



**Minutes of a Remote Meeting of the Finance and Premises Committee
held on Tuesday, 23 March 2021 via Zoom Video Conference**

Commenced: 6.30pm - Concluded: 8.35pm

Councillors Present. Kate Guest [Chairman], Victoria Bowden, John Brownrigg [Ex-Officio], John Housley [Ex-Officio] and Gary Lakin (part of the meeting).

Absent Councillors. Terence Bawden and David Ogle.

Officers: Andrew Towleron – Parish Clerk/RFO (minute taker) and Julie Allsop – Administrative Assistant.

Members of the Public. Four members of the public, including Councillor Carol Levery.

Chairman’s Opening Remarks. Prior to the formal commencement of the meeting, the Chairman, Councillor Kate Guest, outlined the procedure for this remote meeting to ensure that the meeting was effective and lawful. She reminded Councillors and members of the public that we are in the election purdah period when specific restrictions on communication and activities are in place. It was reported that the Clerk would be recording the meeting to assist with minute taking.

<p><u>2020/115</u> <u>(F&P)</u></p>	<p><u>115: Apologies and Reasons for Absence</u></p> <p>The Clerk explained that he had not received any.</p>
<p><u>2020/116</u> <u>(F&P)</u></p>	<p><u>116: Declarations of Interests</u></p> <p>The Clerk explained that he had not received any.</p>
<p><u>2020/117</u> <u>(F&P)</u></p>	<p><u>117: Exclusion of Press and Public</u></p> <p>The Clerk explained that he considered that there were two items on the agenda that required the exclusion of the press or public for part of their consideration due to the confidential nature of the business to be considered. These were items 2020/119 (F&P) Grant Applications and 2020/128 (F&P) Grounds Maintenance. It was also agreed to move the consideration of the items to the end of the agenda.</p> <p>Proposed by Councillor John Housley and Seconded by Councillor John Brownrigg, and RESOLVED: That the press and public be excluded from items 2020/119 (F&P) Grant Applications and 2020/128 (F&P) Grounds Maintenance.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(4 in favour)</p>

<p><u>2020/118</u> <u>(F&P)</u></p>	<p><u>118: Public Participation Session</u></p> <p>A member of the public raised various questions about the Council's financial systems. These included HMRC payments, VAT reclaims and some specific payments. They also stated that they had noticed an issue with the accuracy of the accounts to be discussed at agenda item 2020/121 (F&P). Both the Clerk and Chairman responded to the issues raised and said they would look into them.</p> <p>At this stage Councillor, Gary Lakin reported to the Clerk that he was experiencing intermittent IT issues. This resulted in him not being present for the rest of the meeting.</p>
<p><u>2020/119</u> <u>(F&P)</u></p>	<p><u>119: Grant Applications</u></p> <p>The Clerk confirmed that the Council had received two grant applications. These were then considered.</p> <p>Proposed by Councillor John Brownrigg and Seconded by Councillor John Housley, and RESOLVED: That it is recommended to Council: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That Chapeltown Hockey Club be granted an award of £9,594.00 towards the rejuvenation of the artificial surface of the MUGA at the Caribbean Sports Social Club at Ecclesfield. 2. That Burncross Action Team be granted an award of £140.00 towards bench fittings for a bench located at Bracken Hill. <p style="text-align: right;">(4 in favour)</p> <p>Members also discussed and underlined that for the avoidance of doubt the grant guidance is amended to make it explicit that funding is conditional on the group making the application holding adequate public liability insurance in the name of the group.</p> <p>Proposed by Councillor John Brownrigg and Seconded by Councillor Victoria Bowden, and RESOLVED: That the grant guidance and criteria is amended to make it explicit that funding is conditional on the group making the application holding adequate public liability insurance in the name of the group.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(4 in favour)</p>
<p><u>2020/120</u> <u>(F&P)</u></p>	<p><u>120: Finance and Premises Committee Minutes</u></p> <p>Councillor Kate Guest provided a brief overview of the approved minutes and matters arising from the meeting held on 23 February 2021.</p> <p>An update was provided on progress with IT improvements. It was explained that the computers it was agreed should be purchased for Council staff and various Councillors were to be delivered shortly and were awaiting the installation of the required software. They should be available soon.</p> <p>The switch from G-Mail to Microsoft was also being progressed. This was likely to take place in mid-May. In selecting a date, the Council staff had been mindful that it was likely that there would be new Councillors following the local elections in May. It was agreed to add progress with the IT improvements as an agenda item for the next meeting.</p>
<p><u>2020/121</u> <u>(F&P)</u></p>	<p><u>121: Update on the Accounts of the Council</u></p> <p>The Clerk provided a verbal and written report regarding the financial affairs of the Council. This included the cashbook, account bank reconciliation and management accounts for February.</p>

He explained that due to difficulties of working during the pandemic and other factors there had been some difficulties recently in maintaining the accounting systems accurately. This had been highlighted by the Council's internal auditor (see also Item 2020/125 F&P). He hoped that he had resolved these but there were indications that they may have not been. It was a top priority for the office to resolve this for the year-end accounts. Given the uncertainty about the accuracy of February accounts, he asked members to receive but not confirm the accounts.

