

Helsby Parish Council

Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held at 7pm on 3rd January 2018 at Undermount Mews

Present:

Cllr. Terry O'Neill – Chairman Cllr. Sarah Temple – Vice-Chairman
Cllr. George Randles Cllr. Alan Gardner

1. Public Air Time. Proposed by Cllr. Gardner, seconded by Cllr. Randles and **RESOLVED – that the meeting be suspended for public participation – F01/18.** There being no matters brought to the committee's attention it was proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. Gardner and **RESOLVED – that Public Air Time be closed and the meeting reconvened – F02/18.**
2. Apologies for absence – received and accepted from Cllrs. Ellams and Hulse.
3. Declarations of interest – none reported.
4. Minutes of the previous meeting. Proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. Gardner and **RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 25th September 2017 be accepted as accurate and signed by the Chairman – F03/18.**
5. Matters arising from the previous meeting – no matters reported.
6. Review of grants / earmarked reserves.

Particulars	Balance 01/04/17 £	Provided 2017-18 £	Planned Usage 2017-18 £	Expected Balance 31.03.18 £
Provision for Comm Sports Club support	72,000	8,000	0	80,000
Clerk's Pension provision	5,500	0	5,500	0
Future burial provision	16,000	2,000	0	18,000
CWaC New Homes Bonus	19,171	0	8,168 ^(a)	11,003
HNP Community Development Fund	0	0	0	0
CWaC Cllr. McKie 5 th Helsby Grant Show	0	1,000	1,000	0
Total:	£123,671	£11,000	£14,668	£109,003
Total earmarked reserves balance at 31st March 2017	£123,671	Expected balance 31st March 2018		£109,003

(a) £968 already taken from reserve for camera installation at the Community Centre (overlooking Sherwood Court site). Purchase of TruCam £7,200 (subject to the Parish Council's approval) will be taken from the fund. Annual calibration fee of £245 + VAT for the TruCam would be placed in 2019-20 budget onwards.

The Parish Clerk strongly urged members to keep the unspecified reserves to 6-months working capital. The Chairman estimated that there should be £50K in unspecified reserves at 31 03 18 which was adequate.

7. Review of Investment Programme – the following figures were duly noted.

a) NatWest Business Reserve A/c as at 21.12.17	£50,961.53
b) Monmouthshire Building Society Corporate Bonus	£75,679.82
c) Co-Op Business Select Act as at 11.10.17	£75,679.82

8. Committee budgets for 2018-19. The Finance Committee reviewed all budget calculations:

	<u>2017/18</u>	<u>2018/19</u>
Health & Safety	£880	£730^(a)
Environment	£20,800	£23,460^(b)
Human Resources	£700	£500^(c)
Parks, Cemetery & Allotments	£12,600	£32,525^(d)

Notes to above:

- a) Zurich Municipal waiving annual membership fees for Local Community Advisory Service.
- b) Uplift due to (i) new budget created for War Memorial cleaning £1,500 (ii) increase in other budgets consistent with expected current years outturns.
- c) Decrease based on expected current years outturn.
- d) Increased to (i) painting park railings £13,200 (ii) placing £8,000 per annum (commencing 2018/19 to 2022/23) with the aim of replacing all of the soft safety surface in the Children’s park.

9. Calculation of the budget figures for Financial Year 2018-19. The Committee worked through the individual budget headings for the purpose of calculation the precept request.

Receipts

- Regular income from bank interest was estimated £750 lower.
- Income from VAT reclamation was down by £6,900 to £5,600 as there had not been any major projects in 2017-18 to claim back the VAT in 2018-19.
- The Council Tax Support Grant from CWaC was reducing by £1,029.

