

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance Committee held on Wednesday, 24th April 2019, in the Ray Shill Room at Northway Community Hub, commencing at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Cllr J Roberts (Chairman) Cllr Mrs P Godwin
 Cllr Mrs E MacTiernan Cllr G Shelton
 Cllr Mrs S Terry Cllr S Ward

In Attendance: Mrs C Woodward, Clerk of the Council

FIN/20/19 **Apologies for Absence**

Cllr Mrs D Bailey had tendered her apologies. No further apologies for absence were received.

FIN/21/19 **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest, as required by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council on 11th July 2012 (Minute Ref C/159/12), including paragraph 12(2), were made.

FIN/22/19 **Minutes of the Previous Committee**

Cllr Shelton PROPOSED that the Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting that took place on 23rd January 2019 be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr Shelton Cllr Ward
 Cllr Godwin Cllr MacTiernan
 Cllr Roberts

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Terry

FIN/23/19 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

FIN/14/19 Heating & Cooling System - The Clerk confirmed that SK Refrigeration Heating & Cooling had returned to complete the service that they had previously been unable to do due to wrong scaffolding being provided.

FIN/14/19 Solar Panels – The Clerk confirmed that she had contacted SSE regarding an update on the solar panels. They confirmed that the tariff payments would be back dated to 30th November 2018 but that applications could take up to 13 weeks to process for the contract and there was a back log.

FIN/18/19 WaterPlus – The Clerk informed Members that following receipt of a letter stating that the building was listed as vacant she had been asked to complete a questionnaire. This had been done and returned to WaterPlus. They then advised where the water meter was situated but

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FIN/23/19 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes** (Continued)

added that they would send an engineer to take a reading if it was deemed difficult to find. The Clerk requested that an engineer was sent. A further letter had now been received from WaterPlus stating that the building was listed as vacant, so they were unable to send an engineer. They also requested a list of questions should be answered and these were identical to the ones already forwarded by the Clerk. Members AGREED that no further action should be taken at this time.

FIN/24/19 **Parish Council's Accounts up to 31st March 2019**

- a) **Review of Statements/Invoices** – Cllrs Terry and Godwin undertook a review of the statements and invoices to ensure there were no discrepancies. They confirmed that everything was in order.
- b) **Spot check of Powers** – This was done on a monthly basis where the powers used for expenditure were shown on the 'Accounts to Council'.
- c) **Bank Reconciliation and Balance Sheet** – Members went through the Reconciliation which balanced. Cllr MacTiernan enquired who the £415 debtors related to, the Clerk said that she was unable to produce that information immediately as following the installation of the IT system some of the financial details in the accounts package had still not been transferred over so the Clerk was not able to view the 2018-19 accounts. The Clerk confirmed that this would be rectified shortly.
- d) **Budget Statement (Detailed Income & Expenditure)** – Members went through the statement. It was noted that expenditure should be approximately 100% at this stage with a few exceptions that had been discussed at previous meetings (Min Ref FIN/69/18 refers). Cllr MacTiernan was pleased to see that the income relating to the Hub was higher than had been anticipated. Cllr MacTiernan enquired what the 'indirect expenditure' on the Changing Room related to, the Clerk explained that the Parish Council initially paid the invoices and then re-charged the Football Club (and Trustees of the Youth Club). The charges therefore went through the accounts but would still show as a 'nil' spend.

It was also noted that there was a large expenditure on the Changing Room. The Clerk explained that this related to the works undertaken there i.e. concreting behind the building and new equipment. This had been repaid via Section 106 monies from Tewkesbury Borough Council.

Cllr Ward PROPOSED approval of the Accounts. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/25/19 **End of Year Accounts**

These were not yet available.

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FIN/26/19 **Asset Register**

- i. Asset Register as attached to accounts – Not yet available.
- ii. Asset Register as necessary for insurance – Not yet available.

FIN/27/19 **Insurance**

Members went through the policy; it was noted that the new projector and electric screen needed including. Cllr MacTiernan enquired whether insurance would cover the cost of replacing the gym equipment, Cllr Roberts pointed out that it was wear and tear and so would not be covered.

