



Hartlebury Parish Council

Clerk to the Council – L Cleaver
Email: hartlebury.clerk@gmail.com
Website: Hartlebury.org.uk
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MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING TUESDAY 6TH DECEMBER 2022

PRESENT: Cllrs S Tranter (Chair), C Atkinson, A Buck, T Ingham.

ALSO PRESENT: - L Cleaver (Clerk) and two members of the public.

157. APOLOGIES.

None. It was noted that Cllr Ingham would attend but would be late due to work commitments.

158. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Cllr Tranter declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 8c, payment of the memorial wreath.

159. DISPENSATIONS.

None.

160. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.

Proposed by Cllr Buck and seconded by Cllr Atkinson and unanimously agreed that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting Tuesday 4th October 2022 be signed as a correct record.

161. BUDGET v ACTUAL 2022/23

Budget v actual reviewed by all to the 1st November 2022. Following the review it was agreed by all to speak to the Chair of the Council with regards payment of his Chairman's allowance, payment to be made by the end of the financial year.

162. BUDGET 2022-23

Following a review of the budget it was agreed by all to move £500 from Christmas Fayre to Grass Cutting to cover this year's agreed contract spend.

163. BANK RECONCILIATION

Reviewed by all the position 1st November 2022. Cheque 102267 for £15.00 followed up early October as not presented. Still not presented at the time of the meeting.

164. PAYMENTS FOR APPROVAL: -

Agreed by all to approve the following payments: -

- a) Cheque 102314 £1309.68 Clerks Salary October 2022
- b) Cheque 102315 £ 77.00 Nest Pension Oct refund to Clerk paid from own acc.
- c) Cheque 102316 £ 25.00 Reimburse Cllr S Tranter for the memorial wreath PO78
- d) Cheque 102317 £ 144.00 To reimburse the Clerk Wyevale Nurseries Oak Sapling for the NE School PO79
- e) Cheque 102318 £ 21.98 To reimburse Cllr Meredith Christmas Baubles PO76
- f) Cheque 102319 £ 300.00 GJH Electrical, Christmas tree lights installation PO72

165. ALLOTMENT UPDATE BY CLLR ATKINSON.

From 1st April 2020, the Council had 23 plots with a total income of £418.00. 3 of these plots were empty and overgrown. Cllr Atkinson mentioned that the site also had no water supply. Allotment rent from 1st April 2023 will not be increased but the Council will review again November 2023. The previous rent increase was limited to £10 per year and will end this year so from 1st April 2023 all tenants will be paying the corrected amount for each plot according to their size. All Tenants have been asked if they would like to continue with their plot from 1st April 2023, most tenants had replied positively, only 15 yet to respond. The Council have a budgeted earmarked amount of £2000 for improvements to the site, this along with funding set aside from the allotment rent. New plots can be seen on the right hand side of the site. 2 people are on the plot waiting list, if anyone does decide to give up their plot at the end of March 2023 these plots will be offered to people on the list before creating more plots on the right hand side of the site. As of the 19th November 2022 the Council now has 59 tenanted plots taken by 48 tenants. The suggested income for 2023-2024 £1566.95. The Allotment Advisory Group and Allotment Tenants will look into the supply of water to the site once the land owner agrees, the £2000 earmarked for improvements and surplus rent money will be used to make a start with that project. The Clerk would amend the Councils budget so the income less outgoings could be easily seen. The Chair thanked Cllr Atkinson for a good report and noted her hard work and all agreed she had made a real success of the site.

166. CAR PARK POT HOLE REPAIRS

Quotes received and considered by all. A few members of the committee voiced their concerns having to spend tax payer's money on having the car park maintained and that County last time repaired the potholes via their Contractor who carried out the works free of charge, it was also estimated a possible £10K further spend. Perhaps the way forward should have been to use a different material for the car park. After a lengthy discussion it was agreed by all the repairing of the potholes that must be addressed as soon as possible otherwise the car park would have to be closed under H&S grounds. **DECISION**, the Committee asked the Clerk to speak to the Contractor of the quote for £1540.00 plus vat to ensure the correct car park levels would be maintained and to action the works under grounds of health and safety as soon as possible so that the lower car park area would not have to be considered for closure.

167. FUTURE BUDGET 2024/2025

Consideration of the first draft budget for the year 2024/2025. The External Auditor figure needed to be adjusted given the new rates received. £2000 to be addressed for the possible installation of new village gates at Chadwick Bank, and £6000 towards the possible replacement of the lower car park at the village hall. To be reviewed again at the next FC meeting.

168. CLERKS COSTS

The Clerk gave an update over her concerns referencing spiralling administration costs to complaints raised by a local Charity and two members of the public.

The first concern was raised by two members of the public with regards to the Councils

AGAR 2020/2021 this subject remained outstanding by the External Auditor who hoped to complete their review January 2023. The Council had earmarked an amount of £1200 for additional work by the External Auditor. On this occasion the Clerks time had not been allocated as this concern started some time ago but further time spent on this subject would be allocated.

The second complaint made by a local charity to the ICO in November 2022, the complainant unhappy with the Councils reply under an FOI request. The ICO ruled in favour of the Parish Council; however the local charity has since raised a complaint against the ICO's decision. The Clerks costs from being asked to record her hours of work on this subject to date £284.00

The third complaint made by a local charity for the demand amount of £5000, the current case is now being handled via the processing centre of the County Court. Clerks cost from when being asked to record her time spent on this subject is £463.00. The fourth complaint made by a local Charity for a demand of over £8000, this subject is ongoing, the Clerks costs so far £189.00

The fifth complaint relating to Data Protection made by a member of the public is still ongoing, Clerks costs to date £133

All concerns will be monitored and costs incurred by the Clerk to be brought before the Council at the next meeting and reviewed with the presented budget.

169. PARISH HANDYMAN/MAINTENANCE PERSON

DECISION:- the appointment of a Parish Handyman/Maintenance Person, was given to this committee by the full council at its November meeting. The background to this subject and all considerations put before the committee. The proposal of the appointment of a Parish Handyman/maintenance duly considered and given unanimous approval with immediate effect.

170. MEMORIAL WALL

Cllr Buck gave the committee an update. He was waiting for the planning application back. No spend for the Parish Council to consider. Cllr Ingham thanked Cllr Buck for paying for all the drawings, all noted Cllr Bucks generous help so far.

171. MATTERS FOR URGENT CONSIDERATION.

Purchase order 68, cheque 102320 £1140.00 J & A Tree Services Ltd , high/medium works required around the village green following a tree survey.

Cheque 102321 £ 819.00 Top Cut November grass cutting contract.

Cheque 102322 £1424.80 Clerks Salary November

Cheque 102323 £ 312.00 Top Cut Lengthsman duties for November

172. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Pay and display consideration at the village hall car park to possibly offset future car park maintenance costs.

173. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note a change to Wednesday 8th March 2023 due to the Clerks final training session taking place on Tuesday 7th March. Agenda items to be submitted by 21st February 2023

Noted that Cllr Ingham joined the meeting at 7.45pm, Cllr Pratt did not attend. With no further business the meeting finished at 8.30pm

Signed S Tranter (Chair)..... Dated

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