

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance Committee held on Wednesday 24th July 2024, commencing at 7.00 p.m. held in the Ray Shill Room at Northway Community Hub.

Present: Cllr S Terry (Chairman) Cllr P Godwin (Vice Chairman)
Cllr M Barnes Cllr K Poole
Cllr G Shelton

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

FIN/42/24 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs MacTiernan and Roberts.

FIN/43/24 Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Poole and Godwin declared their interest in items relating to The Northway Pantry (Min Ref: FIN/55/24(c) refers). No further declarations of interest, as required by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council on 12th April 2023 (Minute Ref C/85/23), were made.

FIN/44/24 Minutes of the Previous Finance Committee Meetings

- a. **24th April 2024** – Cllr Shelton PROPOSED approval of the Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting that took place on 24th April 2024. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr Shelton Cllr Godwin
Cllr Poole Cllr Terry

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Barnes

- b. **22nd May 2024** – Cllr Godwin PROPOSED approval of the Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting that took place on 22nd May 2024. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr Godwin Cllr Shelton
Cllr Poole Cllr Terry

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Barnes

FIN/45/24 Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

FIN/24/24 Broadband and Telephone Line – The transfer of service to BDR Group was near to completion.

FIN/28/24 Insurance Renewal – The Council had entered into a three-year contract with Zurich.

FIN/39/24 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24 (AGAR) – This had been forwarded to the auditors and the date for completion of the public rights for inspection was 25th July 2024.

FIN/27/24 & FIN/40/24 IT Support – BDR had been contracted to undertake IT support.

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FIN/46/24 **Parish Council's Accounts up to 31st June 2024**

- a. **Review of Statements** – Cllr Poole undertook a review of the statements and invoices to ensure there were no discrepancies, as part of the Council's Risk Management Programme, and confirmed that all was in order.
- b. **Bank Reconciliation and Balance Sheet** – Members reviewed the Bank Reconciliation and Balance Sheet up to 30th June 2024. Cllr Poole PROPOSED approval. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- c. **Budget Statement** – Members reviewed the Budget Statement (detailed income and expenditure). Several questions were raised, and clarification was provided by the Clerk. Cllr Poole PROPOSED approval of the Budget Statement. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/47/24 **VAT Partial Exemption Calculations 2023/24**

Cllr Shelton PROPOSED approval of contracting DCK Accounting Solutions to undertake VAT Partial Exemption Calculations as part of the Council's Governance. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/48/24 **Direct Debits / Standing Orders**

Members reviewed the schedule of Direct Debits and Standing Orders. Cllr Barnes PROPOSED approval. Cllr Poole SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/49/24 **CCLA Investment**

It was confirmed that the total interest accumulated from the Council's initial £100,000 investment currently stood at £5,427.86.

FIN/50/24 **Internal Auditor**

The Clerk confirmed that Auditing Solutions had continued to provide an exceptional service and were contactable all year round. The Auditor was a competent person who was independent of the financial controls and would provide an objective view. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Council should approve use of this firm for the 2024/25 financial year.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/51/24 **Canva**

Members considered subscribing to Canva, an online graphic design tool, to create posters and other community engagement resources. Cllr Godwin PROPOSED approval of this, at £100 for the year. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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FIN/52/24 Franking Machine

The Clerk reported that, since the Council's decision not to purchase a new franking machine (Min Ref: FIN/26/24 refers), a battery error had been displayed, for which a replacement could not be provided. Pitney Bowes had advised that a new machine would be required at a cost of £450.00 for the same machine, with an annual service plan covering the cost of ink and wearable parts at a cost of £118. The alternative was £550.00 for an upgraded machine with a service plan costing £130.00 to again cover the cost of ink and wearable parts. The cost of one ink cartridge was £100.00 so the additional service plan would be very beneficial. Members looked at the differences between the two machines and Cllr Barnes felt that, due to the fact that the old one was going out of circulation, it would be of greater benefit to have the newer model for which Pitney Bowes would be more geared up for ongoing maintenance.

Cllr Barnes PROPOSED purchase of the newer model franking machine from Pitney Bowes. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/53/24 Chain of Office

The Clerk confirmed that the Chain of Office was currently in the process of being engraved, however, after the additions of the new names, there would be no spare links available.

Cllr Terry felt that the addition of any more links on the Chain would make it too long, so PROPOSED that four new links were purchased to replace four of the oldest links.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Poole suggested that the old links should be displayed as they were of historic interest. Cllr Terry agreed that the matter should be put to Full Council for further discussion.

