**Elsenham Parish Council**

Finance Committee

held on 27 June 2022

at 7.30pm in Old Franks, Elsenham

**Present:**

Mr. P Johnson (Chairman PJ), Dr. G Mott (GM), Mr. B Ogilvie (BO)

and Mrs. L Johnson (Parish Clerk LJ)

**Minutes**

Members of the public, 1

# **Apologies for absence.** None.

# **Declarations of Interest.** None.

# **Signing of the minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2022 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

# **Brought Forward from the last meeting**

## EMR for the Defibrillator

This ear marked reserve account has been set up with £300, donated by the Elsenham Golf Club.

## Bank Signatures

Forms have been sent to the Co-op Bank asking for Mr. Peter Clear to be removed as an authorized signature and BO to be added. LJ to contact the bank to see if this has been actioned.

## EMR entered twice.

This has now been corrected.

## Risk Assessment

PJ had given each risk a score using the 5x5 Risk Assessment Matrix.

GM and BO to check that they agree with the scores, within an acceptable margin.

LJ to research fire alarms for the office.

# **Budgets for 2022-2023**

All the budgets were in order.

It may cost EPC £3,850 to reinstall the streetlight by the doctor’s surgery, which had been knocked down by a motorist. The alternatives are to either go through EPC’s insurance or not replace it.

There is no written agreement with Garson, who maintain the playing field. The budget is for £4,800 and is spent when the contractor deems necessary depending on the weather and the condition of the football pitches.

The Playing Field Committee are arranging a meeting with Paul Jarvis, Chair of the Football Club, to ascertain if the maintenance of the pitches could be put on a more formal footing.

# **Review of the Internal Auditor’s report**

* 1. *The Precept was agreed on 4th January 2021 at item 21462 at £82500.00. There was no item identifying the approval of the budget and so it would appear that the Council does not have an adequate budgeting process. This must be rectified as soon as practicable.*

**EPC does have an adequate budgeting process, but it has not been minuted. In future the budgets must be agreed and minuted at Full Council as well as the Precept.**

**The 2022/23 budgets to be circulated to all councillors and agreed and minuted at the next Parish Council meeting.**

* 1. *A financial/reputational risk assessment was carried out during the year but did not appear as a minuted item. The Council should formally note and record the Risk Assessment in the minutes.*

**It was not clear what this item was relating to. LJ to confirm with the auditor.**

* 1. *The Standing Orders and Financial Regulations on the website were adopted on 6th June 2016. There are copies of both items dated 19th July 2021 but there is no minute recording the adoption by the Council. The Council must minute the adoption of both these items.*

**EPC always agree and minute adoptions of any new/amended polices. It was thought this was referring to policy on the website. All polices on the Website must be kept up to date.**

* 1. *There is no evidence that the bank statements/ reconciliations and the accounts/monthly balance/comparison reports are presented to the Council meetings and minuted. The Council needs to investigate introducing the circulation of these documents and the agreement and minuting of the decisions.*

**As from July 2022 meeting, LJ will circulate the ‘Reconciliations to Bank Account’ and minute it.**

* 1. *On reading the minutes for the year under review, I can find no evidence that the fees were reviewed. This needs to be addressed by the Council.*

**EPC will need to address the fees for the allotments, burials and Football Club yearly.**

* 1. *From a reading of the minutes, it was noted that financial decisions are made under the item of the Clerk’s Report. It is advised that these matters should be separate agenda items and the Clerk’s Report should be kept purely for information only.*

**Any monetary items will now be placed under ‘Finance’ on the agenda and the minutes.**

* 1. *The general reserves are £61,884.44, which is slightly high for a Council precepting £82,500.00. The Council should investigate a Reserves Policy.*

**EPC have reduced the general reserves by Ear Marking dedicated reserves. EPC does have a Reserve Policy, but it is not on the website.**

* 1. *The breakdown of the income was not identified in the accounts****.***

**This was not clear what this related to. The account forms are all generated by Rialtas. The ‘Summary Receipts and Payments’ report only shows a total of the income, but the running costs are broken-down. However, on the detailed reports the income is broken-down. LJ to confirm with the auditor and contact Rialtas if necessary.**

* 1. *A financial/reputational risk assessment was carried out during the year but did not appear as a minuted item. The Council should formally record the Risk Assessment in the minutes Risk assessment should include reference to the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.*

**This was not clear what this was referring to. LJ to contact the auditor. PJ to confirm that the Risk Assessment includes the reference to the General Data Protection.**

* 1. *From a review of the minutes, there does not appear to be a report noted from the Internal Audit From a review of the minutes, there does not appear to be a report noted from the external audit. Both Audits should be noted and minuted by the Council and a plan of action to deal with issues raised.*

**The audits are circulated to all councillors, but in future must be minuted.**

# **Any other Business**

All the policies are required to be reviewed annually. It was agreed to put one or two on the agenda each month.

# **Open to the public**

The fire brigade will install free fire alarms.

The playing field has always been kept to a very good standard. A maintenance program with Garson is a good idea.

The member of the public thought that working groups were only formed for a short while to set up a project, but then they must become committees.

GM said that they didn’t have to become committees, but as EPC managed 88 allotment plots now, it was more practical for them to become a committee.

The meeting finished at 8.50pm