

**Minutes of the Communications Committee Meeting held virtually on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 10:00am.**

**Present:** Cllr C Shepherd (Chairman), Cllr Bubb and Cllr Noble.  
Mr S Martyn, Mr R Smythe and Jo Halpin Jones (Editor).

**In attendance:** Geraldine Scanlon (Communications Officer).

Actual meeting start time 10.20am

**172. Apologies for absence.**

It was resolved to accept apologies from Cllr Wright.

**173. Please indicate if there are any interests, which should be declared. A declaration of an interest should indicate the nature of the interest (if not already declared on the Register of Interests) and the agenda item to which it relates. If a disclosable pecuniary interest is declared, the member should withdraw from the room whilst the matter is discussed.**

None received

**174. Minutes of meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

**a) To approve minutes**

**It was resolved to approve the minutes as a true and accurate record after the following amendment.**

Minute number 165 – Councillor C Shepherd advised the budget for 2020/21 needed to be discussed and agreed.

**b) To consider matters arising.**

There were no matters arising that are not agenda items.

**175. Village Voice**

**a. Current Financial Position**

Councillor C Shepherd explained she had discussed with Jo Halpin Jones the Income budget setting which had been set at £16,000.00 for tax year 2019/20, however the Income received was £12,800.00. Currently this year's income is £10984.00, therefore, Councillor C Shepherd proposed the income be reduced to £12,000.00 for 2021/22.

Jo Halpin Jones advised when she had previously reviewed the figures regarding the short fall in income relating to advertising. She was unaware the precept monies allocated to the Communications budget was not solely for the Village Voice and therefore the shortfall would be more than she had previously thought. The revised figure would be in the region of £1000.00. Councillor Bubb asked if the Covid grant received could be vired to cover the deficit. Councillor C Shepherd agreed the money could be allocated from the Covid grant however it would have to be ratified by Full Council. A small proportion of the grant has been used; an iPad had been purchased for a Councillor to enable him to attend meetings visually as opposed to calling in. The sanitisation of the playground had been funded using the Covid grant. Jo Halpin Jones asked if a certain percentage is allocated from the precept for the Village Voice within the Communication budget allowance. Councillor C Shepherd advised the Precept is split amongst all Committees proportionally relating to expected expenditure

agreed by each Committee when their yearly budgets are set. However, the Precept allocation for Communications was not then specifically allocated within the Committee.

Jo Halpin Jones suggested advertisers be approached March/April and hoped that businesses would feel more optimistic as we will hopefully be out of the current lockdown and many people would've received their vaccinations. Councillor Noble said it is a difficult time for businesses as owners are aware of the need to advertise however the cost of advertising has to be considered. Councillor C Shepherd asked Mr Martyn if the budget currently set for the maintenance of the Parish Council website was enough to cover the extra work due to Covid updates etc. Mr Martyn suggested an increase of £100.00 for 2021/22 from £400.00 to £500.00.

**It was resolved to approve:**

**Income - 605 Advertisement Village Voice be reduced to £12,000.00.**

**Expenditure – 6030 Website be increased to £500.00**

**With all other income/expenditures remaining the same.**

#### **b. Content**

Jo Halpin Jones felt this edition may well be a 68-page magazine. She had been advised by some regular contributors that they would not be submitting articles. Discussion was had regarding various articles that were in the process of being written. Jo Halpin Jones suggested the Census due to take place March 2021 be advertised in the magazine to raise people's awareness. Councillor Bubb proposed resurrecting the "That's my Business" articles, giving an editorial explaining the how, what and why of the business. Jo Halpin Jones agreed it would be a good idea. However, she was aware that businesses are approaching her requesting a "Advertorial" be placed in the magazine. This is compromises of a paid advert being placed and an editorial detailing the business. Councillor Bubb stated the editorial could be written so long as the business concerned do not claim to be the only business offering their product. It was agreed and "Advertorial" could be submitted if a paid half page advert was placed with it.

Discussion was had regarding the Public service announcements being received to be placed in the Village Voice. Jo Halpin Jones said she was mindful that more are being received and wanted to clarify these are to remain in the magazine free of charge as they are usually received from charities or supply information for local residents. It was agreed public service announcements would remain free of charge as they are usually one of submissions however, they should be relevant to local charities, events etc. Any received that were not specific to the area could be redirected to the Village Facebook page. Mr Martyn said there was no guarantee they would be displayed on the Facebook page as it was down to the administrator's discretion.

#### **c. Advertisers & Finance.**

Finance covered in 175 (a)

#### **d. Distribution.**

Councillor C Shepherd advised, though throughout the last lockdown we had withheld delivery of the Village Voice, we would this time approach distributors and ask if they would be willing to deliver the next edition of the magazine.

Distributors will once again be asked if they could collect the magazines from the centre.

There had been three volunteers to join the list of distributors. Each had been contacted and advised that there were no available rounds at the moment. All volunteers had agreed to be placed on the reserves list to covers rounds when needed.

Currently there are 535 magazines printed and distributed to businesses in and around Dersingham however with businesses either being closed or not accepting the magazine it was suggested the print run be reduced by 300/400 magazines. Councillor Bubb proposed, instead of reducing the amount printed the magazine could be offered to Ingoldisthorpe Parish Council to deliver or be collected by residents from a designated area i.e. the village hall. Councillor C Shepherd explained she had taken the business drop round for the last two editions and had had several magazines left over which were then disposed of in the recycling. Therefore, to reduce printing costs and wastage suggested the number of magazines printed be reduced. It was felt that due to the lack of visitors to the area there were less magazines being picked up from shops and businesses. Mrs Scanlon had contacted Clanpress to request the reduction in printing costs a saving of £127.00 would be made if the print was reduced to 2900 copies of a 72page edition. **It was resolved to reduce the number of magazines by 300 until restrictions are lifted and the business drop can be reinstated.**

**176. Website – website accessibility.**

Councillor C Shepherd advised the website accessibility had been dealt with and was compliant with the required standards.

Mr Martyn said the website had been used to display informational posters that had a short shelf life and made accessing official documents such as agendas a lengthier task to find.

Councillor Bubb asked if it was possible to see how many times agendas etc had been viewed on the website. Mr Martyn advised this was not achievable however a count of the times the website is viewed was. The website is accessed on average 20 times a day.

**177. Facebook.**

Councillor C Shepherd advised the Parish Councils Facebook page had been updated reminding people to pick up after their dogs and to use the Dog bins provided.

Mr Martyn asked if Councillor C Shepherd would speak with Councillor Stokes and ascertain why the Dersingham Village Group was not accessible to view unless you have been accepted by the administration team as he could see no hard in viewing the page.

**178. Noticeboards.**

Mrs Scanlon advised she had spoken to Councillor Frost regarding the cleaning of the noticeboards and she had agreed to clean the boards.

**179. Correspondence.**

None Received.

**180. Items or inclusion at the next meeting.**

Removal of agenda Finance from Village Voice item c to show advertisers only.

**181. Date of next meeting.**

Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 to be held virtually at 10.00am

With no further business the meeting closed at 11.21am