

ALRESFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING - THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Thursday 18th November 2021 at 11.00am

Present: Cllrs Frank Belgrove (Chairman), Linda Belgrove, Alistair Broom, Ernie Osborne and Ann Wiggins
Also Present: Mr M Cooke (Clerk) and Mrs A Baxter (RFO and assistant clerk)
Absent: Cllr Rubina Swash

21/016 Apologies for absence: *To note any apologies.*

Apologies were received from Cllr Swash.

21/017 Declaration of interests: *To state any interests in the below agenda items.*

Cllr E Osborne – A pecuniary interest in item 21/023.

Cllr L Belgrove – A personal interest as a representative of TDALC.

21/018 Minutes of a previous Meeting: *To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of the 24th February 2021.*

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting of 24th February 2021 are true and accurate, subject to the following changes.

Item 21/004 add Andrew to Mr Barker.

Item 21/006 add F to Cllr Belgrove.

Proposed: Cllr Osborne, Seconded: Cllr Broom, 4 in favour, 1 abstention.

21/019 Minutes of the last Meeting: *To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of the 30th March 2021.*

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting of 30th March 2021 are true and accurate.

Proposed: Cllr Wiggins, Seconded: Cllr L Belgrove, all in favour.

21/020 To receive an update on actions from the last meeting not covered elsewhere in this agenda.

Cllr L Belgrove informed the committee that TDALC has not invoiced for a few years now. They intend to start afresh.

Cllr F Belgrove explained that a new bank account has not been set up due to Covid restrictions. We need to look into our options as our current bank holdings are over the threshold for government protection.

Cllr Swash is looking into options on the PWLB loan.

21/021 Summary of 1st and 2nd Quarters of 2020/21.

The summary has been circulated. To review any material variances and answer any questions.

It was noted that the grant to offset Covid losses has been a significant help. Also, that we have not had any of the budgeted expenditure for a PCSO but that we have struggled without her from a social perspective.

The Neighbourhood Plan expenses are over budget, but Navigus had to be consulted and the excess came out of the reserves. There are no office expenses in the first half of the year but there will be in the second office.

Cllr L Belgrove explained that there is no longer a horticultural society but there is a new gardening club. The AHS was looking after the gardens in the village, but the situation was complicated by employment issues. The handyman is now doing one of the gardens.

The water rates are very high because Castle Water hugely overestimated in lieu of a meter reading. Mr Cooke will do monthly meter readings and Mrs Baxter will ask for a refund at the next invoice.

Cllr F Belgrove is pleased with the new floodlights.

Signature.....

Date.....

Overall expenditure is at approximately 40% of the budget.

21/022 Draft Budget for 2022/23.

To review a draft budget and discuss a precept recommendation for 2022/23. (To be finalised once the tax base figures are known).

Cllr Osborne expressed concern re how the recycling credits are done.

The PCSO hours will be reduced but there was a concern about an inflationary increase to salary.

The cost of the FiLCA qualification for the RFO was added to the training budget.

The PWLB loan was discussed and whether overpaying or paying a lump sum is an option. There would be a penalty, but this reduces after 10 years. The RFO is to find out the life of the loans, and confirm it is over 10 years.

There was a discussion on future costs for Pavilion maintenance, lighting and seating. We will look at grants for revamping the exterior with possible awnings or a veranda and outdoor seating.

Some of the playground items need repairing, there is an inspection soon.

The car park may have some rotten wood which needs replacing and lining was also raised.

The CCTV may need updating or maintenance.

TDC are thinking of selling the allotments so there is the potential to purchase them, but we don't know what the cost will be.

St Peters will need additional funding and it was agreed to increase the budget to £5,000.

We don't know when Staunton Gate will be handed over. The budgeted expenditure will be covered by a ringfenced reserve to be given to the council.

The EALC subs are high and some councils are not paying them.

After changes the net budgeted expenditure came to £99,255. It was resolved to make a recommendation to the Parish Council to set a precept of £88,230, which is a 2% increase on 2021/22. The remainder of the budgeted expenditure is to be funded by reserves, as it has been a difficult year for residents.

Proposed: Cllr Broom, Seconded: Cllr Osborne, all in favour.

Until the tax base is known we don't know what impact this will have on council tax rates. It was discussed that an explanation of the precept should go into the Alresford Advertiser and on the noticeboards.

21/023 Cllr Osborne expenses claim

Cllr Osborne gave some background to this item then left the room.

After some discussion there was no proposal, so the item was withdrawn from the agenda.

Cllr Osborne returned to the meeting.

21/024 Review of quarterly bank reconciliations by a non-signatory of the bank account.

Cllr Broom will meet with the RFO to do the bank reconciliations.

21/025 Meeting closes

The meeting closed at 12.37pm.

Minuted by Angela Baxter – RFO & Assistant Clerk Contact rfoapcessex@outlook.com

Signature.....

Date.....