



DRAFT MINUTES OF FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Held on Tuesday 16th July 2024, 10.00am, The Hub

In attendance:

Parish Councillors: Cllr Ian Joynson (Chair), Cllr Paul Martin, Cllr Peter Mantle.

Public: None

Clerk: Clare Male

- 1) **APOLOGIES** – accepted apologies from Cllr Sylvia Holyoake and Cllr Philip Nunn.
- 2) **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS**
Members are invited to declare a previously undisclosed interest relating to any item on the agenda and to ask for a dispensation to vote on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest or other non-financial interests – none.
- 3) **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING** – Agreed the accuracy of the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting of the **19th March 2024**. Signed by the Chair.
- 4) **PUBLIC FORUM** – no members of the public were present.
- 5) **MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION** – none.
- 6) **FINANCE COMMITTEE**
 - a) Discussed if it is viable and worthwhile to continue with a separate Finance committee whilst Councillor numbers are so low. Two out of the four meetings this calendar year have had to be cancelled as they have not been quorate. Agreed that the committee is worthwhile to discuss the Finances in detail and that it reduces time pressure on Full Council meetings. Agreed to change the meeting from bimonthly to quarterly. Clerk to reschedule.

ACTION CLERK
 - b) Reviewed and agreed the Finance Committee terms of reference.

CLERK TO PUBLISH
- 7) **BANK RECONCILIATION**
 - a) As at the 11th July 2024 to note bank balances of:

Unity Bank current account	£3,827.88
Unity Bank instant access saver	£47,021.96
Redwood Bank	£10,000.00
CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund	£90,034.25
Total in bank	£150,884.09
Wherry Gardens 10-year maintenance fund	£78,351.00
General reserves	£30,000.00
Working balance	£42,533.09
- 8) **BUDGET**
 - a) Reviewed the current budget. “Receipts” – on track. Clerk will do the VAT return in August. Interest on savings and investments is excellent. Noted that the Tesco grant will be decided in September. Noted that there is a possible £3.5K to be received from the SAM2 bid – see

item 8e. "Running the Council" - no issues with street spaces, recreational spaces, historic and burial spaces, admin and employment. Grants – very little interest. If Councillors are aware of any causes that would like to apply, please tell them to get in touch. "Projects" – main area of concern. Of a budget of £23,416 only £620 has been spent. See action plan update below. Overall, a deficit for the year. Agreed to push the funding for the churchyard wall into the next financial year as the six-month monitoring of wall movement has not yet started. This will resolve the budgeted overspend this year.

- b) Reviewed the current inflation rates – currently 6% on main budget, 8% on Wherry Gardens cashflow. After lengthy discussion, agreed to change both to 3%. **ACTION CLERK**
- c) Reviewed the 3 – year forecast – currently overspent but Clerk has some work to do on the numbers and it needs adjusting for inflation rate. No concerns at present. **ACTION CLERK**
- d) Marketing – discussed funding additional advertising in "Just" magazine, as per decision at Full Council June 2024 – item 13.1.2. Clerk said that the decision to alternate the adverts wasn't possible as the Council had already committed to 12 months in The New Bridge. After piles of the Just magazines have been found dumped around the village agreed to review next year.
- e) Replacement SAM2 – progress on Parish Partnership grant. Were told that the grant would be announced in March. Still no news. Numerous attempts to contact County have been unsuccessful. Clerk has made a formal complaint. County Councillor Fran Whymark aware. Ongoing.
- f) Reviewed the Wherry Gardens revenue budget. Clerk has now updated the budget and identified an underspend in revenue year on year. Options are – wait until the end of the financial year and review again with a full years costs; move the excess revenue over to pay for capital projects at Wherry Gardens or allocate the excess into the main budget. Discussed the condition of the fence adjoining Norwich Road and whether this needs to be budgeted for. Discussed working on continuing the hedge to make it one continuous boundary. Agreed to inspect the fence and the hedge and review other capital projects first – see item 11aii. Clerk to set up meeting on site. **ACTION CLERK**
- g) Clerk requests a new mobile phone due to battery issues. Agreed to take to Wroxham Computers to see if the battery can be replaced. **ACTION CLERK**