Proposed by Councillor Victoria Bowden and Seconded by Councillor John Housley, and **RESOLVED:** That the cashbook, account/bank reconciliation and management accounts for February 2021 and as shown at appendices 121a, 122b and 123c be received.
(4 in favour)

**2020/122
(F&P)**

122: Payments for Approval

The Clerk gave a brief verbal and written report on payments between 22 February 2021 and 17 March 2021 requiring approval. A general discussion then took place on these.

Proposed by Councillor John Brownrigg and Seconded by Councillor Victoria Bowden, and **RESOLVED:** That the schedule of payments dated 22/2/21 to 17/3/21 and shown below be endorsed and the payments be recommended to Council for approval.

PAYMENTS LIST FOR APPROVAL from 22nd February 2021 to 17th March 2021

Date invoice received	Payee Name	Description	Ref	Amount
22.2.21	Firecrest	Works to be carried out: Council office	BACS	£215.00 ex VAT
26.2.21	FMS	Chapelton toilets maintenance: February 21	BACS	£515.00
26.2.21	FMS	Defibrillator maintenance: February 21	BACS	£247.20
1.3.21	YPO	Stationery	BACS	£36.30
2.3.21	YLCA	Nimble training course	BACS	£75.00
2.3.21	B&M Waste	Waste services	BACS	£192.50
9.3.21	Personnel Advice & Solution Ltd	Production of questionnaire & Staff interviews 4x – Hoey Review 21	Cheque	£480.00
9.3.21	Rotherham Contract Laundry (paid by Clerk)	Cleaning of School uniforms	CARD	£54.40
9.3.21	YPO	Plastic boxes x5 (Uniform Swap Shop)	BACS	£72.54
9.3.21	YPO	Stationery	BACS	£2.34
9.3.21	ITI Electrical	Fixed wire test	BACS	£912.00
12.3.21	SYPA	Pensions: February 21	DD	£879.67
12.3.21	Andrew Towleron Assoc.	Neighbourhood Plan – Consultancy support	BACS	£2,400.00
12.3.21	Amazon Prime	Annual subscription	DD	£00.00

	Renewal	(decided not to renew)		
17.3.21	Salaries	Salaries: March 21	BACS	£5,095.27
17.3.21	Yorkshire Internal Audit Services	First internal audit of accounts 2020/21	Cheque	£350.00
19.3.21	Pitney Bowes	Photocopying	BACS	£18.72
22.3.21	Supake Ltd	Purchase of 8 laptops, delivery, setup, and installation of laptops on site	BACS	£5,957.86
22.3.21	Supake Ltd	Site visit 17.3.21	BACS	£145.06
22.3.21	HMRC	Tax and NI March 21	Cheque	£1,093.31

PAYMENTS MADE BY DELEGATED POWER TO THE CLERK

Date invoice received	Payee Name	Description	Ref	Amount
2.3.21	Google	GSuite: February 21	DD	£73.60
2.3.21	British Gas	Gas: Council office	DD	£123.81
11.3.21	Sage	Annual renewal	BACS	£234.00

(4 in favour)

2020/123
(F&P)

123: Covid Recovery Fund Draft Guidelines and Criteria

The Chairman provided a commentary on the draft guidelines and criteria. This, it was explained, was essentially the same as draft guidelines previously considered and approved though the threshold for a minimum grant award had been removed and the maximum grant award threshold had been set at £5,000.

Proposed by Councillor John Housley and Seconded by Councillor Victoria Bowden, and **RESOLVED:** That the Covid Recovery Fund Draft Guidelines and Criteria as set out in appendix 123a to the agenda and shown below at appendix A be endorsed and recommended to Council for approval.

