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Office Hours:

Tuesday 10:00 – 14:00
Wednesday 10:00 – 14:00
Thursday 10:00 – 14:00
Friday CLOSED



Parish Council

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

Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting
The Parish Room, Old School Centre, Thursday 4 Jan, 5pm
Copies of minutes and reports are available on request

Present: Cllr. L Thornton (Chair), Cllr S Colson, Cllr D McCanlis, Cllr D Thornton

Also present: Parish Clerk, Annie Dallaway

1. **Apologies accepted by the council:** None received
2. **Members to declare any interests they may have in agenda items:**
Cllr D McCanlis declared an interest in agenda item 7 iii) as he is a High Bank car park permit holder
3. **Items to be dealt with after the public, including the press have been excluded:**
Items 9 & 10 will be held in closed session as the Parish Council will be discussing confidential terms of tender documents and item 11 will be held in closed session as the Parish Council will be considering legal advice.
4. **Public Participation**
There were no members of the public in attendance at the meeting.
5. **Minutes of Fin Com meetings – to consider for approval as an accurate record**
 - i) **Fin Com meeting 22 February 23**
COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE 22 FEBRUARY 23 FIN COM MINS
PROPOSED BY CLLR L THORNTON; SECONDED BY CLLR D MCCANLIS. ALL PRESENT AND VOTING IN FAVOUR.
Cllr S Colson did not take part in the vote as he was not present at the meeting.

Council noted that the following items are still outstanding:

Heating system – the existing heating system is not very energy efficient. Cllr D Thornton will take advice from a heating engineer and feedback to council. **ACTION: DT**

Water butts – water butts are to be installed in order to conserve water for floral maintenance and reduce costs. **ACTION: LT to organise in this financial year**

- ii) **Fin Com meeting 3 July 23**
COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE 3 JULY 23 FIN COM MINS
PROPOSED BY CLLR L THORNTON; SECONDED BY CLLR D MCCANLIS. ALL IN FAVOUR.

6. **Somerset Council financial situation and devolution opportunities – to receive an update**

No new information has been provided by Somerset Council to date this year. There is a meeting of the LCN on 11 January when hopefully more information will be available. The Clerk has written to Somerset Council to register interest in the following services: Highways Steward (in conjunction with the Local Community Network), the Library (already a Community Library Partnership) and the number 10 bus service from Minehead to Porlock Weir. Somerset Council will be finalising their budget for 24/25 on 20 February when it will become clear which discretionary services will be impacted by funding cuts. This is an evolving situation and Fin Com will monitor the situation accordingly.

7. Draft Annual Budget 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025 – to review and make recommendations to Full Council

i) Precept request

Cllr L Thornton queried the HMRC/PAYE/NI budget figure for 24/25 which is lower than the actual expenditure for 23/24 to date for this budget code. The Clerk will review this and feedback to committee members.

The Committee reviewed the latest draft of the budget and made the following recommendations:

- a) **101 4043 Legal Fees** – remove £3K and allow £1K for contingency. Create new EMR Legal Reviews with 10K allocated to meet the cost of all anticipated legal fees which relate to historic arrangements and should not be part of precept for 24/25 (PVCIC lease/Lovelace licence/Doverly Manor charity status)
- b) **101 1050 Bank Interest** from Unity Instant Access account – include the annual interest as income
- c) **202 4128 Cemetery Improvements** – remove £500 as all works to be funded out of Cemetery EMR 326
- d) The Council laptop may need to be replaced during 24/25 and this will be funded out of OSC EMR 321
- e) **300 1076 Precept** – the Clerk will amend the budget as above and adjust the precept figure to create a balanced budget. The precept figure will show an annual increase which can primarily be explained by the need to prioritise staff salaries. Staff hours and pay have been systematically reviewed and increases allocated where necessary to ensure that the Parish Council is appropriately resourced to manage its business in an efficient manner.

