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PORLOCK



Clerk to the Council
Parish Room
Old School Centre
West End
PORLOCK
Somerset TA24 8QD

Parish Council

Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting
The Parish Room, Old School Centre, Wednesday 4 January 2023, 6pm
Copies of minutes and reports are available on request

Present: Cllr. L Thornton (Chair), Cllr M Mariner, Cllr D McCanlis, Cllr D Thornton

Also present: LOCUM RFO Annie Dallaway by Zoom, Cllr S McCanlis, Deborah Stanyon (Visitor Centre Manager) and two members of the public

1. **Apologies accepted by the council:** There were none received.
2. **Members to declare any interests they may have in agenda items:** There were none declared.
3. **Items to be dealt with after the public, including the press have been excluded:** There were none.
4. **Public Participation**
Deborah Stanyon, Visitor Centre Manager thanked the RFO for providing copies of the December finance documents and the draft budget for 23/24 in advance of the meeting. Ms Stanyon noted that there was no reference to the PVTa grant in the draft budget. The Chair advised that the grant would be discussed under agenda item 7. Ms Stanyon also noted that the grant to the Lovelace Centre was also not included in the draft budget. The RFO advised that once it was confirmed that this was an annual grant, it would be included in the draft budget.
5. **To review the Receipts & Payments report to end December 22 and the preliminary Schedule of Payments for Jan 23 (supporting documents)**
Cllr D McCanlis queried inconsistencies in the running costs for the Cemetery and the Parish Office when comparing the last financial year with the current one. The Chair reported that there are historic posting errors and inconsistencies within the accounts and that the council was working hard to establish a consistent approach with cost centres and codes. The committee noted that the subsidy payment to the bus service had not been paid yet this year. **ACTION:** Cllr L Thornton
6. **To review the budget for 22/23 and recommend the following expenditure to Full Council:**

6.1 £85 to update the Parish Council Chairman's board in the Village Hall

The committee recommended approval.

6.2 £500 to update the Parish Council website, run an accessibility check and create new councillor emails

The committee noted that the computer supplies and website accounting codes were currently overspent but there was significant underspend within Clerk's salary. The committee recommended that this surplus could be used to fund the necessary website updates and IT support.

PROPOSER: Cllr L Thornton

SECONDER: Cllr D McCanlis

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

7. To review the draft budget 23/24 (supporting document) for recommendation to Full Council:

The RFO reported that the latest draft v6 of the budget 23/24 contained the proposals from the Fin Com on 24 November 22 and showed a balanced budget with a small surplus of £102. The committee reviewed the draft budget and made the following recommendations:

- 100/4000 Clerk's salary – no allocation for work from home allowance
- 101/1090 Miscellaneous income (administration) – no allocation
- 101/4029 Website – reduce to £500
- 101/4035 Clerk's telephone – no allocation
- 102/4100 Rent – reduce to £200 for meeting room hire
- 104/4258 Lovelace Centre grant – allocate £500
- 206/4116 Winter maintenance contract – no allocation as this is contingency only
- 207/4118 Flowers, display, barrels - £2.5K allocation
- 214/4131 Dunster Steep project – no allocation as this will be funded out of EMR 337

The committee noted that the War Memorial required repair and maintenance. This will be addressed as part of the forthcoming Asset Review process and funding allocated as necessary.

7.1 To review Earmarked Reserves EMR proposals for 23/24 (supporting document)

The RFO advised that the latest draft of the budget relied upon a more judicious use of the EMR funds. The committee discussed the proposals and recommended the following:

- 326 Beautification grant – to be renamed Cemetery Fund with an allocation of £5K to fund tree/maintenance works in the Cemetery
- 337 Porlock Project Fund – allocation to be increased to £25K to fund projects and general grants as appropriate
- 340 Environment & Amenities Fund – allocation to be increased to £10K to fund projects and general grants as appropriate, for example tree projects, Coronation events and the PVTA grant.

To recommend the revised draft budget 23/24 and the EMR proposals as detailed above:

PROPOSER: Cllr L Thornton

SECONDER: Cllr M Mariner

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

7.2 To recommend the precept for 23/24

The committee recommended £81,687 as the precept for 23/24 to provide a balanced budget. For a Council Tax Band D property this equates to £119.35 (compared to £104.43 last year).

PROPOSER: Cllr L Thornton

SECONDER: Cllr D Thornton

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

8. To review PPC subsidies to other community groups

Cllr Thornton had previously circulated a report detailing the income and expenditure for the council's significant cost centres: Library, Visitor Centre, Lovelace Centre, Cemetery, Village Hall car park, High Bank car park, Doverhay public toilets and Old School Centre public toilets. The report will be useful for future budget review and monitoring. See Appendix 1 for the report.

The committee agreed that the village grass cutting contract should be reviewed in advance of the next growing season.

9. To receive a report/update on PPC security

Cllr Thornton had previously circulated a report detailing security issues related to IT, assets and finances and the measures required to address any areas of weakness. This matter will be the subject of on-going review. See Appendix 2 for the report.

10. To receive an update re recommendations from the 2022 RFO Financial Review Report and agree plan of implementation.

The RFO reported that she would be visiting the Parish Council office on Wed 11 Jan 23 to ensure that appropriate record keeping is in place in advance of the internal and external audits for 22/23. The council's Asset Review process and Risk Management procedures will be an agenda item for review at Full Council in February 23.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm

Signed:

Date:

L. Thornton (Fin Com Chair)

11/1/2023