

WESTMESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Draft minutes of the council meeting held on Thursday 8th October 2020 at 7.30 pm via Zoom

Present: Councillors Rob Mills (Chairman), Cathy Mills (Vice-Chairman), Mark Clark, Clare Farrands, Kendall Golding, Tessa Haughton and Vincent Tickner
Andy Beams, Locum Clerk
No members of the public

1 Apologies for absence: None

2 Declarations of interest: None

3 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 27th August 2020: The minutes had been unable to be approved previously, due to a number of concerns over the accuracy of the content. The Chairman circulated in advance of the meeting a note outlining the concerns, and it was agreed this be attached as an addendum to the minutes. It was noted that at the date of the production of the agenda for today's meeting, the minutes of the September meeting had not been produced.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 27th August 2020, with the Chairman's addendum, were agreed as a record of the meeting.

RESOLVED: In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Section 1, in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press were excluded from the remainder of the meeting.

4 Current issues: The Chairman summarised the concerns raised over the performance and conduct of the former Clerk and reminded Members that a written appeal had been received regarding his dismissal. It was noted that the former Clerk had reported three Members to the Monitoring Officer at Lewes District Council.

5 Financial matters:

- (a) **RESOLVED:** Payment of the former Clerk's salary (including holiday pay and working from home allowance) to the end of his notice period of 25th September 2020 in the amount of £2,035.50 was approved.
- (b) **RESOLVED:** Payment to the Locum Clerk at £25 per hour was approved. The Locum Clerk's work would be limited to that necessary to keep costs under control, and he confirmed his availability to fulfil the role until the end of December 2020.
- (c) **RESOLVED:** Payment to HR Services in the amount of £426 for employment consultancy services was approved.
- (d) **RESOLVED:** Payment for Zoom services required for remote council meetings was approved.
- (e) **RESOLVED:** Cllr Tessa Haughton was approved as an additional signatory to the council's Nat West bank account.

6 Staff matters: Members discussed the situation regarding the former Clerk's written appeal against his dismissal and agreed the need to appoint members to a panel to consider the appeal. Due to their direct involvement in matters relating to the former Clerk, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman felt it appropriate to exclude themselves from being part of the panel. Cllr Clark recommended continuing to seek advice and support from HR Services if required during the appeal process.

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- (a) **RESOLVED:** Cllrs Clark, Golding and Haughton were authorised to act as the panel, taking additional advice from HR Services as required.
- (b) **RESOLVED:** The panel intended to resolve the appeal within two weeks, with the outcome to be reported to council
- (c) **RESOLVED:** In the event the appeal was unsuccessful, the council would advertise for a new Clerk through SSALC. The job description and person specification would be reviewed to ensure a suitable candidate is sought.

7 Date of next meeting: The next council meeting will be held on Tuesday 10th November 2020 at 7.30pm via Zoom. The Locum Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, will produce and circulate the agenda prior to the meeting

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.24pm.

DRAFT

Chairman's signature
Date

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