

Committee, Group or Sub Group	
FINANCE & STRATEGY GROUP	
Meeting Date & Venue	
2.30pm Wednesday 1 st December 2021, Virtual ZOOM Meeting	
Report Author	
Deborah Jenkins – Deputy Clerk & Finance Officer	
Report	
<p>Present: Parish Councillors Paddy Riordan (PR), Colin Bowden (CB), Joan Buller (JB), Eric Hotson (EH), John Perry (JP), Richard Smith (RS). Deputy Clerk & Finance Officer Deborah Jenkins (DJ), Clerk Alison Smith (AS).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Apologies: Councillor Sam Lain-Rose. Dispensations: None. Notes of last meeting (20/10/2021): it was NOTED that they had previously been issued to Full Council and published on the PC website. Draft Budget 2022-2023 – Review of updated draft budget: Councillors discussed the updated draft budget as presented by the Deputy Clerk & Finance Officer. Discussions ensued with regard to a proposed Parish Precept of £215,000, an increase of 10.72% from the previous year on a Band D property. It was noted that in real terms this amounted to £7.91 per Band D property per year. The Parish Council has many projects it wishes to facilitate in the coming year or two, primarily at Jubilee Field and Surrenden Field, which accounts for the majority of the increase. RS recommended that the Parish Council be open and transparent when presenting the increase to residents. This was agreed. EH said that he had no objections to the proposed increase but would suggest that a review of spending should take place in the coming year. It was agreed to leave the updated budget in its current form to be finalised at a meeting in January 2022 before taking to Full Council for approval. <p><u>ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Jubilee Playing Field – PR/AS update on the appointment of new trustees and the relationship between JFMC and the Parish Council: AS reported that she intended to start work on untangling the relationship between Jubilee Field Management Committee and the Parish Council and the issue of new trustees, imminently. Staplehurst Youth Club – JP update following discussions with the trustees regarding their intentions for the Youth Club: JP reported that the Youth Club AGM would take place on 16th December 2021 but unfortunately, he would be unable to attend. PR said that he would attend the meeting on behalf of the Parish Council. JP had received a copy of the current Youth Club accounts which he would send to all F&SG members. Further discussion took place over the future of Youth provision in the village, which would be progressed following the outcome of the Youth Club AGM. <p><u>OTHER BUSINESS</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> CIL – Schedule of funds received/available: - DJ informed Councillors that she had applied to MBC for s106 funding from application 14/502010 Hen & Duckhurst, for the extension to the footpath at Surrenden Field, as agreed by Full Council. No further CIL or S106 funds had been received since the previous meeting. The schedule was NOTED. Contain Outbreak Management Fund – proposed claim for expenditure items relating to Covid-19 from 1st November 2020 to 31st March 2022 for discussion: – DJ and AS has put together a list of expenditure items for consideration. The schedule was NOTED and AGREED by Councillors who were asked to contact the office if they thought of further items to be added. DJ reminded Councillors that the claim had to be submitted to KCC by midday 24th January 2022. 	

9. Quotations for Discussion and Recommendation to Full Council –

- a) Surrenden Field Mowing - Quotes received from Forestry First £2,640 and KCC Landscape Services £1,517.30
- b) Surrenden Field Hedge Cutting – Forestry First £1,460.00 (price held since 2017)
- c) Youth Club Hedge Cutting – Forestry First £100.00
- d) Youth Club Grass Mowing – Forestry First £400.00
- e) A229/Chestnut Avenue Grass Mowing – Forestry First £600.00
- f) A229/Chestnut Avenue Hedge Cutting – Brad Hawkins £255.00

It was AGREED to recommend to Full Council that Landscape Services be appointed to carry out the mowing at Surrenden Field a cost of £1,517.30 p.a.; that Forestry First be appointed to cut Surrenden Field hedge £1,460.00 p.a., the Youth Club hedge £100 p.a., Youth Club grass mowing £400.00 p.a. and A229/Chestnut Avenue grass mowing £600.00 p.a.; and Brad Hawkins be appointed to cut the hedge at A229/Chestnut Avenue at £255.00 p.a.

- 10. Next Quarter Contract Reviews & Payments to be made -** A schedule of forthcoming contracts and subscriptions for renewal had been circulated to all Councillors. **It was AGREED to recommend to Full Council** the renewal of the bi-annual PAT testing with South East PAT Testing £50 up to 50 items and £1 per item thereafter and annual contracts with Paxman Services (UK) Ltd for Bell Lane Toilet sundries £600 variable est.; Playsafety Ltd inspection of play equipment at Jubilee and Surrenden Fields £165.00; annual subscriptions with Action with Communities in Rural Kent £120.00, Weald of Kent Protection Society £25.00, National Allotment Society £55.00, Kent County Playing Fields Association £20.00 and Kent Pond and Tree Warden £50.00 and annual donations to RBL Poppy Appeal £100.00; Staplehurst WI re Village Clean-up £50.00; Staplehurst Community Events Group Stay Safe event £100.00; Medway Valley Countryside Partnership £50.00; Heart of Kent Hospice £250.00; Involve Kent £75.00; Kenward Trust £100.00; Staplehurst Parish magazine £75.00; CAB Maidstone £200.00; Samaritans Maidstone & Weald £100.00; Staplehurst Community Centre for Debt Advice £200.00 and Kent Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance £250.00.

- 11. Date of Next Meeting –** 5th or 12th January 2022, 2.30pm by virtual ZOOM. (TBC)

