

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance Committee held on Wednesday, 27th October 2021, commencing at 7.00 p.m., held in the Main Hall at Northway Community Hub.

Present: Cllr S Terry (Chairman) Cllr J Roberts (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr C Blackmore Cllr P Godwin
Cllr E MacTiernan Cllr G Shelton
Cllr T Treacy Cllr S Ward

In Attendance: Mrs C Woodward, Clerk of the Council
Mrs L Stewart, Clerk's Assistant

FIN/75/21 Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence had been received.

FIN/76/21 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest, as required by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council on 1st July 2012 (Minute Ref C/159/12), including paragraph 12(2), were made.

FIN/77/21 Minutes of the Previous Meetings

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED approval of the Minutes of the Meeting that took place on 28th July 2021. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/78/21 Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

FIN/68/21 Northway Community Hub and Parish Office – A letter of thanks had been forwarded to the contractor that assisted with locating the water meter, as agreed.

FIN/69/21 Changing Room – Lighting and locks had been replaced/installed at the Changing Room (to be funded by Section 106).

FIN/68/21 Changing Room – A lockable outdoor socket had been installed at the Changing Room Facility at a cost of £59.00 (the Clerk would investigate whether this could also be covered by Section 106 funds).

FIN/72/21 Northway Village Hall / Youth Provision in the Parish – It had been agreed that a meeting should be arranged with Trustees of the Youth Club (this had been agreed and superseded by actions taken by Full Council).

FIN/79/21 Parish Council's Accounts up to 30th September 2021

a. **Review of Statements/Invoices** – Cllr Godwin undertook a review of the statements and invoices to ensure there were no discrepancies as part of the Council's Risk Management Programme. Later in the meeting she confirmed that all was in order and Cllr PROPOSED approval. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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FIN/79/21 **Parish Council's Accounts up to 30th September 2021** (continued)

- b. **Bank Reconciliation and Balance Sheet** – Members had been provided with copies of the bank reconciliation and balance sheet with their agendas. The Clerk went through the reconciliation showing how the balance reconciled to the bank statement. Cllr Ward PROPOSED approval. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- c. **Budget Statement** – Members had been circulated a copy of the Budget Statement (detailed income and expenditure). Members went through the statement and any queries were addressed by the Clerk. Cllr Ward PROPOSED approval. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/80/21 **Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the Year Ended 31st March 2021**

Members acknowledged the Audited Return (which had already been received by Full Council).

FIN/81/21 **VAT Partial Exemption Calculation 2020-21**

The VAT Partial Exemption Calculations undertaken by DCK Accounting Solutions (Min Ref: FIN/66/21 refers) were received. This confirmed that Northway Parish Council did not breach the VAT Partial Exemption de-minimis limit of £7,500 for 2020/21 so no repayment was necessary.

FIN/82/21 **Financial Requirements for the Year 2022/23**

- a. Members reviewed the fees and charges for the Community Hub Main Hall and Ray Shill Room. Since the prices were still considered to be competitive, and the Council was on a fixed energy contract (so would be unaffected by increases to the cost of energy), Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the room hire charges should remain the same. Cllr Roberts suggested that the amount of free hire time being offered should be reduced - currently one hour (30 minutes at the start and 30 minutes at the end of each hire) were being permitted for free to allow users time to set up/tidy away.

Cllr MacTiernan wished to make an amendment to her original proposal and so PROPOSED that the Council's hire charges should remain the same but only 30 minutes offered free at the end of each hire to allow for tidying. Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that all other charges relating to the Community Hub (i.e photocopying, laminating) should also remain the same.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- b. **Exclusion of the Public and Press under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings Act) 1960 s.1 ss.2 Viz:** Cllr Terry PROPOSED that in view of the special / confidential nature of the business to be transacted that under Standing Order No 10s xi, Viz that the public and press should be excluded to allow for staffing budgets to be discussed.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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FIN/82/21 Financial Requirements for the Year 2022/23

Under confidential cover staffing salaries and pensions were reviewed and approved to assist in the budget setting process for the forthcoming year.