(4 in favour)

2020/124
(F&P)

124: Community Room Refurbishment Update

The Clerk led on this. He provided an update on progress with the preparation of the process, including tender documentation, and sought approval to formally commence the tender process as soon as possible. He explained that the tender offer would be advertised on the Government's 'contract finder' website, as well as approaching appropriate local businesses, giving detail and key information of the proposal works and inviting interested contractors to tender.

Proposed by Councillor John Housley and Seconded by Councillor John Brownrigg, and **RESOLVED:** That it is agreed that the formal tender process for the Community Room Refurbishment should commence.

(4 in favour)

2020/125
(F&P)

125: Interim Audit of Accounts for the Year End 31 March 2021

It was reported that the Council had received the report from the Internal Auditor, which had been circulated to members of the Committee. Overall, this was positive though had highlighted some outstanding matters raised in previous reports as well as new matters to bring to the attention of members. The main issues were some recent difficulties in maintaining the accounting systems accurately (see also item 120/121 (F&P)); the minuting of the amount of money that the Council raises through the precept; minuting of some

	<p>governance related policies approved by Finance and Premises Committee by Full Council and management of the Grenoside Exhibition Fund. This report was then considered. The Clerk was asked to prepare an action plan detailing the main recommendations and resulting actions for consideration at the next Finance and Premises Committee meeting.</p> <p>Proposed by Councillor John Housley and Seconded by Councillor John Brownrigg, and RESOLVED: That</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Interim Audit of Accounts for the Year End 31 March 2021 be endorsed and recommended to Council for their consideration and approval. 2. The Clerk be asked to prepare an Action Plan detailing the main recommendations and resulting actions of the Interim Audit of Accounts for the Year End 31 March 2021 and this be considered at the next meeting of the Finance and Premises Committee. <p style="text-align: right;">(4 in favour)</p>
<p><u>2020/126</u> <u>(F&P)</u></p>	<p><u>126: Fire Risk Assessment</u></p> <p>Julie Allsop, the Council's Administrative Assistant, provided a verbal and written report on the key outcomes from the independent Fire Risk Assessment that had been recently undertaken of the Council's offices. The outcomes of this she explained had been overall positive about the actions taken by the Council but did make some recommendations (set out in Action Plan - attachment 126a to the main agenda) to either minimise the risk of a fire or control it. She then set out the main recommendations. She explained that Council staff were now taking these recommendations forward. Most of the recommendations were straight forward to deal with, she explained, though some, especially those with budget implications, may require Council approval first. Julie was thanked for her hard work on this.</p>
<p><u>2020/127</u> <u>(F&P)</u></p>	<p><u>127: Improvements to the Council offices</u></p> <p>Julie Allsop explained that she had developed a 'long list' of the various suggested improvements to the Council offices. These include those suggested following the Fire Risk and Health and Safety inspections and required under DDA requirements. The aim was to bring this long list to a future meeting of the Finance and Premises Committee with a shortlist of fully costed improvements. It was noted that a budget of £10,000 had been earmarked in next year's budget for these improvements. The adequacy of this budget was then discussed.</p>
<p><u>2020/128</u> <u>(F&P)</u></p>	<p><u>128: Grounds Maintenance</u></p> <p>A verbal commentary was provided by the Clerk on the arrangements for maintenance of the grounds around the Council offices, including the potential need to formally appoint a contractor to undertake these works. This was then discussed. It was agreed to have a more detailed discussion at the next meeting of the Finance and Premises Committee.</p>
<p><u>2020/129</u> <u>(F&P)</u></p>	<p><u>129: Chapelton Toilets</u></p> <p>It was explained that, following an incident, it had been necessary to consider the adequacy of the arrangements in an emergency or serious business disruption. In response, clear signs had been placed in the toilets giving details of who to contact in an emergency.</p> <p>It was noted that the contract for the maintenance of the toilets and other facilities in the Parish was due for renewal in October. After discussions, it was agreed that the Finance and Premises Committee should commence at its next meeting reviewing the existing contract to ensure that the revised one reflects the Council's requirements.</p>

<p><u>2020/130</u> <u>(F&P)</u></p>	<p><u>130: Other Correspondence</u></p> <p>Julie Allsop explained that the Council had recently received three grant monitoring forms. These were from the Chapeltown Silver Prize Band, Lound Junior School, and South Yorkshire County Scout Group. She then briefly outlined their contents.</p>
<p><u>2020/131</u> <u>(F&P)</u></p>	<p><u>131: Challenge to the Council accounts</u></p> <p>A verbal progress report was provided by the Chairman. It was agreed that a remote meeting of the Sub-Committee leading on this should take place at 11.00 on Saturday 27 March 2021 and the person who had made the challenge should be invited along to give evidence. The Clerk reported that the concerned person had indicated that they were available at this time and would welcome the opportunity to contribute.</p>
<p><u>2020/132</u> <u>(F&P)</u></p>	<p><u>132: Date and Time of Future Meetings</u></p> <p>It was confirmed that the date of the next meeting would be on Thursday 22 April 2021 at 6.30 pm.</p>

