

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance Committee held on Wednesday 26th October 2022, commencing at 7.00 p.m., held in the Ray Shill Room at Northway Community Hub.

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

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

FIN/61/22 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Terry.

FIN/62/22 **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/63/22 **Minutes of the Previous Meetings**

Cllr Shelton PROPOSED approval of the Minutes of the Meeting that took place on 27th July 2022. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/64/22 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

FIN/48/22 Internal Auditor – Auditing Solutions Ltd had been appointed as Internal Auditors for the 2022/23 financial year.

FIN/49/22 VAT Partial Exemption Calculations 2021/22 – DCK Accounting Solutions had undertaken a VAT Partial Exemption on behalf of the Council and had reported that it did not break the de-minimus limit of £7,500 for 2021/22.

FIN/51/22 – Northway Community Hub and Parish Office – An additional children's table and chairs had been ordered (although delivery had been delayed until November).

FIN/51/22 Northway Community Hub and Parish Office – Bluetooth function had been installed on the audio system.

FIN/55/22 Webpage – The Council had contracted a webpage provider called Fortitude to oversee its webpage following the cessation of Utopia.

FIN/56/22 Defibrillator – A new light had been purchased and placed inside the defibrillator at the Northway Centre (outside Pets Only).

FIN/57/22 Donation Request – A letter of thanks had been received from Sycamore Chapel for the £100 youth provision funding provided by the Council to assist with arts and crafts at the Breakfast Club.

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FIN/65/22 **Parish Council's Accounts up to 30th September 2022**

- a. Cllr Godwin undertook a review of the Council's bank statements and invoices to ensure there were no discrepancies as part of the Council's Risk Management Programme and it was confirmed that all was in order.
- b. Members reviewed the bank reconciliation which reconciled to the bank statement. No queries were raised. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED approval. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- c. Members received the budget statement (detailed income & expenditure). Cllr Ward PROPOSED approval. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

A question was raised as to whether postage costs could be reduced by emailing agendas and attachments to Members. The Clerk agreed to look into the legislation surrounding this.

The Clerk confirmed that the Community Hub, Changing Rooms and Village Hall were on fixed rates for electricity until 2024. Gas contracts were ending on 31st March and the Council was currently paying 4.154 pence per kw. The cheapest rate she could find on a new, twelve-month fixed contract was 17.393 pence per kw. Other contracts ranged between 20p – 25p per kw which was five times more than the Council was currently paying so it was felt that this needed to be reflected in the budgets, as Members had already agreed that they did not wish to go into a fixed contract. (Min Ref FIN/54/22 refers).

FIN/66/22 **Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the Year Ended 31st March 2022**

Members noted receipt of the Audited Return. This had already been received by Full Council.

FIN/67/22 **Financial Requirements for the Year 2023/2024**

- a. Members reviewed the Northway Community Hub and Ray Shill Room Fees and Charges, as well as office facility charges.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that, from April 2023, the charge for photocopies should be increased to £0.13 (£0.15 inc VAT) per A4 sheet and £0.23 per A3 sheet (£0.30 inc VAT).

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that, from April 2023, the charge for laminating should be increased to £1.25 (£1.50 inc VAT) per A4 sheet and £1.67 (£2.00 inc VAT) per A3 sheet.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that, from April 2023, the charge for aerial photographs of the parish should be increased to £12.50 (£15.00 inc VAT).

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that, from April 2023, the cost to hire the Main Hall should be increased to £15.00 per hour (£18.00 inc VAT) for Northway residents and £18.33 per hour (£22.00 inc VAT) for non-residents, with these prices being re-assessed in June 2023 to ensure they did not have a

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FIN/67/22 **Financial Requirements for the Year 2023/2024** (continued)

detrimental effect on hiring. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that, from April 2023, the cost to hire the Ray Shill Room should be increased to £10.00 per hour (£12.00 inc VAT) for Northway residents and £12.50 per hour (£15.00 inc VAT) for non-residents. Additionally, the cost to hire the whole building should be increased to £29.17 per hour (£35.00 inc VAT) for Northway residents and £37.50 per hour (£45.00 inc VAT) for non-residents. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- b. **Exclusion of the Public and Press under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings Act) 1960 s.1 ss.2 Viz:** 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

Under confidential cover Members reviewed the information provided by the Staffing Committee and approved their recommendations (Min Ref S/26/22) for the forthcoming year.

