

PARISH COUNCIL OF NEWLANDS

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 5 NOVEMBER 2020 VIA A ZOOM TELECONFERENCE COMMENCING AT 7.30 pm

<u>Members:</u>	Cllr F Tingle (Chair)	(P)	Cllr O Barneveld	(P)
	Cllr A Berry		Cllr A Carden	(P)
	Cllr D Crichton	(P)	Cllr A Kirby	(P)
	Cllr J Parry	(P)	Cllr L Price	(P)
	Cllr M Read	(P)		

Also present was two members of the public and Tony Daniells, Clerk to the Council.

- 028/21F Apologies:** Apologies were received from Cllr A Berry.
- 029/21F Declarations of Interest:** Cllr M Read declared a personal interest as a Ward Member for Winchester City Council.
- 030/21F Minutes of the Previous Meeting**
The minutes from the Finance Committee Meeting dated 3 September 2020 were received. **It was unanimously RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting be accepted as an accurate record and were duly signed by the Chair.**
- 031/21F Public Participation:** The meeting was adjourned at 7.33 pm to allow comments from the public. The meeting reconvened at 7.54 pm.
- 032/21F Correspondence:** There was no correspondence to receive.
- 033/21F Finance**
- a) External Audit: The Clerk informed the Committee that he was still awaiting completion of the External Audit. He had successfully challenged a penalty charge of £40 for late submission. **NOTED.**
- b) Orders for Payment: **It was unanimously RESOLVED that the payments detailed on the Orders for Payment (list 09) should be APPROVED in the sum of £420.60 including VAT and that further payments of £493.69 were ratified and that NIL receipts are noted.**
- 034/21F Investment Strategy:** The Clerk summarised the Strategy which prioritised security and liquidity of any investments over return. A Strategy was required prior to receiving commuted sums for open space adoption. Cllr M Read referred to a list of approved investments for public funds. The need to understand the type of investments and term of such was required together with how to invest large sums of money was required.
It was AGREED to defer consideration of the Strategy until the next meeting of the Finance Committee and for Cllr A Carden to review and propose any amendments to Finance Regulations. It was further AGREED that the next Finance Committee meeting should start at 7.00pm
- 035/21F 2021/2022 Budget**
- a) The Chair of the Finance Committee displayed a draft budget for 2021/22 on screen. This was based on 2020/21 but incorporated amendments agreed at previous meetings.
In reviewing the budget line by line, the following comments and amendments were made:
- Audit provision would be reduced to £250
 - Election expenses should be £200 but Cllr M Read would ask WCC for likely costs.
 - Insurance would remain at £500. Costs for adoption of open spaces and play equipment were unknown but could be funded from commuted sums in this year.
 - IT Support should remain at £200 but a sum of £500 should be added to allow for purchase of a new laptop for a second member of staff with £120 added for maintenance of the laptop.

- Legal expenses should remain at £1,000. Any legal costs associated with adoption of open spaces should be funded from commuted sums.
- HALC fees should remain at £500
- Newsletter to remain at £1,000
- Postage would be reduced to £50 as most correspondence was electronic.
- Stationery to remain at £300
- Telephone costs should be increased to £256 to allow for Zoom costs
- Training had been unspent in 2020/21 but should remain at £1,000 for 2021/22
- Travel had been unspent in 2020/21 but would remain at £250 for 2021/22
- Utility charges would need to be confirmed. No share of utility costs for the Hall had been agreed but should be taken from Hall income. There would be an element of cost for use of the office.
- Web hosting charge would remain as per the budget
- The Levy of £6k to WCC for the costs of the play area would be removed.
- Grants would remain at £1,000
- The salary budget would be increased to £20,000 as agreed. This would cover the increase in hours and any pension, NIC and training costs for the new Clerk..
- Payroll admin would remain at £200
- Community Events to remain at £5,000. Events proposed for 2021/22 had not been discussed by the Amenities Committee. Some type of Christmas event should be held. New lights may be needed for the tree. Amenities to arrange a tree for 2020/21
- General Reserve was expected to increase due to unspent funds in 2020/21. It was advised that Reserves could not exceed the Precept.
- There would be an increase in the tax base but this would not be advised by WCC until early December. Once known, this would allow the budget to be reviewed before setting the Precept.
- Community Assets would be funded from Reserves so no sum would be included to fund from the Precept. What assets were proposed was referred back to the Amenities Committee.
- The costs of a Ranger would be £20,000 but pro rata for the hours worked.
- Maintenance of open space would be £15k but taken from commuted sums. Costs for inspections of the play area would be requested from WCC by The Clerk.

It was AGREED that the amended budget would be taken to the December meeting of the Full Council. It was further AGREED that

- i. Cllr D Crichton would discuss utility costs with Grainger and if Grainger funded fire extinguisher maintenance costs.**
- ii. Amenities Committee were authorised to spend up to £500 to install and light a tree in the current year.**
- iii. Cllr A Carden would validate the amount of Reserves that could be held in a general pot.**
- iv. Cllr M Read would confirm election costs**
- v. The Clerk would request play area costs from WCC**

036/21F Other reports: The Chair referred to a request from the Developer of the industrial land for comments from the Parish Council on the proposal.

At this point, Cllr M Read left the meeting and took no part in the discussion.

This item provoked much discussion and covered

- This not being a matter for this Committee to discuss and to wait for an application to be received before commenting.
- A discussion had taken place with the developer in the summer so a precedent had been set.
- The Council should encourage residents to submit their comments
- Plans may change between now and a submission of a formal application. Industrial developments should be on brownfield sites and not encroach on residential areas.
- Only to comment on the design and not if the land should be developed. The land had been allocated to industrial use but Council could influence the design.
- Comments on the proposed application should be put into writing and shared with residents.
- The Clerk would circulate the meeting notes from Dicentra.

It was agreed to an extension of time of 30 minutes for the meeting.

It was AGREED that comments of the use of the land would be documented and circulated to all Councillors for review and agreement at the next Council meeting such that they could be submitted to the Developer by the closing date of 23 November.

037/21F It was RESOLVED that in accordance with the Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press for discussions regarding personnel matters where publicity might be prejudicial to the special nature of the business.

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm. The next Finance Committee meeting will be held on Thursday 7 January 2021.

Finance Committee Meeting – Thursday 5 November 2020
Public Session

A member of the public asked questions and raised points relating to the 2021/22 budget.

- A levy of £5k was shown in 2020/21 but not carried forward to 2021/22. The member was advised that this was for the play area but this would be adopted by the Parish Council in 2021/22. Cllr Read had written to WCC to start the process of transfer.
- Vandalism should be split out from other categories. The member was advised that vandalism to the Hall would be funded by the Developer as Hall owner. Any other expenses to the Hall would be funded by Hall income. Any charges for utility costs were to be agreed with Grainger.
- Payroll administration was undertaken by an external company and appeared as a line item in the budget.
- The increase in Clerks salary was to take account of the increase in hours for the Clerk
- The insurance of the building was covered by the Hall owner but the contents of the Council were included in the Councils insurance
- The Council paid no rent for the lease of the Hall
- Community Assets to be purchased in 2021/22 and beyond were yet to be agreed
- £1k had been budgeted for legal costs related to open space adoption.
- Would the entrance to public land be adopted. There was a question over maintenance costs for land up to the middle of the road.
- Open space adoption had been agreed in principle. An estimated figure for maintenance had been added to the budget based on figures supplied by WCC. The Clerk would confirm the maintenance figure included that of the play area.