APPENDIX A ECCLESFIELD PARISH COVID SUPPORT AND RECOVERY FUND 2021/2022

Grant Guidelines and Criteria

The Covid 19 pandemic has had a serious effect on the wellbeing of Ecclesfield Parish including many local groups and organisations. At the same time, COVID 19 has also demonstrated the value and contribution that many local organisations and bodies make to the delivery of important local services and the community of the Parish of Ecclesfield.

In response, the Council has established a Covid Support and Recovery Fund for the financial year 2021 to 2022 to support local groups and organisations most adversely affected by COVID-19. It aims:

‘to support groups and organisations in the Parish to continue to deliver activity, supporting existing users and services, responding to the immediate crisis, or undertaking recovery or resilience activity in response to COVID-19 in Ecclesfield Parish’.

The Fund has a value of at least £25,000 and will provide grants of up to £5,000 for the financial year 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

Are you eligible to apply?

Groups or organisations should be locally based, and local people should be involved in their management. Groups should be and operate within the Ecclesfield Parish Council area. Community groups who apply must have a bank account in the name of the group; payments cannot be made to individuals.

Completing your form

Please write clearly and check the phone numbers you give. Make sure that you answer all of the questions fully. If you need help with any part of the form, please contact the number below. Please

put as much information as you possibly can and use additional sheets of paper if necessary.

The Fund closes on 31 March 2022. This means that the last date for completing and submitting an application is on 14 March 2022.

In Your Application Form you need to show your activity is:

- Set up by local people within the Parish.
- Meets the aim of the fund.
- Has a co-operative, partnership or self-help approach.

Alongside your application you must submit:

- An up to date Public Liability Certificate held in the name of the .
- End of year accounts.
- Most recent bank statements.

What We Fund:

Any activity by a group (both capital and revenue) in support of the aim of the Fund, and which enables them to '*Continue to deliver activity, supporting existing users and services, responding to the immediate crisis, or undertaking recovery or resilience activity in response to COVID-19 in Ecclesfield Parish*'. This includes both helping bodies and organisations to:

- Continue to deliver activity in response to COVID-19 pandemic.
- Change, enhance and adapt to become more resilient to respond to new and future challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please note we can only fund an organisation or body for a maximum of £5,000 in one or more grants between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022 and they can only hold one grant at a time from the Fund.

We don't fund?

- Individuals – childcare, training, travel expenses, salaries or wages.
- Salary costs – for paid workers.
- Party political or religious activities – though we may fund community activities run by churches and faith organisations.
- Groups or activities outside the Parish area.
- Services which other bodies, such as Sheffield City Council, has a statutory responsibility to provide such as road maintenance, schools – though we may be able to fund activities in support of these.
- Things that have already happened or have been paid for.

What about the Council's main grant Programme?

- Groups and bodies may also apply to the Council's main grant programme for different activities - you cannot make duplicate or similar applications to this and the Council's main grant programme – if you are in doubt about which programme you should apply to, please get in touch.

- Please note, if we consider you could receive the funds you are applying for more appropriately from the Council’s main grant programme, or another organisation, then we may ask you to apply to them instead.

Are there any conditions that apply?

- If you decide to change how you will spend the money, then you must let us know.
- You must keep receipts – we may need to see copies.
- You must complete the activities we have funded normally within six months.
- You will be sent or given a monitoring form that you must complete and return to us by the date stated on the form.
- If you don’t return the monitoring form you may not get any funding in the future.
- We do expect that participants on workshops, trips etc. would contribute to the cost, even if it’s a small amount.
- It is a requirement of the Parish Council that photographic evidence is provided of the event/purchase for which the grant is given.

Who decides about our application?

We anticipate that we will get a lot of applications for really worthwhile projects. This may mean we have to make some tough decisions around which projects we can fund, and the amount they receive.

The Finance and Premises Committee of the Parish Council will consider any applications and make recommendations to Full Council on whether it should be supported and the amount to be awarded. Applicants may also be invited to speak and answer questions about the application at a Finance and Premises Committee. Their recommendation is then approved or rejected by Full Council at the subsequent Council meeting.

Approved XXXXX

To be reviewed September 2021