

## NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance Committee held on Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020 directly following a meeting of the CCTV Working Party commencing at 7.45pm.

*Following the passing of the Coronavirus Act 2020 (c.7) Councils are unable to meet in person during the COVID emergency. This meeting was therefore held via a Zoom link, with Councillors connecting remotely. The meeting commenced at 7.00 p.m.*

Present: Cllr J Roberts (Chairman) Cllr P Godwin (Vice-Chairman)  
Cllr C Blackmore Cllr E MacTiernan  
Cllr G Shelton (From Min Ref FIN/60/20) Cllr Mrs S Terry  
Cllr S Ward

In Attendance: Mrs C Woodward, Clerk of the Council

### FIN/56/20 **Apologies for Absence**

Cllr Phennah had tendered his apologies, no further apologies for absence were received.

### FIN/57/20 **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Roberts declared an interest in Agenda Item 7 'Health and Safety' as a quotation had been received from NFU who were his employers. No further declarations of interest, as required by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2012 (Minute Ref C/159/12), including paragraph 12(2), were made.

### FIN/58/20 **Minutes of the Previous Committee**

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting that took place on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020 be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

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

ABSTENSIONS: Cllr Blackmore

### FIN/59/20 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

There were no matters arising.

### FIN/60/20 **Parish Council's Accounts up to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

- a. **Review of Statements/Invoices** – As Members were unable to meet physically the review of statements/invoices was deferred (Min Ref FIN/47/20 refers) although it was noted that the Accountant undertook a check each month as well as the Clerk. No changes were believed necessary.

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FIN/60/20 **Parish Council's Accounts up to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

- b) **Bank Reconciliation and Balance Sheet** – Members went through the Reconciliation and agreed it reconciled to the bank statement. Signing of the Bank Reconciliation would be deferred until physical meetings were permitted.

The Clerk drew Members attention to a payment to Reach Publishing Services in the sum of £76.56 had not gone through the banking system and would now be out of date so she would arrange for it to be removed.

\*7.49 p.m. Cllr Shelton joined the meeting.

Members reviewed the Balance Sheet and did not raise any queries or concerns.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED approval of the Bank Reconciliation and Balance Sheet. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- c) **Budget Statement** – Members received the Budget Statement (Detailed Income & Expenditure). It was noted that the spend should be sitting just over the 50% mark. It was noted that 1116 ADM-ERS NI CARETAKER was at 112%. The Clerk pointed out that the NI for the Litter Picker and Play Area Inspector now went through this budget along with the Caretaker NI, although the salaries were in the General Purposes Budget. Previously those two roles had been undertaken by a contractor so a budget for salaries had not been set up for the current financial year.

It was also noted that 1131 ADM-INTERNET was showing an overspend of 353.9%. The Clerk explained that this was because the new web page had been allocated to this budget although the funds came from Capital Expenditure which could be seen below where a figure of £4,000 had been transferred from EM Reserve 4999 for the purpose. Budget 1165 ADM-ADVERTISING also showed a 582% overspend. The Clerk informed Members that this represented the unplanned legal costs for advertising the details of the lease for the Changing Room. The Clerk pointed out an error in one of the headings that stated 09/10/2018 as the report date, she tabled a revised copy with the corrected date on it. No further queries were raised, and Cllr Terry PROPOSED its approval. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

7.55 p.m. Cllr MacTiernan left the meeting.

Cllr Godwin enquired why 2143 GP-JOAN'S FIELD, showed an overspend. The Clerk said that Smart Cut, who had taken over the grass cutting and maintenance, invoiced slightly differently to their predecessors and she believed the grass cutting costs were getting allocated to Joan's Field rather than grass cutting. Cllr Godwin also pointed out that the embankment in Joan's Field had not been strimmed as agreed, the Clerk advised she would look into this.

8.00 p.m. Cllr MacTiernan re-joined the meeting.

Cllr Shelton PROPOSED approval of the Budget Statement (Detailed Income and Expenditure). Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

**NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL**

FIN/61/20 **Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

The Clerk tabled the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 which had been returned by PKF Littlejohn and reported that there were no matters raised for attention.

FIN/62/20 **Health and Safety**

Cllr Roberts briefed the Committee regarding the recommendation from the Staffing Committee that Health and Safety should be outsourced to consultants (Min Ref S/51/20 refers).

Two quotations had been received one from the National Farmers Union (Cllr Roberts declared an interest) and the other from Envesca, Whittam Ellis had also been approached but no response had been received.

