

Minutes Meeting of the Finance & Administration Committee meeting held on Monday 14th November 2022 at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillor M Shepherd (Chairman), Councillor D Hipkin (Vice Chairman), Councillor R Frost, and Councillor C Shepherd.

In attendance: Karen Orgill (Business Manager)
Geraldine Scanlon (Assistant Business Manager & Minute Taker)

781 To consider apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Parish Councillor Brian Anderson.

782 Declarations of interest and requests for dispensations by councillors in any agenda item

None received

783 Minutes of the Finance & Administration Committee meeting 17th October 2022

a) To approve the Minutes

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

b) Matters arising

Action points were discussed and those completed were removed.

Cllr Hipkin

- To investigate mobile Broadband providers.

Cllr Hipkin advised due to time restraints he had been unable to purchase Sim cards to do the necessary testing and reported he had checked the download speed using his EE account, the speeds achieved had not been significantly different to those using BT Broadband. Cllr M Shepherd advised he had also checked using his O2 account with the same results as Cllr Hipkin. Cllr Hipkin suggested a Vodafone Sim be purchased and the download speed checked, if the results are the same as EE and O2 then the only option for now is to remain with a hard-wired Broadband.

784 Current Financial Position

a) Current Financial Position.

Cllr M Shepherd stated he had circulated his Internal Audit Controller report. The bank reconciliations to 31st October 2022 were all in order. The balance on the Warren reserves incorrectly shows a total of £750.60, the correct value is £159.84 as per invoice for grass cutting, this is to be rectified by the Locum RFO, however the Financial Budget Comparison Report appears to be correct. The Journal Transfer from general funds to the staffing code 320, previously authorised by full council, is yet to be done.

b) Whole Council Budgets.

Nothing to report

c) Age Debtors.

Cllr M Shepherd advised there are no outstanding Aged Debtors.

d) Reserves.

Nothing to report

785 Budget Setting Process

Cllrs discussed each Council Budget line, both Income and Expenditure. Some proposed changes were suggested however other budget lines need further investigation for additional information either by staff members or Councillors to enable the budget to be agreed. Once these items have been reported back to the Committee at the next meeting Councillors will discuss further and confirm the proposed budget for ratification for the 2023/24 tax year.

- Code 101 – Council Support Grant – BM/ABM to confirm whether we will get Council Support Grant next year.

- Code 145 – Printing – BM/ABM to sort out how many pages of each type need to be recharged to DVCA.
- Code 1020 – Audit fees – Cllr M Shepherd to seek advice from Price Bailey as to likely cost of new contract.
- Code 1050 – Postage – BM/ABM to advise on likely spend up to 31st March and budget for next year
- Code 1055 – Stationary – BM/ABM to advise on likely spend up to 31st March and budget for next year
- Code 1085 – Election Expenses - BM to advise on budget needed for election expenses in the event of the election being contested.
- Code 1105 – De-Fib maintenance – BM to advise on likely outturn this year and budget needed for next year.
- Code 1130 – Software subscriptions – Cllr M Shepherd to advise on required budget
- Code 1150 – Printing costs – BM/ABM to advise how much we should allow for purchase of paper between November and March.
- Code 2000 – Sportsground grant – Cllr C Shepherd to talk to DSCIC.
- Code 2005 – Churchyard grant – Cllr C Shepherd to talk to Church Warden
- Code 2010 – Community Car Scheme – Cllr Frost to talk to HCCS
- **Code 2010 – Community Car Scheme = BM to arrange for RFO to add payment of £250 to be added to the November payment list. This is to correct the underpayment to the grant paid in April 2022.**

786 Future of NS&I Account

The Business Manager (BM) reported she had contacted NS&I. The account used by the Parish Council is an Investment Account with a current interest rate of 0.4% which cannot be converted to an online account, the necessary documents are being sent should we wish to close the Investment Account. NS&I recommend an Income Bond Account which has a current interest rate of 1.8%. It is an online account therefore will be easily accessible. After discussion it was agreed for the BM to establish what Barclays current interest rate is and to research interest rates for other Building Society accounts.

787 Telephone and Broadband contract renewal.

This had been covered under minute 783b

788 IT Update

Cllr M Shepherd reported, due to sickness, there was no progress to report.

789 Technology Refresh of Staffing IT

Cllr M Shepherd advised it had been agreed to purchase the new IT equipment for staff as opposed to leasing, however due to sickness there was no significant progress to report.

790 Correspondence

The BM reported the following: PK Littlejohn have confirmed they had been appointed as external auditors for the next 5 financial years by the Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments (SAAA).

An Email had been received from NALC regarding the Norfolk ALC Pilot Scheme offering Parish Councils a .gov.uk domain name from early 2023. There is a form to be completed to express interest. Cllr C Shepherd proposed this item be discussed in the closed part of the agenda, excluding press and public. Cllrs agreed the proposal.

Cllr C Shepherd reported she had been received an email from Barclays requesting information to update their records. She was concerned that it was not a genuine email o had contacted Barclays Business Banking Department confirmed the Email was genuine

but should not have been sent. The Email was forwarded to the senior manager for further investigation.

Two invoices had been received from DVCA. The first invoice is for running costs of the centre, of which the Parish Council pay 6.61% of the total, therefore a payment of £774.10 for April 2022- September 2022 is now due. The second invoice is for £500.00 to cover the office rent from 1st November 2021 – 31st October 2022. Cllr Frost proposed the two payments be approved and added to the Payments list for the next Full Council meeting. **It was resolved to approve the proposal.**

791 Items for inclusion at the next meeting

Budget Setting

792 Date and time of the next meeting

Monday 12th December 2022. 7.00pm, the Loft, Dersingham Centre.

With no further business public were asked to leave at 8.25pm

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider passing the following resolution: "That by virtue of the provisions of Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded during discussion of the following business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

793 Leases Update

a) Sportsground

Cllr C Shepherd advised the solicitor who has been dealing with the lease has now retired and a replacement is now in place.

b) Social Club

Ward Gethin Archer (WGA) have been instructed to act on behalf of the Parish Council. Correspondence had been received from them which Councillors discussed. **It was approved that the Solicitor be instructed to write to the Social Club regarding the lease on the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hall.**

Councillors discussed the possibility of using NALC .gov.uk domain for the Parish Council website. It was agreed for Cllr C Shepherd to investigate further using other possible hosts.

Action Points

Business Manger

- To add Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to a future Finance & Administration Committee (Feb 2023).
- Investigate the current interest rate for Barclays Bank as well as other Building Societies – minute 786
- Instruct WGA to write to the Social Club re the lease – minute 780
- To notify the Locum RFO of the two payments agreed to DVCA £774.10 running costs and £500.00 office rent.

Cllr C Shepherd

- Investigate hosts for the Parish Council Website