

Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance & Administration Committee held virtually on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at 7.00pm.

**Present:** Councillor M Shepherd (Chairman), Councillor B Hopkins, Councillor D Murrell Councillor R Frost and Councillor C Shepherd.

**In attendance:** Sarah Bristow (Clerk) and Geraldine Scanlon (Communications Officer)

**579 Apologies for absence**

**It was resolved to accept apologies from Councillor Anderson and Councillor Billard.**

**580 Declarations of interest**

No declarations of interest.

**581 Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on the 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020.**

**a) It was resolved for the minutes to be signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.**

**b) Matters Arising from the Minutes.**

Minute number 566 regarding the Clerk obtaining usage readings for the photocopier. Councillor M Shepherd asked if this had been achieved. The Clerk advised readings had been taken and an invoice is to be worked out for the DVCA usage.

Minute number 571 the new contract with BT has now been accepted after the queries raised at the previous Finance Committee meeting had been answered. Minute number 567 Councillor C Shepherd advised Jo Halpin Jones, Village Voice editor, had looked at the expenditure in relation to the Village Voice. The shortfall that was originally thought to be £3000.00-£4000.00 would in fact be much lower. With a 72-page magazine being produced it is projected the shortfall would be £700.00-£800.00.

**582 Current Financial Position.**

The Clerk had previously sent round the reports. (Please see attached)

**a) Whole Council Budgets.**

Councillor M Shepherd advised the Internal Audit Controllers report had been completed and he was happy all was in order.

The Covid Support reserve has now been set up.

Regarding the recent advice from Aston Shaw for a £2856.24 refund for National Insurance, Councillor M Shepherd expressed concern the Parish Council may not be entitled to the refund. HMRC website clearly states only businesses were eligible to claim and not local government bodies.

The Clerk was asked to obtain assurance in writing from Aston Shaw that their advice was correct and that the Parish Council is entitled to claim employment allowance. The Clerk advised she had also had confirmation of a refund due at Thornham Parish Council.

**b) Aged Debtors.**

The Clerk advised there are no aged debtors.

c) **Reserves.**

Councillor M Shepherd reminded Councillors that during the budget setting process in January it was agreed to transfer some surplus funds from the General Fund to the Project Reserve in April, once the end of year balance of the General Fund had been determined. This was not done due to Covid. The balance of the General Fund on 31<sup>st</sup> March was £60,689.87 so he felt that £16,000.00 could be transferred to the Project Reserve. The Clerk was asked to check these figures so a report can be put to Full Council for agreement.

d) **VAT.**

The Clerk advised she had been waiting for Councillor M Shepherd to check the accounts before she submits the next quarterly return. Now this has been achieved she would submit the next return.

**583 Internal Audit.**

**a) Appointment of Auditor for 2020/21.**

The quote from Price Bailey had been circulated before the meeting. The quote detailed what would be provided at a fixed fee guaranteed for a three-year period. As previous recommendations have now been mostly implemented and on the basis of carrying out the audit remotely, a reduced fee had been offered. Councillor Hopkins queried the daily rate quoted for additional work and asked if it was felt a daily rate would need to be used often. Councillor M Shepherd said he felt it was unlikely to be something that would be needed as most queries would be resolved via the phone or email free of charge. It has also been confirmed that the council do not need to commit to a three-year contract, but simply that the prices the quoted prices will remain fixed for three years provided our requirements do not change. Councillor M Shepherd proposed the quote be accepted. **It was resolved to approve the proposal.**

**584 Budget Setting.**

Councillor M Shepherd suggested a review of each whole council budget line to ascertain if any increase, decrease or if the figures could remain the same for the 2021-22 tax year. After discussion, the following were to be amended or further clarification obtained by the Clerk before being set.

