

Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance & Administration Committee held virtually on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 7.00pm.

**Present:** Councillor M Shepherd (Chairman), Councillor B Anderson (Left 9.00pm), Councillor R Frost (Left 9.25) and Councillor C Shepherd.  
Councillors M Noble and T Bubb joined the meeting at 20.20

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

**653 Apologies for absence**

**It was resolved to accept apologies from Councillor G Billard.**

**654 Declarations of interest.**

**None received.**

**655 Minutes of the Meeting held 14 December 2020.**

**a) Approve Minutes.**

**It was resolved for the minutes to be signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record after the following amendment.**

**Minute number 642a to read as follows:**

Councillor M Shepherd had completed the December 2020 Internal Audit Controller Report and circulated it to Councillors.

**b) Matters arising from Minutes.**

Councillor C Shepherd enquired if there was an update regarding the donation expected from the disbanded Youth Group for the skatepark project. The Clerk advised she had been unable to contact Mrs M Lambert however she thought the second signatory on the youth group account was Mr Hunter and she would attempt to contact him. Councillor Frost advised he had contact details for Mr Hunter and would speak with him regarding the matter.

**656 Current Financial Position.**

**a) Whole Council Budgets.**

Councillor M Shepherd advised he had completed the Internal Audit Controller report for January 2021 and explained the Clerk had circulated the amended accounts just prior to the meeting.

Councillor M Shepherd summarised his findings and confirmed the bank reconciliation are in order.

Two payments had been made that had not been formally authorised by Full Council on either the December or January payment approval list. One a payment of £2.00 to Norfolk Pension fund and another to Imperative Training and Defibshop.co.uk of £1560.00 for the new defib equipment. Full Council had approved the purchase and installation however the payment had not been formally authorised.

A discrepancy had appeared of £160.11 between the Cashbook and Financial Budget Comparison report. The Cashbook report includes a payment against code 3040 of £160.11 but does not appear on the FBC report. This has happened previously and appears to take place when the paid date is prior to

the invoice date which then falls in different accounting month. The invoice date had been post-dated by SLCC to 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021 payment being made 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021. Councillor M Shepherd stated whilst it is not a major issue should it be noticed by an auditor it could be deemed as bad practice. The Clerk stated the payment had to be made otherwise her membership would've lapsed and stated she would note the invoice accordingly.

A donation of £750.00 had been credited to the Project Reserves income code 950. This transaction appeared on the comparison report but not on the reserves report. This donation should have been credited to the Dersingham Centre reserve. The Clerk advised there had been code established for the donation and the journal transfer had now been done.

**b) Age Debtors.**

The Clerk advised there are no aged debtors.

**c) Reserves.**

The Clerk reported there were no updates other than the transfer of £750.00 from Project reserves to Dersingham Centre as previously discussed.

**d) VAT.**

Councillor M Shepherd asked if the VAT return had been submitted for the third quarter. The Clerk confirmed she had sent the completed form this morning. Councillor C Shepherd enquired when a refund could be expected. The Clerk thought it would be within a week, the refund due is £2148.47.

**657 Bank Accounts**

**a) NS&I – Mandate Update.**

Councillor M Shepherd requested an update from the Clerk regarding the signatures and asked if the new signatures had been added and the old ones removed. The Clerk advised both had been done. Councillor C Shepherd asked if the Clerk had been added to the list of signatories. The Clerk confirmed she had.

**658 Regular Payments.**

Councillor M Shepherd reported he had commenced work on the regular payments list however upon reviewing contracts dates there seemed to be differing dates on various documents. He was mindful that circulating any report would not be beneficial until the correct dates had been established. The Clerk advised she would need to attend the office and check the contracts to confirm dates.

**659 Minor Grants.**

Councillor M Shepherd summarised the applications received for minor grants.

A request by a parent asking for an iPad to aid her child's education had been received. The Clerk had already written to the Parishioner advising the Parish Council are unable to help individuals. General opinion was the Parish Council would prefer to assist people through organised groups rather than buying equipment ourselves.

The second application, for a non-specified amount, had been received from the Air Ambulance service. The Clerk had issued them with a form upon their enquiry however it had not yet been returned. Councillor Frost said the Air Ambulance was a worthy cause and one that anyone could need at any time.

A further application had been submitted by NARs requesting a donation towards a specific piece of equipment that would be used by a local paramedic who works 60 percent of his time in Dersingham. The equipment costs £600.00 and a donation of £200.00 had been applied for. It was agreed this is a worthy cause to support.

The Youth Football Group had applied for a donation with no specification of an amount although a list of requests had been submitted, i.e., new goal posts for under 12's, new kit for 5-7-year olds. The Clerk stated she had sent them an application form but had not received a response to date. Councillor C Shepherd told Councillors there are many t-shirts in store at the village centre that the Parish Council could donate for the youth teams to wear for training purposes. It was agreed we need a more detailed proposal before a grant could be considered.

