MINUTES OF A LYMPSTONE PARISH COUNCIL JOINT FINANCE AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND ASSETS AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 7.00PM ON THURSDAY 23RD JANUARY 2025.

PRESENT:	
Councillors	D Atkins (DGA) (Lead of A&A), S Francis (SF), R Gale-Hasleham (RGH), K Hill (KH) (Lead of F&A), and L Staddon (LS) (LPC Chair)
Clerk	L. Tyrrell
County Councillors	None present
District Councillors	None present
Public	None present

Public session:
None present

F&A/A&A 25/1 Apologies

JP due to other commitments.
SC due to ill health.

RESOLVED that the apologies were accepted.
LS proposed. SF seconded. Unan.

F&A/A&A 25/2 To receive any Declarations of Interest

None

F&A 25/3 LPC banking Arrangements

KH went through his proposed document for banking arrangements (See Appendix 1). The Clerk felt she should be able to submit payments to online banking but not have the authority to approve them. This was agreed.
It was also agreed that for regular monthly payments a works order would be raised at the start of the year with an annual budget. There would also be a separate emergency works order produced with a list of emergency contractors.
The Clerk would send the signatories a list of payments to be approved and attach the relevant invoices to be authorised and paid online.
The Unity bank account was successfully started online. Clerk to print off the Application submission form and bring to the next meeting for signatories to sign.

RESOLVED that a Unity Bank current account was opened with the Clerk as a 'view and submit payments' online and KH, DGA, JP and SF to be authorised signatories to 'view and authorise payments' online.
KH proposed. LS seconded. Unan.

F&A/A&A 25/4 Front Meadow

KH raised concerns of issues raised during the winter months at Front Meadow. DGA explained that the car park was muddy and churned up. LS felt the PC should agree to only open the car park during dry periods of the year. She also highlighted the weeds growing up through the path surfaces. The Clerk asked that the handover from RBL to LPC was due 1st Feb and these issues would bot be rectified. KH explained

that LPC would only take over the responsibility some time in Feb once the PC were content that the issues had been resolved. The Clerk asked for a list of the issues to be rectified. DGA explained he would produce a list of work to be rectified before the PC took over responsibility.

A&A 25/5 Assets update – Cllr Atkins to report on LPC assets.
DGA reported that he was still waiting for the NT to get back to him. He explained that the boundary hedge between the private house and LFC container would be laid in due course on Cliff Field. The heaped soil along the Cliff edge would be pulled back as soon as possible.

F&A/A&A 25/6 Items for the next Agenda
None currently.

Meeting closed: **8.45pm**

Chairman/Lead Cllr: Date:

Appendix 1:

This is a proposed policy for Lympstone Parsh Council to deal with the move to electronic payments,

Background

Any payment made by the Council must have multiple authorisations to protect the RFO in the event of a problem or an error.

Currently the Council use Bank Cheques to pay employees, suppliers and contractors. As Banks are becoming increasingly reluctant to accept payment by cheque, the Council needs to move to payment be electronic transfer.

The following authorisation steps that all payments must follow are:

1 Authorisation in Council and recorded in minutes;
2 Quote / Price sort and confirmed by RFO or Council;
3 Goods orders / works initiated/ service requested;
4 Goods received / works satisfactorily completed /Service provided;
5 Invoice received and verified;
6 If required, Preauthorisation confirmed;
7 Payment made; and
8 Final authorisation at next Council meeting.

The current authorisation steps can still be followed with a slight adjustment to cope with electronic payments must follow are

1 Authorisation in Council will be that same as we currently do:

Ongoing costs can also be approved and confirmed in the annual budget and recorded in the minutes; Statutory Costs, Taxes and Utility costs can be approved annually without the need for a set budget but against a set aside estimate; Exceptional items raise, discussed and agreed in Council and recorded in the minutes; The must be an allocation made for / budgeted for all potential expenses to ensure there are / will be sufficient funds to pay the invoice; and There should also be an emergency budget that can be spent immediately at the RFO / Chair of Council's discretion and later authorised and recorded in the minutes of Council

2 Quotes/Prices - The RFO is tasked with obtaining quotes or prices
3 Goods orders / works initiated/ service requested

The RFO is authorised to proceed if below "The Preapproval Threshold"; otherwise The quotes or prices are discussed, acceptance agreed and recorded in the minutes of the Council.

4 Goods received / works satisfactorily completed /Service provided

The RFO is tasked with confirming of receipt of goods, satisfactory completion of works and that services have been provided; We do not prepay for goods or services – on-line orders must be made using a Credit Card for maximum protect against non-delivery or fraud.

5 Invoice received and verified

The RFO is tasked with checking the invoice is valid and the monies are owed and as agreed; All other requests for payment will also be verified and documentary evidence produced for engrossment;. or

Regular payments will be amortised from a budget set aside.

6 If required, Preauthorisation confirmed

If the amount of the invoice is above The Preapproval Threshold the RFO must send an email to two Authorised Signatories and await the authorisation: - The initial email

should contain the supplier's name, reference, invoice date, brief description of goods or works and the amount requested. (Note that this should be a simple form without the any additional disclaimer info etc.) and a copy of the invoice scanned and sent as an attachment
The Authorised Signatories should reply using an agreed set of words and include the supplier's name, reference, invoice date, brief description of goods or works and the amount requested as this can then be filed for future reference.
If a quick response is required, this could also be followed up by a text to the Signatories to check their emails. In the event that there are insufficient Signatories available, Chair of Council or Deputy Chair of Council could also authorise in their stead.
May I suggest "The Preapproval Threshold" for 2025 be £2,500
7 Payment made
In order a payment can be made the following information must be provided by all suppliers:
Name of Bank
Business or Personal account
Account number
Sort Code
This will be set up and confirmed by our Bank as a valid account and if necessary, in the first instance a trivial sum shall be sent and confirmed as received by the Supplier.
Note that any future changes to account details will have to be confirmed by a person known to the RFO or double checked using previously held known contact details.
Note payments shall either be allocated against a set budget or set aside.
As stated above - for invoices less than "The Preapproval Threshold", the RFO can immediately initiate electronic payment, else make payment upon receipt of two authorisation emails.
8 Final authorisation at next Council meeting.
A list of all electronic payments shall then be presented at the next Council meeting and engrossed by two Authorised Signatories and the document put on file.
It should be easy to produce a bank statement of the last month's transactions together with the appropriate invoices.

Further notes:
Remuneration of employees, including their additional expenses, is discussed and set by the Employee, Chair of Council and Chair of Finance and a total presented to the Council for approval – it will not be up for discussion - and recorded in in the minutes of Council.
May I suggest that it may be easier / more convenient to set up a second bank account where the only payee is the Parish Clerk as this statement can then be only seen by the Authorised Signatories for sign off at Council meetings and the other main bank account statement made available to be viewed by the public.

Cllr K Hill – 23rd January 2025