The Clerk read details of what both firms offered. After some debate Cllr Blackmore PROPOSED that a comparison table was put together for the next Finance Committee, so it was clearer to see what both firms offered. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/63/20 **Financial Requirements for the Year 2020 /2022**

- a. Members reviewed the Northway Community Hub and Ray Shill Room fees (as agreed under Min Ref FIN/21/08)

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that because of the reduction in hiring, due to Coronavirus, that no changes should be made for the 2020/21 Financial Year. This would also apply to office services. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- b. Cllr Roberts 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

**COUNCILLORS ONLY**

Under confidential cover staffing matters were reviewed including budget setting for the forthcoming year.

- c) **Finance Committee Budgets**

**Cost Centre: ADMINISTRATION**

**1107 ADM-CLERK'S TRAINING** – It was AGREED to reduce this budget slightly to £200.00.

**1108 ADM-CLERK'S EXPENSES** – It was AGREED to maintain this budget at £50.00

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FIN/63/20 **Financial Requirements for the Year 2020/2021** (Continued)

**1111 ADM-PAYE OUTSOURCING** – Due to the increase in staff numbers it was AGREED to increase this £500.00.

**1121 ADM-TELEPHONE/BROADBAND** – As it appeared there may be a slight overspend on current budget Members AGREED to increase this to £1200.00.

**1122 ADM-POSTAGE** – It was AGREED to reduce to £500.00.

**1123 ADM-GENERAL** – It was AGREED to reduce to £500.00.

**1124 ADM-SUBSCRIPTIONS** – It was AGREED to increase third to £1950.00.

**1125 ADM-INSURANCES** – The current insurance policy was coming to the end of its set period and would be due for review in the spring. It was, therefore, AGREED to increase this budget to £3,800.00.

**1128 ADM-OFFICE EQUIPMENT** – Besides replacements it was not envisaged that new office equipment would be required. The budget was set at £250.00.

**1130 ADM-STATIONERY/PRINTING** – It was AGREED to maintain the budget of £1,400.00.

**1131 ADM-WEB HOSTING/SUPPORT** – A figure of £2000.00 was AGREED.

**1132 ADM-MISC STAFF COSTS** – Members AGREED to keep this budget at £100.00.

**1157 ADM-AUDIT FEES** – A budget of £1,400.00 was AGREED for Audit Purposes.

**1158 ADM-OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES** – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £7,500.00 to allow for additional assistance i.e. Health and Safety.

**1163 ADM-YOUTH WORK** – A figure of £3,000.00 was allocated for this budget.

**1164 ADM-RISK ASSESSMENT** – It was AGREED to maintain this budget at £80.00.

**1165 ADM-ADVERTISING** – Currently this budget had a nil spend but normally the advertising was for the Parish Assembly in March of each year. AGREED £200.00.

**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.

**1210 CIV-CLLRS TRAINING** – This budget was maintained at £300.00 to allow for potential new Councillors to undertake some training in the next financial year.

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FIN/63/20 **Financial Requirements for the Year 2020/2021** (Continued)

c) **Finance Committee Budgets**

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

**1236 CIV-REGALIA** – A budget of £50.00 was set to allow for any engraving required on the Chain of Office.

**1237 CIV-COMMUNITY EVENTS** – The Council AGREED to increase this budget to £700.00 to allow for a community event to take place in the event that Coronavirus would allow.

**Cost Centre: 103 NORTHWAY COMMUNITY HUB**

**1311 NCH-RATES** – It was AGREED to increase this by 3% to £9,600.00.

**1312 NCH-WATER RATES / SEW** – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £1,900.00 as a metre had still not be unearthed.

**1314 NCH-ELECTRICITY** – This budget is to be decreased to £1250.00. AGREED.

**1315 NCH-GAS** – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £1000.00.

**1316 NCH-WASTE DISPOSAL** – It was AGREED to increase slightly to £480.00.

**1317 NCH -COVID 19** – Members felt that most of the expenditure relating to safety measures put in place were mostly done but AGREED a budget of £500.00 going forward.

**1336 NCH-MAINTENANCE/CONTRACTS** – It was AGREED to maintain the budget of £6000.00.

**Cost Centre: 105 NORTHWAY VILLAGE HALL**

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

**1512 NVH-WATER RATES** – It was AGREED to set a budget of £120.00.

**1514 NVH-ELECTRICITY** – It was AGREED to set a budget of £350.00.

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

**1537 NVH - GAS** – It was AGREED to set a budget of £500.00 for this budget.

**Cost Centre: 106 CHANGING ROOM FACILITY**

**1635 CHR – EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE** – It was AGREED to decrease this budget to £700.00.