COMMITTEE RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND THE DRAFT BUDGET FOR FULL COUNCIL APPROVAL SUBJECT TO THE ABOVE AMENDMENTS

PROPOSED BY CLLR L THORNTON; SECONDED BY CLLR D MCCANLIS. ALL IN FAVOUR

ii) Budget provision/EMR for devolution

No budget/precept allocation will be made for devolution for 24/25 as the situation is uncertain with regard to SC service and funding cuts. However, the Committee agreed that it would be prudent to establish an EMR for devolution and that this would need to be reviewed throughout the year. It may be that the Parish Council will need to budget for devolution and asset transfer in 25/26.

COMMITTEE RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND FOR FULL COUNCIL APPROVAL A NEW EMR FOR DEVOLUTION WITH AN ALLOCATION OF £25K

PROPOSED BY CLLR S COLSON; SECONDED BY CLLR D THORNTON. ALL IN FAVOUR

Cllr D McCanlis declared an interest and left the meeting for agenda item 7 iii) as he is a High Bank car park permit holder

iii) High Bank car park fees 24/25

COMMITTEE RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND FOR FULL COUNCIL APPROVAL AN INCREASE OF FEES FOR 24/25 BY CPI 4.7%

PROPOSED BY CLLR L THORNTON; SECONDED BY CLLR S COLSON. ALL IN FAVOUR

8. Asset Register – to review/update and make recommendations to Full Council

The Clerk will update the Asset Register to include the new metal book cabinet and the updated list of flood equipment.

In accordance with Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the Parish Council's Standing Order 3 d) the press and public will be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of items 9 and 10 on this agenda as the Parish Council will be discussing confidential terms of tender documents and item 11 on this agenda as the Parish Council will be considering legal advice.

**COMMITTEE RESOLVED TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION FOR AGENDA ITEMS 9, 10 & 11
PROPOSED BY CLLR L THORNTON; SECONDED BY CLLR D MCCANLIS. ALL IN FAVOUR**

9. Grounds Maintenance Contract – to consider the draft tender document and make recommendations to Full Council

The Committee agreed that it was important to have a better understanding of the work schedule in the Grounds Maintenance Contract before going out to tender. The Committee agreed that it would be useful to receive feedback from the existing contractor. A monthly invoice template will be introduced to help gather data.

**COMMITTEE RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND FOR FULL COUNCIL APPROVAL THAT THE COUNCIL GOES OUT TO TENDER FOR THE GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT AUTUMN 2024
PROPOSED BY CLLR L THORNTON; SECONDED BY CLLR S COLSON. ALL IN FAVOUR**

10. Toilet Cleaning Contract – to consider the draft tender document and make recommendations to Full Council

The Committee agreed that it would be useful to receive feedback from the existing contractor.

**COMMITTEE RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND FOR FULL COUNCIL APPROVAL THAT THE COUNCIL GOES OUT TO TENDER FOR THE TOILET CLEANING CONTRACT AUTUMN 2024
PROPOSED BY CLLR L THORNTON; SECONDED BY CLLR S COLSON. ALL IN FAVOUR**

11. PPC legal agreements with other bodies – to review and make recommendations to Full Council

i) PVCIC – to receive an update re draft lease

The draft lease was sent to the PVCIC solicitor week commencing 13 November and the Council is awaiting feedback. The Clerk will contact the solicitor for an update.

ii) Lovelace Centre – to review use of shared space at OSC

The Committee agreed that it would be useful to hold a meeting with PVCIC to discuss how the organisations work together in the Old School Centre.

**COMMITTEE RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND FOR FULL COUNCIL APPROVAL THAT THE COUNCIL WRITES TO PVCIC TO SUGGEST A MEETING IN JANUARY
PROPOSED BY CLLR D MCCANLIS; SECONDED BY CLLR L THORNTON. ALL IN FAVOUR**

iii) Doverly Manor – to receive an update re Charity status

This item was deferred to January Full Council.

The meeting closed at 6.50pm

Signed:



Date:

6/3/2024