FIN/54/24 Public Access Bleed Control Kit

The Clerk had been asked to investigate purchase of bleed control kits to store in the Council's defibrillator cabinets. It was noted that the kits were too large to fit in the cabinets alongside the defibrillators, the ambulance service also recommended that they were provided with their own cabinets. The Clerk had found bleed control cabinets at cost of either £290 (unlocked) or £330 (locked). The price of individual kits ranged between £30 - £80 and there would be the ongoing cost of replacing contents as/when they expired.

Cllr Poole felt that the Council would not need more than one kit and, if progressing, it would be best located at Northway Playing Field. Cllr Barnes PROPOSED that Finance Committee recommended installation of a public access bleed control kit, and locked cabinet, funded from the Rolling Capital. Cllr Poole SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/55/24 Northway Community Hub

- a. **Heating and Plumbing** – SK Heating and Cooling had reported, following their latest service, that there was a possible shortage of refrigerant in the air conditioning unit. They were recommending to come back and check at a cost £549.60 (plus the possible cost of replacement parts depending on the outcome of these tests). It was agreed that it was essential to maintain the system within the Hub so Cllr Terry PROPOSED approval of this work.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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FIN/55/24 Northway Community Hub (continued)

- b. **Legionella Inspections** – It was confirmed that the Clerk's Assistant was undertaking water checks on the months that CDI Facilities did not. No issues were reported.
- c. **Use of Ray Shill Room** – Members received a request from The Northway Pantry for additional free use of the Ray Shill Room. This would be to implement safety and awareness training for staff and volunteers and to provide access to skills and wellbeing training for members of the Pantry. Cllr Shelton PROPOSED approval. Cllr Barnes SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr Shelton Cllr Barnes
 Cllr Terry

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Godwin Cllr Poole

- d. **Charity Sweets** – Members considered allowing a box of charity sweets and snacks to be available in the building (in support of Teenage Cancer Trust). Cllr Barnes PROPOSED approval. Cllr Poole SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

It was suggested that it might be suitable to keep these should be kept under staff supervision, possibly in the Office so that items were not at risk of being stolen.

- e. **Licence** – The Clerk mentioned that she had investigated the need for any licences in the building, however, advice received from Tewkesbury Borough Council confirmed that there was no need for any.

FIN/56/24 Changing Room Facility

- a. **Legionella Inspections** – It was confirmed that the Clerk's Assistant was undertaking water checks on the months that CDI Facilities did not. No issues were reported.
- b. **Section 106** – The Clerk passed on correspondence from the Football Club asking the Council's consideration of:
1. A replacement battery for the mower (£50-60) – Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Council organised replacement of the battery as part of the upcoming mower service.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

2. Treatment of pitches with selected weedkiller for plantain (£375 per pitch). It was noted that the Council's contractors, Smart Cut, had provided a slightly cheaper price of £360 per pitch, Members AGREED that it would need to be Smart Cut undertaking the work. The Clerk reported that there was £253.78 left in Section 106 funding which could potentially be used towards the cost of pitch maintenance.

Cllr Barnes PROPOSED that the Council applied for the remaining Section 106 funds towards the cost of this maintenance and offered to cover 50% of what was outstanding, alongside the Football Club, provided that Smart Cut were used to undertake the work. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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FIN/57/24 **Northway Village Hall**

- a. **CCTV** – It had previously been reported that the quality of one of the CCTV cameras at Northway Playing Field had deteriorated. A quotation had been received for installation of another, like-for-like, camera at a cost of £200 or one of a better quality for £400. Cllr Barnes PROPOSED installation of a replacement camera at a higher quality using funds from Rolling Capital. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- b. **Legionella Inspections** – It was confirmed that the Clerk's Assistant was undertaking water checks on the months that CDI Facilities did not. No issues were reported.

FIN/58/24 **Correspondence for Information**

- a. **APM Fire and Security** – Advert for services.

FIN/59/24 **Correspondence received after 18th July 2024**

- a. **Debt Management Office** – Notice of upcoming payment due in August (towards Public Work Loan).
- b. **GRCC** – Details of Community Resilience Event on 11th September 2024. Due to this being on the same night as the next Full Council Meeting, it was suggested that copies of a recording might be made available, if not Cllr Terry expressed that she might be willing to attend.

As there was no other business the meeting concluded at 7.52 pm.