**1636 CHR – MAINTENANCE** – It was AGREED to maintain this budget at £1,200.00.

**1637 CHR - GAS** – It was AGREED to set a budget of £250.00.

**1638 CHR-PAY TO PLAY** – It was AGREED to set this at NIL.

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FIN/63/20 **Financial Requirements for the Year 2020/2021** (Continued)

c) **Finance Committee Budgets**

**Cost Centre: 106 CHANGING ROOM FACILITY**

**1639 ELECTRICITY** – It was AGREED to set this budget at £350.00.

**1640 CHR - WATER RATES** – It was AGREED to set this budget at £500.00.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED approval of the above budgets.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/64/20 **Precept**

The Clerk confirmed that the second half of the precept (£92,790.00) had now been paid into the bank account.

FIN/65/20 **The Public Sectors Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No2) Accessibility Regulations 2018**

a) Members considered a request to place a review online relating to the new web page. The Clerk was asked how she found it and she confirmed that it was easy to use, the providers were very responsive and prompt. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that a review was provided.

FOR: Cllr Roberts Cllr Blackmore  
Cllr Godwin Cllr Shelton  
Cllr Terry Cllr Ward

AGAINST: Cllr MacTiernan

b) Cllr Terry PROPOSED ratification of the setting up of a monthly direct debit to cover the cost of web page maintenance in the sum of £50.00. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

c) Cllr Roberts PROPOSED the existing quarterly standing order payable to Rainbow Digital Media was cancelled.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

d) The Clerk confirmed that a letter of thanks had been forwarded to the previous web page provider following at least 17 years of service.

e) The Clerk explained to Members that the initial payment for the new web page to Utopia in the sum of £4,000.00 was never received. It was, therefore, cancelled with a bank charge of £10.00. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED approval.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

**NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL**

FIN/66/20 **Banking**

- a) **HSBC** – Details of Changes to Services (for information)
- b) **Internet Banking** – The Clerk informed Members that she had still not had an opportunity to fully investigate internet banking and asked that it was deferred. AGREED.

FIN/67/20 **Village Hall**

- a) **Track and Trace** – Users of the Village Hall had been unable to get the GOV.UK site to recognise the post code that had been allocated to the Village Hall. The Clerk contacted Royal Mail who confirmed that the post code was not active so she forwarded the original documentation from Cheltenham Borough Council from when the post code was set up and Royal Mail agreed to update its information. The 'Track and Trace' QR code had since been successfully designated to the village hall (via the Dance Group).
- b) **SSE Energy** – An offer to update the meter to a smart meter had been received. Following a debate Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that this was actioned.

FOR:                      Cllr Roberts                      Cllr Blackmore  
                                 Cllr Godwin                      Cllr Shelton  
                                 Cllr Terry                         Cllr Ward

AGAINST:                Cllr MacTiernan

- c) **Edgefire Ltd** – A Certificate of Inspection for the fire extinguishers at the Village Hall was tabled. No issues were raised.

FIN/68/20 **Changing Room Lease**

- a) **Pipes** – Following the continual damage to down pipes at the building a quotation was tabled for black galvanised protection covers at a cost of £358.84. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that this was progressed. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR:                      UNANIMOUS

- b) **Lease** – Following adverts in the papers regarding the lease renewal, One Legal had confirmed that no objections were received. The draft lease had now been forwarded to the Football Club for approval.
- c) **SSE Business Electricity** - An offer to update the meter to a smart meter had been received. Following a debate Cllr Shelton PROPOSED that this was actioned. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR:                      Cllr Shelton                      Cllr Terry  
                                 Cllr Blackmore                      Cllr Godwin  
                                 Cllr Roberts                         Cllr Ward

AGAINST:                Cllr MacTiernan

- d) **Edgefire Ltd** - A Certificate of Inspection for the fire extinguishers at the Changing Room was tabled. No issues were raised.