c) Finance Committee Budgets

Cost Centre: ADMINISTRATION

- 1107 ADM-CLERK'S TRAINING – It was AGREED to maintain this budget at £200.00.
- 1108 ADM-CLERK'S EXPENSES – It was AGREED to maintain this budget at £50.00
- 1111 ADM-PAYE OUTSOURCING – It was AGREED to maintain this budget at £500.00.
- 1121 ADM-TELEPHONE/BROADBAND – It was AGREED to set this budget at £1,400.00.
- 1122 ADM-POSTAGE – It was AGREED to maintain this budget at £500.00.
- 1123 ADM-GENERAL – It was AGREED to reduce this budget to £250.00.
- 1124 ADM-SUBSCRIPTIONS – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £2,200.00.
- 1125 ADM-INSURANCES – It was AGREED to maintain this budget at £3,800.00.
- 1128 ADM-OFFICE EQUIPMENT – It was AGREED to reduce this budget to £100.00.
- 1130 ADM-STATIONERY/PRINTING – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £1,600.00.
- 1131 ADM-WEB HOSTING/SUPPORT – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £2,100.00.
- 1132 ADM-MISC STAFF COSTS – Members AGREED to keep this budget at £100.00.
- 1157 ADM-AUDIT FEES – It was AGREED to maintain this budget at £1,400.00.
- 1158 ADM-OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES – It was AGREED to maintain this budget at £7,500.00.
- 1163 ADM-YOUTH WORK – Following Council agreement to increase this budget (Min Ref: C/246/21 refers), it was AGREED that it should be set at £5,000.00.
- 1164 ADM-RISK ASSESSMENT – It was AGREED to maintain this budget at £80.00.
- 1165 ADM-ADVERTISING – It was AGREED that this budget should be reduced to £100.00.
- 1166 ADM-DEFBRILLATOR – It was AGREED to maintain this budget at £300.00.

Cost Centre: ADMINISTRATION

The next Cost Centre was 101 Income but these figures could not be determined at this stage so Members moved on to:

Cost Centre: 102 CIVIC & DEMOCRATIC

- 1209 CIV-CLLRS EXPENSES – It was AGREED to retain a figure of £50.00 in the budget.

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FIN/82/21 Financial Requirements for the Year 2022/23 (continued)

Cost Centre: 102 CIVIC & DEMOCRATIC

1210 CIV-CLLRS TRAINING – It was AGREED that this budget should be reduced to £200.00.

1235 CIV-CHAIRMAN'S ALLOWANCE – It was AGREED to maintain this budget at £600.00.

1236 CIV-REGALIA – It was AGREED to retain this budget at £50.00.

1237 CIV-COMMUNITY EVENTS – As there had not been any community events held during the pandemic, it was AGREED that the current year's budget should be rolled over into 2022/23, taking the figure to £1,700.00.

Cost Centre: 103 NORTHWAY COMMUNITY HUB

1311 NCH-RATES – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £9,695.00. Members noted that the Business Rates for the Community Hub were especially high and, with the government offering reductions in rates, the Clerk was asked to query whether the Parish Council might qualify for any discount.

1312 NCH-WATER RATES / SEW – It was AGREED to reduce this budget to £1,600.00 now that the missing water meter had been located.

1314 NCH-ELECTRICITY – It was AGREED to reduce this budget to £800.00.

1315 NCH-GAS – It was AGREED to maintain this budget at £1,000.00.

1316 NCH-WASTE DISPOSAL – It was AGREED to reduce this budget to £300.00.

1317 NCH -COVID 19 – Members AGREED to reduce this budget to NIL.

1336 NCH-MAINTENANCE/CONTRACTS – It was AGREED to reduce this budget to £4,000.00.

Cost Centre: 105 NORTHWAY VILLAGE HALL

1511 NVH-RATES – A NIL budget was AGREED as the building was leased.

1512 NVH-WATER RATES – It was AGREED to maintain a budget of £150.00.

1514 NVH-ELECTRICITY – It was AGREED to maintain a budget of £250.00.

1536 NVH - MAINTENANCE – It was AGREED to maintain this figure at £1,000.00.

1537 NVH - GAS – It was AGREED to maintain a budget of £500.00.

Cost Centre: 106 CHANGING ROOM FACILITY

1635 CHR – EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE – It was AGREED to decrease this budget to £550.00.

1636 CHR – MAINTENANCE – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £2,500.00.

1637 CHR - GAS – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £300.00.

1639 ELECTRICITY – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £450.00.

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FIN/82/21 **Financial Requirements for the Year 2022/23** (continued)

Cost Centre: 106 CHANGING ROOM FACILITY

1640 CHR - WATER RATES – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £600.00.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED approval of the above budgets.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/83/21 **Precept**

Members received confirmation that the second half of the precept had been received in September 2021.

FIN/84/21 **Banking**

- a. **Direct Debits / Standing Orders** – Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that Total Energies (gas supply for Changing Rooms and Community Hub) should be paid by Direct Debit. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- b. **Changes to Community Accounts** – The Clerk explained that HSBC Community Accounts were to be disbanded which meant that the Council's bank account would be converted to a 'Small Business' account. The Clerk had investigated alternative options and explained her findings to Members. Lloyds were not accepting new customers, Starling would not allow dual authorisation, Unity Trust issued a monthly charge and a charge for all transactions. HSBC would soon be issuing a monthly charge as well as a fee for any cash payments coming into the account. It was felt that further research was necessary.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that further investigations were made into other options and the matter brought back to the Committee in January 2022. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

