

SWINESHEAD PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH OFFICE

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CHAIRMAN: Councillor Carl Gibbard

TEMPORARY CLERK: Natalie Grant

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE SWINESHEAD PARISH COUNCIL

held on

Monday 1st November 2021

Present: C Carl Gibbard, C Roy Hilton, C Sean Trafford, C Georges Cornah

Also Present: Clerk, Natalie Grant

21/010 To appoint a substantive Chairperson for the committee

Cllr ST proposed Cllr CG for Chairman of the committee, this was seconded by Cllr GC and resolved.

21/011 To receive apologies for absence and reasons given

Cllr CT sent her apologies, she is unable to attend due to childcare issues. Cllr CG Proposed that her apologies and reason for absence are accepted, this was seconded by Cllr ST and resolved.

21/012 To receive any declarations of interest in accordance with the Localism Act 2011

None

21/013 Notes of meeting held on 5th July 2021 to be confirmed and signed as minutes

Cllr CG checked that the Councillors present had read and checked the notes. Cllr ST proposed that the notes presented were an accurate and true reflection of the proceedings and should be accepted as minutes. This was seconded by Cllr GC and resolved. Cllr CG signed the minutes.

ACTION: CLERK TO POST JULY MINUTES TO WEBSITE

21/014 Update on current financial situation

The Clerk presented the attached Budget Report and explained that some changes would be made once last year's accounts had been restated and therefore a full picture of the finances is not completely accurate at this time. Councillors were also presented with the full list of receipts and expenditures for the year so far.

21/015 Update on the progress with Scribe accounting package and next steps

The clerk explained that as soon as the accounts were restated and the internal audit had taken place, Scribe would be populated with all receipts and payments going back to the beginning of the financial year. From this point, she would cease maintaining the spreadsheets for the book-keeping and move on to Scribe. As soon as payments are all in, Finance Committee members would be given read-only access to Scribe.

ACTION: CLERK TO UPDATE SCRIBE AND CREATE USER ACCOUNTS FOR THE COMMITTEE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

21/016 To discuss the "Earmarked Funds" and agree a way forward with managing these pots of money

The Clerk presented the Earmarked Funds for clarification (see budget report).

Councillors made the following suggestions to be recommended to the Full Council:

Mackey's Pit: Expecting income from Enhancement Society for the Fishing Platforms

Play Area: Funds were low and a lot of maintenance is needed. Additional funds may need to be added when budget setting for 2022/23

- Library: Councillors were concerned about the high balance and felt that the Council should be looking at ways of spending some of this money on the community. Cllr CG proposed that the Earmarked Fund should be updated to be called the "Community Hub and Library Fund", this was seconded by Cllr ST and resolved.
- Elections: Cllr GC proposed that while there is money in the bank that is not earmarked, the Council could top this earmarked fund up to £9000 and leave it with this balance so that the Council don't need to keep topping it up each year. If the reserve is depleted at all during the year, it should be topped back up from precept the following year. This was seconded by Cllr RH and resolved.
- Streetlights: The clerk reminded Councillors that this was the fund that was likely to have a significant change due to the restating of the accounts. Cllr RH proposed that the Council could afford to have the outstanding lists of work done that had been suggested by Boston Borough Council in their lighting audit, completely depleting the fund, then allow the usual £7000 in the 2022/23 budget. Cllr ST seconded the proposal and it was resolved.
- Asset Sales: Cllr GC proposed that the funds in this reserve were purely historical and that the money could be moved to general funds and the earmarked fund could be dissolved. This was seconded by Cllr RH and resolved.

Cllr RH proposed that instead of having a high bank balance of unallocated money, a new fund called "General Reserve" should be created with a balance of £15000. This should be used in the same way as the Elections fund and kept topped up at £15000 at the start of each financial year, using precept to top up any depleted funds. This was seconded by Cllr CG and resolved.

The above recommendations will be made to Full Council at the November meeting.

ACTION: CLERK TO MAKE THE ABOVE AN AGENDA ITEM AT NOVEMBER FULL COUNCIL MEETING

21/017 To review the Asset Register and consider a way forward with updating and maintaining records of assets

The clerk explained that although we now have a way of maintaining the Asset Register and adding new items, the matter of existing Council assets is still outstanding and needs to be resolved before the external audit next year. Cllr RH suggested a small working group should be set up to review the assets and decide on a definitive list. This was seconded by Cllr CG who suggested that Cllrs RW, MB and KO would be the obvious candidates for the working group. It was resolved to recommend this to Full Council.

ACTION: CLERK TO PULL A WORKING GROUP TOGETHER AND ARRANGE TO MEET ASAP

21/018 To discuss the tendering process for gardener / handyman in the village

Cllr CG proposed that the working group suggested above should also take a lead on the gardener / handyman role. This was seconded by Cllr ST and it was resolved to recommend this to Full Council.

ACTION: CLERK TO PULL A WORKING GROUP TOGETHER AND ARRANGE TO MEET ASAP

21/019 To discuss the tendering process for grass cutting in the village

Cllr CG proposed that the working group suggested above should also take a lead on the gardener / handyman role. This was seconded by Cllr ST and it was resolved to recommend this to Full Council.

ACTION: CLERK TO PULL A WORKING GROUP TOGETHER AND ARRANGE TO MEET ASAP

21/020 To discuss and agree a timescale for the budget planning for 2022/23

Cllr RH commented that the Finance Committee need to start working on this as soon as possible, the first steps being to ask Full Council if they have any spending requirements, finalise the grass cutting and handyman tenders, and review spending of this year. The clerk said that spending requirements could be added to the agenda for November and the grass cutting and handyman tenders could be prepared as soon as the working group had fed back. Cllr RH proposed that the Finance Committee meet again before the December meeting to review the process. This was seconded by Cllr SG.

ACTION: CLERK TO ADD "PROPOSED SPENDING REQUIREMENTS" TO NOVEMBER FULL COUNCIL AGENDA AND ARRANGE A FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING BEFORE THE DECEMBER FULL COUNCIL MEETING

Meeting concluded at 19:55