The final request for a grant came from Dersingham United Charities which would be used for signage on their land.

After discussion regarding all requests for donations received Councillor R Frost proposed a donation of £250.00 be given to the Air Ambulance Service and £250.00 to NARs. Councillor B Anderson seconded the proposal. **It was resolved to approve the proposal.**

Councillor M Shepherd advised the donations would need to be ratified by Full Council.

**660 Correspondence received.**

**Borough Council CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) funding.**

Councillor C Shepherd reported the CIL funding would not be available in time for the Skatepark project to apply. Applications had to be submitted by 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021 with a decision being made in July 2021 by which time she hoped the construction of the skatepark would have commenced. Councillor M Shepherd suggested the Environment Committee create a project plan for submission to the Borough Council for CIL funding to assist with maintenance of Parish Council assets such as replacing concrete lamp columns. Councillor C Shepherd advised applications for funding could be between £2,000.00 and £10,000.00. Councillor B Anderson stated the Environment committee would discuss the possibility at their next meeting, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

Councillor M Shepherd asked Councillor B Anderson if there were any requirements relating to Climate Change. Councillor B Anderson advised there had been no meeting arranged for this month.

**661 NALC regarding virtual meetings.**

The Clerk had circulated information from NALC regarding the Government's decision to not extend the need for virtual meetings past May 2021. Councillor C Shepherd said Norfolk ALC are urging Parish Councillors to contact local MP's highlighting the need to continue to hold meetings virtually not face to face. Councillor M Shepherd suggested the reasoning behind the need for virtual meetings be focused on the current Covid restrictions, social distancing, Councillors being in a vulnerable age group, possible loss of Councillors due to them not being willing to attend meetings due to risk of infection. After discussion it was agreed for Councillor C Shepherd and the Clerk to compose a letter to the Local MP highlighting councillors' concerns.

**662 Items for inclusion at the next meeting.**

Councillor M Shepherd suggested Committee vacancies be added to the next Full Council agenda to enable the newly co-opted councillors to join committees. He asked the Clerk if a Councillor could be co-opted onto the Parish Council and join a Committee prior to signing the relevant documents. The Clerk advised co-option and acceptance on a committee was permitted however attendance to meetings was not allowed until paperwork had been completed.

Councillor Frost asked why the recently co-opted councillors had not been asked to address the Parish Council advising why they wished to join, their interests etc as others had been required to do so previously. It was pointed out that their application forms had been circulated with the agenda and councillors were invited to ask questions of them at the meeting. Councillor C Shepherd said she would ask those concerned to give a brief resume at the next Full Council meeting.

**663 Website.**

None

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

**To be held virtually Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021.**

**The meeting was closed at 8.15pm**

**EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.**

To consider passing the following resolution: "That by virtue of the provisions of Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960, the Public be excluded during discussion of the following business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

**665 Social Club Lease.**

Councillor C Shepherd advised there was no update as the Social Club remains closed due to the Corona virus lockdown.

**666 Head Lease/Sports Ground Leases.**

Councillor M Shepherd explained Councillors Noble and Bubb had joined this meeting as they had been present at the meeting with Councillors C Shepherd, M Shepherd, the Clerk, and the Solicitor.

Councillor C Shepherd updated the committee on the discussions which included the lease with the Scouts and Guides, the head lease between the landowner and the Parish Council, the underlease between the Parish Council and the Sports Ground Committee and the cost. It was agreed that the head lease would be extended for as long a period as the freeholder will agree to with minimal changes. A new underlease with SGMC will be prepared to include all provisions that need to be cascaded down from the head lease. A corrected plan for the scout underlease has been prepared and agreed and will now be used to correct the lease registration with HM Land Registry. It was agreed that Councillor C Shepherd will write to our solicitor with the Councils response to his recent emails.

## **667 Contracts.**

- a) Photocopier Lease
- b) Photocopier Usage
- c) Pat Testing
- d) Insurance.

Councillor M Shepherd advised that as two councillors had left the meeting the meeting was no longer quorate therefore agenda item 15 Contracts would have to be deferred to the next Finance & Administration Committee meeting to be held 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021

**With no further business the meeting was closed at 9.35pm**

### **Action Points**

#### **Cllr M Shepherd**

- **Email disclaimer slip.**

#### **Cllr Frost**

- **Contact Mr. Hunter regarding disbanded Youth Club donation for the Skatepark project.**

#### **Cllr C Shepherd**

- **Draft and agree with the Clerk a letter to Local MP regarding the need to extend virtual meeting deadline date**
- **Contact newly co-opted Councillors regarding delivering brief resume at the next Full Council meeting.**

#### **Clerk**

- **Add committee vacancies for newly co-opted councillors to the next Full Council agenda.**
- **Continue to pursue refund of youth club money from the police.**