Members were also reading the policy relating to environmental issues and wondered whether the policy would include cleaning up the playing field when the travellers left. The Clerk agreed to investigate this further.

Cllr Roberts said that he felt happy that everything that needed to be covered was and PROPOSED that it was recommended to Full Council to accept with the changes mentioned above.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/28/19 **IT**

- i. **IT System** - The Clerk confirmed that the IT installation had now taken place with very few hiccups. She mentioned that it was made easier by the co-operation of the previous IT supplier. The emails were changed over during the Easter bank holiday weekend so the impact on the office was minimal. Cllr Terry suggested that LS Caine Electronics were thanked for all their help and co-operation. Cllr Ward pointed out that they would still be maintaining the web page. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED a letter of thanks was sent.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Projector for Ray Shill Room** – Members considered the benefit of a ceiling mounted projector for the Ray Shill Room. Projectors had been used quite regularly in this room but to set this up would involve leads being draped over the floor, causing a trip hazard. The Clerk had applied for some quotes, but none had been received to date. It was AGREED to defer this until figures had been received.
- iii. **Old Computers** – The Clerk explained that the old computers had been taken by PC Rescue to be wiped clean, although a backup had been taken of all the data. Consideration was given as to whether they may be useful to keep for training purposes (a bit like was currently done at Priors Park). Cllr MacTiernan pointed out that there was a lot of work involved in this type of venture, so it may not be practical. A couple of suggestions were made for use of the computers which the Clerk agreed to investigate further.
- iv. **Laptop** – The existing laptop, occasionally used by the Council, was very old, Cllr Ward had brought his own in to use at events because the office one was inadequate. There were

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FIN/28/19 **IT** (Continued)

occasions when the laptop would be beneficial in meetings and events as well as community users like Citizens Advice. Members felt that the laptop would be a worthwhile purchase and enquired about prices.

The Clerk had received some estimated costs and for one with an intel core i3/i5, 4/8GB of RAM, 500 GB HDD, DVDRW Drive and Windows 10 Home including pre delivery and set up would be approximately £520.00. There was also the alternative of having a refurbished machine, with one years warranty and would be fourth General intel core i5/i7, 8GB RAM, 240 GB SSD, DVDRW Drive and Windows 10 Pro would be approximately £330.00. Cllr MacTiernan felt it was not a good idea to have a refurbished one and PROPOSED that a new laptop should be purchased at a total maximum cost of £750.00. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iv. **Web Page** – It had previously been agreed that LS Caine would be asked to continue hosting the web page and putting information on the page. When asked how much this would cost the response had been that it would be around £50.00 per month but this figure would be adjusted if Office 365 was part of the IT service. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED agreement to this at a maximum cost of £50.00 per month but he would expect this figure to be lower.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/29/19 **Audit**

- i. **Annual Systems Audit / Internal Sub-Audit** – An independent auditor had been contracted to review procedures around contractors, whether the Council was getting value for money, monitoring to ensure work paid for was being done.

Members received a copy of the Sub-Audit and reviewed the contents. The Clerk pointed out that the auditor seemed a little confused and the report had a number of inaccuracies. Members considered the report and agreed no changes were necessary as a result.

- ii. **Internal Auditor** – Members were reminded that Mr Selkirk had been contracted to undertake the internal audit on the 2018/2019 accounts. Following this a firm called IAC had been contracted to undertake future audits and this would most likely include the internal sub-audit too.

FIN/30/19 **Northway Community Hub & Parish Office**

- i. **Painting** – Three quotations had been received to repaint parts of the Hub i.e. Toilets, Corridor, Atrium, Main Hall and Ray Shill Room. A request had been made that a very durable, wipeable paint be used such as Dulux Diamond. The three quotes were as follows: -

- £3850.00
- £2985.00
- £2380.00 but a higher charge would be made for use of Dulux Diamond.

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FIN/30/19 **Northway Community Hub & Parish Office** (Continued)

After consideration Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that LB Brushworks quote was accepted at £2380.00 plus Dulux diamond. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Solar Panels** – This had already been discussed under Matters Arising.
- iii. **Exclusion of the Public and Press under Standing Order No 10a xi, Viz**

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that in view of the special / confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, regarding contracts, it was advisable in the public interest that the public and press were temporarily excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Exclusion Items – Councillors Only

Under exclusion the contract with GAB Waste was discussed and Members approved new rates of pay and hours.

