

ASHFORD PARISH COUNCIL.

DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 28TH JUNE 2021 at 7.30pm.

The meeting was conducted via Zoom.

Meeting was Chaired by Councillor M Moss

Clerk – Katherine Cole.

Councillors Present:

Agenda:

Mrs. J. Bosley.

1a. Presentation of Accounts for the financial year 2020/21 for approval.

Mr. D. Hall.

1b. To confirm that the requirements of the

Mr. P. Hughes.

AGAR document have been met and maintained.

Mr. V. Lawson.

Mr. M. Moss.

Mrs. S, Sampson.

2 Members of the public were in attendance.

Item:

Action:

The Chairman opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and confirming that Councillor Hughes was controlling the zoom link. The meeting was recorded to provide an accurate record of any discussion. The recording will be deleted when the relative minutes have been approved. The Chairman provided a brief explanation as to why the meeting was held in this way and confirming procedure. It was made clear that the meeting was an INFORMAL meeting meaning that discussion on topics can take place, but no resolutions can be passed. (NO formal decisions can be made). The Chairman confirmed that the meeting was being conducted as there is a legal requirement for the Annual Governance and Accounting Returns to be approved and on display to the public by the end of June. There is also an obligation for the Parish Council to be transparent to the public. Covid regulations prevent public meetings being held indoors with more than 6 people and Govt regulations prevent formal meetings being held remotely. To navigate these various restrictions and in order to complete this essential piece of business this unusual procedure has been adopted. The plan is to hold this informal public meeting for reasons of transparency. An extraordinary council meeting, held in person, with the minimum of attendees, in order to formally sign the required documents will be held on Tuesday, 29th June. Both these meetings will be limited to one essential agenda item only, which is to discuss and then approve the Annual Return documents. Any discussion points raised will be considered by the quorum of

council members meeting on the 29th June, before signing off the documents.

It was noted that this procedure is not normal, but an appropriate means of completing essential business whilst staying within our understanding of the guidelines. It is understood other councils are following similar practices. (Advice from DALC has been taken into account).

Given the nature of this meeting and the need to be transparent, questions from the public will be allowed which relate to the business in hand.

Councillors have seen the returns paperwork for scrutiny. The essential parts of the paperwork will be displayed on the website before July 1st, as required by law.

The Chairman moved on to the single agenda item.

- 1a. Presentation of Accounts for the financial year 2020/21.**
Councillors had all received copies of financial accounts and records prior to the meeting for their perusal and information. The Clerk worked through the Accounting statement providing information on both income and expenditure. Explanations of variance were confirmed.
- 1b. To clarify the requirements of the AGAR document have been met and maintained.**
- A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.
 - B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.
 - C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.
 - D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.
 - E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.
 - F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.
 - G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI

requirements were properly applied.

H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.

I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.

J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.

K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2019/20, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2019/20 AGAR tick “not covered”).

L. If the authority has an annual turnover not exceeding £25,000, it publishes information on a website/ webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the Transparency code for smaller authorities.

M. The authority, during the previous year (2019-20) correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (evidenced by the notice published on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).

N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2019/20 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).

The specific requirements of the AGAR were discussed. The Chairman worked through the separate items, A-N above, before Councillors approved each point.

Arrangements were made for the necessary information to be displayed on the Parish Council website to comply with the requirements of the audit.

There were no comments from Councillors of the members of the parish present.

This concluded the business on the Agenda.

The Chairman thanked everyone for joining the meeting, which was declared closed at 19.50 hours.

Signed:

Dated:

