

## HARTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council: Mrs H Boden  
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22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee on **WEDNESDAY 28<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2024** at **Hartley Library, Ash Road**, commencing at **10.00a.m.**

Yours sincerely

*Helen Boden*

Helen Boden  
**Proper Officer**

**Please note that the proceedings of this meeting may be recorded in line with regulations set out in the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014.**

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### AGENDA

#### 1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

To receive Members' declarations of interest not already included on their Register of Interest.

#### 3. Minutes of the previous meeting (WHITE)

To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2023 as a correct record. (Annexed).

**Pursuant to Standing Order 3 (e) the Chairman will invite members of the public to express an interest should they wish to make representations, answer questions or give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda.**

#### 4. Review of Income and Expenditure (BLUE)

To review the Council's income and expenditure from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024. (Annexed).

Background document

*Detailed income and expenditure by budget heading as at 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024.*

## **5. Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Audit (PINK)**

Assertion 2 of the Annual Governance Statement contained in Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, requires Members of Hartley Parish Council to confirm that they have; “*maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.*”

This Assertion covers the Council’s responsibility to ensure that its affairs are managed in accordance with proper standards of financial conduct and that arrangements exist to prevent and detect fraud and corruption. The Council is required to confirm that it has tested these arrangements, at least once in the year to make sure they are working in an adequate and effective way.

When completing Assertion 2, 6 and 7 in the Annual Governance Statement, local councils should consider the outcome of any review of internal audit. Guidance on how the review could be conducted is set out in the Governance & Accountability for Local Council’s – A Practitioners’ Guide (England) March 2023, pages 24 to 33 inclusive.

The Committee is requested to review of the effectiveness of the system of internal audit for 2023/24. (Annexed).

## **6. Risk Management Review (GREEN)**

To review the Risk Management Policy Statement and Risk Management Strategy approved by the Council on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023. (Annexed).

### Background document

*Risk Management Policy Statement approved by the Council on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023. (Annexed)*

*Risk Management Strategy approved by the Council on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023. (Annexed).*

## **7. Financial Risk Assessment (PINK)**

To review the Financial Risk Assessment approved by the Council on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023. (Annexed).

### Background document

*Financial Risk Assessment approved by the Council on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023. (Annexed).*

## **8. Risk Register (BLUE)**

To review the Risk Register approved by the Council on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023. (Annexed).

### Background document

*Risk Register approved by the Council on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023. (Annexed).*

## **9. Reserves (CREAM)**

(a) To review the Reserves Policy approved by the Council on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023. (Annexed).

(b) To review the current reserves held by the Council. (Annexed).

### Background document

*Reserves Policy approved by the Council on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023. (Annexed).*

*List of Reserves held by the Council. (Annexed).*

## **10. Statement of Internal Control (YELLOW)**

To review the Statement of Internal Control approved by the Council on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

Background document

*Statement of Internal Control for y/e 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. (Annexed).*

## **11. Assets Register (GREEN)**

To review the Council's Assets Register showing property and land owned by the Council, other assets and land leased by the Council. (Annexed).

Background document

*Assets Register. (Annexed).*

## **12. Insurance (PINK)**

(a) The internal auditor's interim half year audit report for 2023/24, highlighted the fact that at the date of the interim audit, total account balances totalled over £350,000 and it was suggested that the council should consider increasing the Fraud and Dishonesty cover level to cover the highest balance held during the year.

The Committee is requested to consider an email dated 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2024, received from the Parish Council's insurers. (Annexed).

(b) To review the Council's insurance schedule to ensure the Council's assets are adequately covered. (Annexed).

## **13. Subscriptions and Licences (BLUE)**

To review the Council's subscriptions and licences falling due to be paid annually.

Background document

*List of subscriptions and licences for 2023/24 as approved by the Council on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023. (Annexed).*

## **14. Review of investments and Banking Arrangements (CREAM)**

To review the Council's investments and banking arrangements. (Annexed).

The internal auditor's interim half year audit report for 2023/24, highlighted the fact that at the date of the interim audit, the combined balance held with Barclays, exceeds the protection limit offered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) and the council may wish to consider making arrangements to maximise the protection available to it.

At the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023, the Clerk suggested that she make enquiries regarding opening an additional bank account, to be brought back to the Committee for consideration.

The Committee is requested to consider an update.

Background document

*Investments and banking arrangements. (Annexed).*

## 15. Highways

(a) At the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2023, the Committee considered an email received from a resident regarding the poor state of the unmade road in Merton Avenue.

It was agreed that Cllr Abraham would contact Sevenoaks District Council to ask whether they are able to confirm ownership of the land and that the Clerk be requested to contact West Kent Housing Association to ask whether they are able to assist with any additional information.

The Committee is requested to consider any response received.

(b) At the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023, the Committee considered the results of the ATC Traffic Survey carried out by Kent Highway Services (KHS) in September 2023.

The Clerk was requested to contact KHS to enquire as to whether, following the survey, any measures to enable residents entering/existing the adjacent cul-de-sacs, to do so safely, will be considered/implemented.

The Committee is requested to consider any response received.

## 16. Website (GREEN)

(a) To consider an email dated 6<sup>th</sup> February 2024, received from the Parish Council's website provider. (Annexed).

(b) To receive an update on the transition of councillors emails to gov.uk emails.

## 17. Youth

(a) At the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023, it was noted that Kent County Council had given notice that it will be ending all commissioned youth services, which includes West Kent Housing Association (WKHA) from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

The Committee is requested to note that the Clerk and several members of the Council recently met with WKHA to discuss how youth services may be retained in Hartley and to consider a proposal put forward by WKHA (if available).

(b) To consider the provision of another 12 weeks of football sessions at Woodland Avenue, by Millwall Football Club.

## 18. Date of Next Meeting

### List of circulated documents

1. Minutes of the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2023. **(WHITE)**.
2. Detailed income and expenditure by budget heading as at 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024. **(BLUE)**.
3. Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Audit. **(PINK)**.
4. Risk Management Policy Statement approved by the Council on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023. **(GREEN)**.
5. Risk Management Strategy approved by the Council on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023. **(GREEN)**.
6. Financial Risk Assessment approved by the Council on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023. **(PINK)**.
7. Risk Register approved by the Council on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023. **(BLUE)**.
8. Reserves Policy approved by the Council on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023. **(CREAM)**.

9. List of Reserves. **(CREAM)**
10. Statement of Internal Control for y/e 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. **(YELLOW)**.
11. Assets Register. **(GREEN)**.
12. Email dated 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2024, received from the Parish Council's insurers. **(PINK)**.
13. Insurance Schedule as at 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2024. **(PINK)**.
14. List of subscriptions and licences for 2023/24 as approved by the Council on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023. **(BLUE)**.
15. Investments and banking arrangements. **(CREAM)**.
16. Email dated 6<sup>th</sup> February 2024, received from the Parish Council's website provider. **(GREEN)**.