- c. **Cost Centre: ADMINISTRATION**

Members were reminded that the figures tabled were just starting points and this was a first draft for the Finance Committee so changes could be made at a later date.

1107 ADM-CLERK'S TRAINING – It was AGREED to retain this budget at £200.00.

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

1111 ADM-PAYE OUTSOURCING – It was AGREED to retain this budget at £500.00.

1121 ADM-TELEPHONE/BROADBAND – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £1,600.00.

It was AGREED that the Council should try and talk to BT about reducing the monthly cost of phone/broadband services and, if necessary, look at alternative options once Virgin became available in the local area.

1122 ADM-POSTAGE – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £600.00.

1123 ADM-GENERAL – It was AGREED to retain this budget at £250.00.

1124 ADM-SUBSCRIPTIONS – It was AGREED to reduce this budget to £2,100.00.

1125 ADM-INSURANCES – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £4,000.00.

1128 ADM-OFFICE EQUIPMENT – It was AGREED to retain this budget at £100.00.

1130 ADM-STATIONERY/PRINTING – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £1,800.00.

1131 ADM-WEB HOSTING/SUPPORT – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £2,200.00.

1132 ADM-MISC STAFF COSTS – Members AGREED to retain this budget at £120.00.

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FIN/67/22 **Financial Requirements for the Year 2023/2024** (continued)

1157 ADM-AUDIT FEES – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £1,650.00.

1158 ADM-OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES – It was AGREED to reduce this budget to £7,500.00.

1163 ADM-YOUTH WORK – It was AGREED to reduce this budget to £3,000.00.

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

1165 ADM-ADVERTISING – It was AGREED to reduce this budget to £100.00.

1166 ADM-DEFBRILLATOR – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £400.00.

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 – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £500.00.

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

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

1237 CIV-COMMUNITY EVENTS – It was AGREED to reduce this budget to £1,500.00.

Cost Centre: 103 NORTHWAY COMMUNITY HUB

1311 NCH-RATES – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £9,800.00.

1312 NCH-WATER RATES / SEW – It was AGREED to retain this budget at £1,600.00.

1314 NCH-ELECTRICITY – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £1,400.00.

1315 NCH-GAS – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £5,000.00.

1316 NCH-WASTE DISPOSAL – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £315.00.

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

Cost Centre: 105 NORTHWAY VILLAGE HALL

1511 NVH-RATES – Rates were currently not applicable to this building.

1512 NVH-WATER RATES – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £1,500.00.

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

1536 NVH - MAINTENANCE – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £1,400.00.

1537 NVH - GAS – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £1,500.00.

Cost Centre: 106 CHANGING ROOM FACILITY

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

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

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FIN/67/22 Financial Requirements for the Year 2023/2024 (continued)

1637 CHR - GAS – It was AGREED to increase this budget to £600.00.

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

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

Cllr Ward PROPOSED approval of the above budgets (copy of breakdown attached for Members).
Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/68/22 Northway Community Hub

- a. **Tablet/Device** – Members considered purchase of a tablet or laptop to allow the Caretaker to handle bookings (PC Rescue had set up an old office computer for this purpose but it was too slow to operate effectively). The Clerk confirmed that there was £900.00 available in ear marked reserves for IT/webpage.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that prices of laptops and tablets be brought back to a future meeting.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- b. **Service for Heating and Cooling System** – A maintenance report had been received from SK Heating and Cooling following their service of equipment at the Community Hub in September 2022. No issues were reported.
- c. **Free Hire** – Cllr Shelton PROPOSED that the Council should approve free hire of the Community Hub for a Young Lives Vs Cancer fundraising event. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/69/22 Changing Room Facility