It was suggested that a card machine might be worth considering as this would reduce the Council's cash income. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that information relating to card machines should be brought to the meeting in January also. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/85/21 **Northway Community Hub & Parish Office**

- a. **SK Heating and Cooling Ltd** – A maintenance report had been received (for information).
- b. **Laser Alarms** – Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that callout costs relating to emergency lighting (£80.00) should be ratified. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- c. **Hiring and Use of the Building** – Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that a meeting of the Councillors delegated with emergency powers to deal with Covid-19 issues should be called if/when necessary to address any issues relating to the pandemic. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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FIN/85/21 **Northway Community Hub & Parish Office** (continued)

- d. **CW Hygiene** – Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED renewal of contract for emptying of feminine hygiene units at the Community Hub was ratified. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- e. **Cardiac Science Defibrillator Training** – It was noted that this event had been rescheduled for Saturday 22nd January 2022 at 10.30am.

- f. **Utilities** – Members considered whether to renew its electricity contract now as Total Energy had advised this would likely be cheaper than waiting until it ended in 2023. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that a decision on this should be deferred for six months when more information might be available. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

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

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Blackmore

- g. **Fire Extinguisher Servicing (Edgefire)** – A service took place on 30th July 2021 with no replacements necessary.
- h. **Dinner Plates** – The Clerk explained that there were only 20 large dinner plates in the kitchen and Luncheon Club had expressed concern that they might be at risk of running short some weeks. Cllr Ward PROPOSED purchase of 24 additional large dinner plates at a cost of £43.98. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/86/21 **Changing Rooms**

- a. **Flammable Liquid Store** – Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that purchase of a new store for petrol (at a cost of £162.49) should be ratified. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

It was noted that it might be possible to have this cost reimbursed from Section 106 funds.

- b. **Boiler Repairs** – Cllr Terry PROPOSED that costs incurred in repairing of the boiler at the Changing Rooms should be ratified.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Ward felt that a lot of money was spent on the boilers at the Changing Rooms, however, the Clerk reminded that the Carbon Neutral Working Party was due to receive an energy advice report relating to the building at its next meeting.

- c. **Mower Service** – It was noted that servicing of the mower had taken place and a replacement part had been required. Cllr MacTiernan asked whether it might be possible to claim back the cost of servicing the mower from Section 106 funds, or even just replacement parts as/when necessary. The Clerk doubted that this would qualify for Section 106 but said that she would make enquiries.

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FIN/86/21 Changing Rooms (continued)

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the cost of servicing/repair of the mower, amounting to £483.48, should be ratified. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- d. **Legionnaires Check** – The Clerk reminded Members that she had previously met with a plumber to discuss the risk of Legionnaires with the water tank at the Changing Rooms. The plumber had made recommendations regarding cleaning of the shower heads but felt nothing more could be done. After receiving the recent Health and Safety Report undertaken by NFU Mutual and speaking to several other councils it seemed that more action might need to be taken as a legal requirement.

A Legionnaire assessment firm had said that it would absolutely be a legal requirement to have initial and ongoing assessments, but these would be costly, and they would be expected to say this as it would benefit them to have the Council's business. Enquiries did seem to indicate it was a legal requirement, however, the Clerk had been unable to find anything official in writing.

Cllr Ward mentioned test kits which were available and could be used to check the water in the tank periodically.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that more investigations were made before the matter was brought back to a future Committee Meeting.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Roberts offered to make investigations also.

- e. **Energy Suppliers** – It was AGREED that no changes were necessary.
- f. **Fire Extinguisher Service** – A fire extinguisher service took place at the Changing Rooms on 30th July and a new fire blanket, and 6kg powder service exchange had been required at a cost of £119.20. Cllr Godwin PROPOSED that this expenditure was ratified. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/87/21 Northway Village Hall

A fire extinguisher service took place at the Village Hall on 30th July and new signage and a 6 litre Aff service exchange had been required at a cost of £95.85. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that this expenditure was ratified.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/88/21 CCTV / Broadband

A response was still being awaited about the possibility of installing broadband for the CCTV system at Northway Playing Field.

FIN/89/21 Internal Audit

- a. **Auditing Solutions Ltd** – Confirmation of reappointment had been received (Min Ref: FIN/65/21 refers).

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FIN/89/21 **Internal Audit**

- b. **IAC** – An introductory letter from IAC Audit and Consultancy Ltd had been received.

FIN/90/21 **Correspondence for Information**

- a. **DCK Payroll Solutions** – The Payroll outsourcing had been moved from DCK Accounting Solutions to DCK Payroll Solutions.
- b. **HM Treasury** – Updated Guidance had been received relating to applications for PWLB lending.
- c. **Information Commissioner's Office** – Confirmation that annual payment has been taken and certificate provided.

FIN/91/21 **Correspondence received after 21st October 2021**

None received.

As there was no further business the meeting ended at 8.16 p.m.