- iv. **Bookings** – It was AGREED to review the new booking system in three months' time to see whether the taking of deposits and reporting of any problems by the Caretaker was successful.

It was also suggested that obtaining feedback from hirers would be useful and a couple of samples were tabled. Members liked the Coombe Community Trust Hall one and it was AGREED this should be trialled with the addition of a question regarding accessibility to cleaning supplies. The Caretaker could then hand a form out at the beginning of the hire when he undertook the checklist with the hirer.

Members went on to discuss allowing regular, trusted hirers access to the building via a combination padlock on the gate and a key safe at the back door. This would be suitable for hirers such as M5Nine. Cllr Ward offered to source these items. Cllr MacTiernan, therefore, PROPOSED that as Cllr Ward was offering he should proceed with the purchase of one combination lock (as there was already one available) and a key safe. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- v. **Wheelchair Use at the Hub** – The Clerk had noticed a free wheelchair advertised on Facebook. The Clerk secured this for the Council but wanted to ensure that this was something the Council felt would be useful at the Community Hub. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council should accept the wheelchair as it would be useful. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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FIN/30/19 **Northway Community Hub & Parish Office** (Continued)

- vi. **Carers Gloucestershire** - The Clerk reported that Carers Gloucestershire had lost their funding for a Connections Café which was held once a month at the Hub. This was very valuable to Carers and would be greatly missed. The Clerk had enquired whether there was anything that the Council could do but was informed this was now closed, so nothing could be done. Cllr Shelton suggested contacting SSFRA/Age UK to see whether they could help. It was also suggested that a letter was sent to the man who ran the Carers Café thanking him for this work.

- vii. **Laser Alarms Ltd** – The Clerk confirmed that the six-monthly service on the fire alarm, CCTV and access systems had now taken place.

FIN/31/19 **Northway Village Hall**

The Clerk tabled an email from a resident suggesting that the Village Hall needed some remedial works. Members considered this and agreed that guttering and painting work may be necessary. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Clerk obtain quotes for window repair/repainting as well as external doors and entrance doors and guttering. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS.

FIN/32/19 **Good Councillor's Guide**

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that five copies of this guide were purchased. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/33/19 **Banking/Direct Debits**

The Clerk informed Members that Tewkesbury Borough Council were not giving the option of paying by cheque any longer, invoices were to be paid by direct debit or bank transfer. Cllr Shelton PROPOSED that direct debits were set up for these invoices. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

The Clerk went on to say that it may be a good time to set up other direct debits, she appreciated that the Council may not want to set up direct debits for utility bills as they differed so much but regular payments like paying for the web page would be simpler. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Clerk made a list of the suitable payments for direct debit for the next meeting. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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FIN/34/19 Correspondence for Action

- i. **Roses Theatre** – A request for funding had been received. It was noted that the Theatre had lost a lot of funding recently. It was AGREED that they should be informed of the current Council policy that no grants were given.
- ii. **Air Ambulance** – A request for financial assistance had been received but again it was AGREED that the Air Ambulance should be informed that current policy stated grants were not given. It was suggested that they be invited to attend the Community Event on 8th June 2019 but it was pointed out that they had declined to attend the fete as the attendance numbers were not high enough.

FIN/35/19 Correspondence for Information

- i. **Public Works Loan Board** – Annual Statement of Balance outstanding as at 31st March 2019.
- ii. **Information Commissioner's Office** – Newsletter April 2019.
- iii. **Royal Mail** – The Clerk tabled confirmation of price increases.

FIN/36/19 Correspondence received after 16th April 2019

- i. **Playing Field Football** – The Clerk informed Members that she had received a complaint about bad language during the football matches that took place on Saturday 20th April 2019 (both morning and afternoon matches). It was AGREED that the Clerk should speak to the Football Club of this and remind them not to drop sock tape and bottles in the field.

As there was no further business the meeting concluded at 8.40 p.m.