**145** – Printing – *DVCA to be invoiced to establish usage before new budget set.*

**Expenditure**

**1015** – Insurance – *Clerk to chase valuation report for the War Memorial and check cost of skatepark insurance before budget can be set.*

**1020** – Audit Fees – *Clerk advised she had not yet received the bill for the External Audit.*

**1025** - Subscriptions – *Clerk to check subscriptions due other than the NALC and Parish Online.*

**1035** – Office Rent – *Councillor C Shepherd advised she had requested figures from DVCA however not received them to date. Councillor M Shepherd asked if there had been any rooms booked at the centre between October and March for training purposes, as the Parish Council would have to pay for the cost of the room. The Clerk advised there had been one in*

*December but had received and paid the invoice. Councillor M Shepherd requested the Clerk checks for any outstanding invoices room hire.*

**1040** – Office Equipment/Maintenance – Clerk to advise on the budget needed. Note that this code is not for IT equipment maintenance.

**1065** - Legal Fees/Land Registration – Clerk to check solicitors fees regarding the leases for the Sports Ground. Three quotes had been obtained regarding the Social Club lease however this has not been progressed. Councillor M Shepherd advised a figures would be needed to set the budget.

**1080** – Office Cleaning – to be increased to £100.00

**1130** – Software/Subscriptions/Licensing – Clerk to review and report at next meeting.

**1145** – New Replacement IT Hardware – Clerk to establish the age of the office PC's.

**1155** – DVSC Contingency Fund – Councillor M Shepherd advised last year's figures and current year's figures to date were needed from the Social Club to ascertain next year's budget. The Clerk to contact DVSC Treasurer and request the information

**1160**- Printing Costs – The Clerk advised she would need to claim for printing expenses due to working from home.

#### **Council Grants**

##### **Expenditure**

**2000** – Sports Ground Management – To be reviewed. Councillor Hopkins advised the committee of the equipment SGMC has and requested a review of the £5500.00 rent. He was asked how much of an increase they are looking for and answered they would be grateful for whatever they were given.

**2005** – Churchyard – Clerk to contact the church regarding grass cutting costings as these have not been reviewed recently.

#### **585 Bank Accounts.**

##### **a) Barclays – Payment Authorisation.**

The Clerk advised she had contacted Barclays and they assured her all signatories have access. Councillor M Shepherd stated he had spoken with Councillor Anderson who had confirmed he did not have access as he was waiting for new PIN details.

Councillor M Shepherd asked for an update on Councillor Bubb replacing Councillor Frost regarding payment authorisation. The Clerk advised she had received the mandate form and now required signatures from Councillors C Shepherd, Noble and Bubb and a copy of the minutes approving the transfer of signatories.

##### **b) Barclays – Mandate Change.**

This item is covered under minute number 585a

##### **c) NS&I – Mandate Update.**

The Clerk advised she had attempted to contact NS&I however was still receiving the same message regarding dealing with regards to dealing with urgent requests only.

#### **586 Dersingham Centre.**

**Committee to receive an update from Councillor M Shepherd.**

The air conditioning has been provisionally planned for installation 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> November 20. DVCA have planned to have the path widened at their cost.

The heat pump gates have been completed with all snagging issues addressed.

The installation of dimmable lights in the main hall has been completed. DVCA have asked for approval from the Parish Council to install a loft hatch in the large storeroom as the ceiling cavity is not currently accessible. **After discussion it was resolved to request Full Council approval of a loft hatch being installed.**

**587 Climate Change.**

Councillor Frost advised there was no update.

**588 Correspondence.**

None received.

**589 Items for inclusion on the next agenda.**

**590 Items for Website.**

No items for the Website.

**591 Date and time of next meeting.**

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020 7.00pm to be held virtually via Zoom

**Action Points**

**Cllr M Shepherd**

- **Email disclaimer slip**

**Clerk**

- **To contact the NS&I helpdesk and arrange signatory changes.**
- **To contact CCS regarding the recycling of used toner cartridges**
- **To obtain written assurance from Aston Shaw.**
- **To check sum for transfer from General Fund to Projects Reserve.**
- **To submit quarterly VAT return.**
- **Actions listed in Budget settings - minute number 584.**
- **To obtain signatures and return bank mandate - minute number 585**