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FIN/68/20 **Changing Room Lease** (Continued)

e) **Showers** – The Clerk explained that the pump did not appear to be working properly to the showers and asked if Members wanted this investigated when the annual service took place in November. Members AGREED it should be.

f) **Mower**

i. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED ratification of the annual service of the mower at a cost of £346.65.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

9.13 p.m. Cllr MacTiernan left the meeting.

ii. It was noted that the mower was no longer under warranty and from could now be serviced elsewhere. Cllr Terry PROPOSED approval to look for other service engineers next year. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/69/20 **Northway Community Hub & Parish Office**

a) **Total Gas & Power** – An offer to update the meter to a smart meter had been received. Cllr Godwin PROPOSED accepting the offer. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

9.16 p.m. Cllr MacTiernan re-joined the meeting.

b) **SK Heating & Cooling** – At a recent service it was found that the Duct Heater was not working, a quotation was received in the sum of £818.55. The firm advised that the air conditioning was re-circulating the air but the air handling unit, which was not working, was what brought in fresh air and sucked out all stale air. Members considered deferring for a month, but it was suggested that the price might increase, the Clerk confirmed there were funds in budget to cover this repair. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that it was replaced.

FOR: Cllr Roberts Cllr Blackmore  
Cllr Godwin Cllr Shelton  
Cllr Terry

AGAINST: Cllr MacTiernan Cllr Ward

c) **SSE Business Energy** – An offer to update the meter to a smart meter had been received. Following a debate Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that this was actioned.

FOR: Cllr Roberts Cllr Blackmore  
Cllr Godwin Cllr Shelton  
Cllr Terry Cllr Ward

AGAINST: Cllr MacTiernan



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FIN/69/20 **Northway Community Hub & Parish Office** (Continued)

Cllr MacTiernan added that the Council need to consider the future and should look to going carbon neutral. It was AGREED that this would be placed on a future Full Council Agenda, it could be then considered whether a Working Party should be created and also whether a Consultant should be contracted for assistance.

- d) **Renewal of Feminine Hygiene Units** – Cllr Ward PROPOSED ratification of the renewal of the contract for feminine hygiene units at £175.00 per annum. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- e) **BT** – The Clerk confirmed that a new BT contract had started which should reduce costs. Cllr Ward PROPOSED ratification of this. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- f) **Edgefire Ltd** – A Certificate of Inspection for the fire extinguishers was tabled. To issues were raised.

- g) **Covid-19** – Slimming World and Yoga were not using the building following the latest lockdown running until 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020. A support group had expressed interest in using the building, as their current facility had closed. Cllr MacTiernan expressed concern as to whether any group should be using the Hub but Cllr Roberts pointed out that, under the current Government Guidelines, support groups could continue to meet and, in fact, Wheatpieces Community Centre had put out an advert to such groups. Cllr Roberts said this would be dependent on a risk assessment. Cllr Ward PROPOSED approval at a nil charge. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr Ward Cllr Terry  
Cllr Blackmore Cllr Godwin  
Cllr Roberts Cllr Shelton

ABSTENSIONS; Cllr MacTiernan

- h) **Signage** – Signage had been erected at the car park entrance of the Hub following cars regularly blocking it. The signa had cost £70.00. Cllr Ward PROPOSED ratification. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- i) **EDF** – The Clerk informed Members that EDF had advised that they were holding a credit of £12.00 for the Parish Council. The Clerk had responded and had put in a claim for this amount which had now been received.

- j) **Rialtas** – The Clerk said that she had intended to provide Members with details of a booking package but had not yet had the chance to investigate this further. AGREED to defer.

FIN/70/20 **Electricity Suppliers**

The Clerk informed Members that she had received numerous calls from various utility brokers trying to help set up new contracts. These were for the SSE accounts which all were due for

**NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL**

FIN/70/20 **Electricity Suppliers** (Continued)

renewal in September 2021 for the Hub, Village Hall and Changing Room. Members AGREED that no new contracts should be considered until March 2021 and at that time the Clerk should approach one broker and also use a also something like 'Go Compare' and bring the information back to the Committee.

FIN/71/20 **Correspondence for Action**

- i. **C and J Fire Protection** – This firm had offered to quote for the servicing of fire extinguishers. Up until now this had been done by a firm called Edgefire that had been doing the work pre 2000 and had been very reliable to date. Cllr Ward PROPOSED that a quote should be obtained. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/72/20 **Correspondence for Information**

- i. **Rialtas** – Members received information regarding a new support solution called Freshdesk that the firm has launched.
- li **Information Commissioners Office** – Newsletters were tabled for September and October 2020.

FIN/73/20 **Correspondence received after 29<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

None received.

As there was no further business the meeting concluded at 9.30 p.m.