- a. **Risk Assessment** – Members received the mower risk assessment forwarded by Tewkesbury Town FC. Cllr Ward highlighted that the fuel storage container should be locked instead of simply 'clicked shut'. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED approval of the risk assessment. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- b. **Mower** – It had been requested at Full Council that the Finance Committee considered ongoing maintenance and ownership of the mower (Min Ref C/187/22 refers). The Clerk reminded Members that the Council had purchased the mower six years ago with Section 106 funds, these funds had also paid for creation of a store area and the Council took on ownership including responsibility for ongoing repairs and maintenance, but the mower was used solely by the Football Club. Cllr MacTiernan believed that the Football Club should be responsibility for all ongoing costs and servicing. There was concern that servicing may be undertaken by individuals with no public liability insurance. A way round this would be to ensure they provided the Council with copies of all works undertaken by appropriate firms or alternatively the Parish Council could continue to maintain the mower but re-charge the costs to the Club.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council wrote to Tewkesbury Town FC and informed them that they would be required to take on ownership and responsibility of the mower including its servicing and

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FIN/69/22 Changing Room Facility (Continued)

repairs as of April 2023, providing the Council with the necessary documents confirming this. Alternatively, the Council could continue to make the necessary arrangements and pass invoices on to the Club, the Council would also be open to suggestions of companies that could undertake servicing or repairs at a cheaper rate. Cllr Shelton SECONDED

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- c. **Other Matters** – The Clerk tabled a quotation for ‘multiboard’ or ‘perform’ to be fitted in the shower rooms, the quote had come in at £8200.00 including VAT. This was a higher cost than expected, however, Members felt that the existing tiles were not bad enough to warrant replacement.

A quotation had also been received for the roof areas in the Village Hall and Changing Rooms to be insulated to a depth of 300mm. Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the quotation of £3,380 should be accepted and the Clerk should investigate whether Section 106 funds could be claimed towards the cost. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- d. **Water Charges** – The Council went through recent water bills relating to the Changing Room Facility and noted how the charges had inexplicably risen. Members were reminded that contractors installing the wheelchair swing had left a hosepipe running in the Changing Rooms and no-one knows whether this was for one day or five as it was found by the Football Club on the Saturday morning. This was the most likely reason but there was also concern that there might be a leak somewhere which would explain why recent bills were so high.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the Council should make further investigations into whether there was a leak and, if necessary, contract a leak detection company to find it and correct it.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- e. **Fire Extinguishers** – Certificates of inspection had been received relating to the Changing Room Facility.

FIN/70/22 Northway Village Hall

- a. **Electrical Installation Certificate** – The Clerk confirmed that an Electrical Inspection had been undertaken at the Village Hall (as this was required prior to Young Gloucestershire using the building). No alerts were highlighted in the Electrical Installation Condition Report.

- b. **Fire Extinguishers** - Certificates of inspection had been received relating to the Village Hall.

FIN/71/22 New/Revised Policy

The Staffing Committee had recommended that the Finance Committee created a policy (or modified an existing policy) relating to treatment of staff by members of the public (Min Ref: S/27/22 refers). Cllr Roberts had put together some wording and Cllr Ward PROPOSED that it be incorporated into the existing policy for unreasonable persistent complaints and unreasonable behaviour. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr MacTiernan suggested that the word ‘persistent’ was removed from the policy so that it related to any unreasonable complaints and behaviour, even if only one-off incidents. AGREED.

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FIN/72/22 Correspondence for Information

- a. **Royal Mail** – Leaflet advising that old style stamps need to be used by 31st January 2023.
- b. **Rialtas Computer Software** – Letter advising that Rialtas had been sold to N. Harris Computer Corporation.
- c. **Tewkesbury Borough Council** – Confirmation that the second half of the precept had been paid into the Parish Council's bank account.
- d. **United Kingdom Debt Management Office** – Details of loan repayment taken on 16th August 2022.
- e. **DCK Accounting Solutions** – Details of changes to fees effective 1st April 2023.
- f. **Auditing Solutions Ltd** – Recommendation that councils stay with SAASA appointed external auditor (already agreed by Full Council on 5th October 2022).
- g. **The Pension Regulator** – Re-enrolment and re-declaration (required by 31st March 2023).

FIN/73/22 Correspondence received after 20th October 2022

- a. **Remembrance Sunday** – Cllrs Ward and Shelton had confirmed attendance at the wreath laying ceremony at St Nicholas Church on Remembrance Sunday where Cllr Ward would be laying the wreath in the absence of Cllr Roberts.
- b. **Dobbies Opening** – Cllr Roberts had been invited to attend the Dobbies opening event on 3rd November 2022.

As there was no further business the meeting concluded at 8.37 p.m.