9) ROSPA PLAYGROUND REPORTS – REVIEW

- a) **Agnes Gardner King playground** – discussed the report concerns about the timber steps and handrail to the slide and the erosion down the side of the slide. Discussed replacing the timber with recycled plastic to increase the lifespan. Otherwise, the playground is looking in good condition. Noted how mossy the tarmac is and that this needs clearing. Clerk to set up meeting with grounds maintenance contractor to discuss ideas for the slide. Would need to check legal requirements/British Standard for steps and handrail. Cllr Joynson to tighten bolts as per report. **ACTION CLERK & CLLR JOYNSON**
- b) **Wherry Gardens playground** – fixing bolts on the bench loose. Cllr Martin has looked at this – discussed solutions. Agreed to review during a site meeting as agreed in item 8f. Safety matting – no response from Wicksteed on solutions. Agreed to get quotes from other companies. Clerk to draw up spec and get quotes. **ACTION CLERK**

- 10) **CONTRACTS.** Grass cutting contract for 2025 onwards for verges and Caen Meadow. Discussed strategy going forward. Current 3-year contract with Garden Guardian expires at the end of this calendar year. Issues with complaints about areas not being cut properly. Clerk noted that FP2 hasn't been cut this year. There have been issues this year with it being so wet. Options are – do the same again – i.e review spec, go out to tender, award 3 year contract to the cheapest contractor OR employ someone local to undertake the work, like we have with the Parish Gardener OR join forces with Hoveton Community Council to employ a Parish Ranger to cut grass in both villages. They have already purchased machinery and cut the grass at the village hall themselves. Agreed to write a new spec and then do a procurement for a contractor. Discussed possible changes to the spec including biodiversity commitments and a request to do No Mow May. Clerk has consulted with other Parishes about practicalities. Noted feedback that NCC will not allow No Mow May on verges that they pay the Parish Council to cut. Other Parishes get lots of complaints about it and it is difficult to cut and clear in June.

Recommendation was to identify field boundaries and areas that could be treated as meadow areas which are cut less regularly to help biodiversity. The Cemetery extension is a possibility. Agreed to review areas that could be cut less regularly. Agreed to add in Keys Hill Wood strimming paths twice a year, strimming areas around Salhouse Road bus shelters and strimming around posts at Wherry Gardens. Clerk and Cllr Mantle to review areas for the spec.

ACTION CLLR MANTLE & CLERK

11) ACTION PLAN UPDATE

- a) Current projects:
 - i) Caen Meadow management plan – update. None.
 - ii) Wherry gardens adoption (supplementary sum) – feedback on consultation on an estate name sign. No response direct to Cllr Martin in response to the article in the New Bridge. Facebook consultation resulted in 17 comments against the scheme and 3 in favour. Lots of other suggestions for projects. The majority of Councillors voted against continuing with the project. Replacement trees on the swales – NCC tree department have approved the choice of tree and instructed Highways to issue a licence. Wait for licence to be issued by Highways.
 - iii) Tree management – reviewed spec for 24/25 season works created by the Clerk and agreed to go out for prices. **ACTION CLERK**
 - iv) Wroxham Neighbourhood Plan review – £2K in the budget but there isn't a spend profile identified for this project at present. Discussions within the group as to whether a consultant is required for a complete review, or it could be done in house. This determines whether Locality funding be applied for. Ongoing.
 - v) Bench refurbishment – no progress by Councillors since proposed in March. Agreed to ask for a volunteer resident to do a walk around and assess the condition. **ACTION CLERK**
 - vi) Agnes Gardner King playground – signage and line markings inc basketball hoop. Reviewed quote from Wickteed. Basketball hoops are very expensive, but these have to be very structurally secure. Councillor Joynson to get more quotes for the next meeting. **ACTION CLLR JOYNSON**
 - vii) Castle staithe – claiming title. Clerk has submitted a "statement of truth" to the solicitor for submission to Land Registry. Long delays at Land Registry mean it could be months before we hear anything.
 - viii) Churchyard retaining wall – waiting for the movement monitoring equipment to be fitted.
 - ix) Cemetery projects – Cllr Mantle submitted a variety of ideas for new projects in the Cemetery. No budget allocation at present.
- b) Proposed new projects:
 - i) Footpath Salhouse (Full Council June 2024 – item 9.2). Meeting with Trafford Estates hasn't yet been arranged. Agreed to set up meeting with the NCC footpath officer first to discuss. **ACTION CLERK**
 - ii) Footway lighting – nighttime switch off, equipment and meterage. Waiting for UK Power Networks to come back on metering. Ongoing.

12) GRANTS – no new applications.

13) ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA – October tbc (see item 6a) – Financial Regulations, Financial risk assessment, Procurement policy, internal control review, Tesco grant, budget and precept setting.

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