Clerk is to produce an application form.

1. **Correspondence to the Clerk.**

The council had received reports of wood lotting in Kent which we need to be aware of and its possible implications in our area.

1. **Trees.**

The Council believes that the only trees that it owns are some small saplings which are now cared for by Mr. Turgoose as Tree Warden.

1. **Items for inclusion in the next meeting Agenda.**

Consideration of Wi-Fi for the Village Hall.

1. **Date of Next Meeting.**

17th March 2021 at 6.30pm.

The meeting was closed at 7.45pm.

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Signature of Chair.