Payments

- The decision not to continue the funding of PCSO had reduced expected expenditure by £12,000. This however is offset by new expenditure on painting the park railings as an estimated £13,500. The amount is none recurring so will not appear in future years;
- The committee is recommending a break in 2018-19 from organising the annual Helsby Grant Show thus saving £4,000. This is due to there being 2 x Community Benefit Funds open to local organisations from Protos £30,000 (maximum grant £4,000 per project) and the Wind Farm £125,000;

Proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. O’Neill and **RESOLVED – that the Parish Council be RECOMMENDED 1) to take £8,000 out of the New Homes Bonus Reserve and to place said amount into a new specified reserve Budget Heading 226R entitled ‘Soft Safety Surface’; 2) to place £8,000 into the specified reserves per annum starting 2019-20 until required to replace all soft surfaces in the Children’s Play Area - F04/18**

The Helsby Grant Show has run its course and reached a natural end given the low number of applicants in the last 2 years. The expenditure of £4,000 per annum will therefore be saved. Proposed by Cllr. Gardner, seconded by Cllr. O'Neill and **RESOLVED – that the Parish Council be RECOMMENDED to terminate the Helsby Grant Show in 2018 – F05/18.**

That the Parish Council be RECOMMENDED to accept the budget calculations for 2018-19 £113,234 income and £113,234 expenditure – F06/18.

10. Precept for Financial Year 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019. Proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. Gardner and **RESOLVED – that the Parish Council be RECOMMENDED to issue a precept request to Cheshire West and Chester Council for £96,675 based on budget calculations for the ensuing fiscal year 2018-19 as now attached to these minutes along with justification of the precept request and taking into account the £2,059 Council Tax Support Grant – F07/18.**

The Band D equivalent number for Helsby was 1960.3 for 2018-19. Based on a precept amount of £96,675, a Band D property would pay £49.32 which was an increase of 9.02% from 2017-18. The Council Tax Scheme was being phased out over the next 2 years as follows:

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Payment to Helsby Parish Council from CWaC	£2,059	£1,029	£0

The above CTRS grant must be taken off the precept amount.

11. Financial Statement – the Clerk hoped to have the figures ready in time for the next full council meeting on 8th Jan.
12. Clerk's mobile phone use. Proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. Temple and **RESOLVED – that the Parish Council be RECOMMENDED to approve the Clerk's invoice £60 for use of her personal mobile phone for business use from 1st Jan 17 to 31st Dec 17 – F08/08.**
13. Notification of change of External Auditor commencing 2017/18 for 5-year period – PKF Littlejohn LLP, SBA Team, 1 Westferry Circus, Canary Wharf, London E14 4HD Email: sba@pkf-littlejohn.com 020 7516 2200. The fee for Limited Assurance Review (for those councils with income/expenditure band £100,001 - £200,000) will be £400 + VAT – duly noted.
14. 5-Year Plan. Cllr. O'Neill had produced a draft plan which the committee reviewed and asked questions. The following items were discussed: -
- Circumference footpath around the Parish Field – Cllr. O'Neill was awaiting a response from CWaC Localities Team re request if Section 106 money could be used to fund it;
 - Proposal to consider putting money in reserve if the Parish Council took on services that the local authority currently provided;

- Maltby Triangle – awaiting response from Localities re the Parish Council’s request asking CWaC to consider if they would be willing to commence negotiations on giving the land to the Parish Council to maintain;
- Community Centre. The Lease between CWaC and the Parish Council expires in May 2019. The Parish Council awaited a response from CWaC Property Services re commencing negotiations to either extend the Lease or to hand over the building to the Parish Council;
- Emergency Gritting – this was not a task that the members wished the Parish Council to become involved with therefore the item would be removed from the draft 5-Year plan;
- Website – the cost of employing a website management provider;
- Panna Cage Football. The Police owned the equipment and used it in different areas for youth participation. The basketball court was already being used for Panna Cage by PCSOs engaging with local youths;
- Request for proper road crossing on A56 outside Lincoln Court. Cllr. O’Neill stated that the Netherton Hall crossing cost £50k. Cllr. Temple asked if Section 106 money could be used. Section 106 money had clear definition for use and it was unlikely that this money could be used for a crossing. Residents had been advised to investigate Community Benefit Funding;
- Cycle provision and recreation area for youngsters. Cllr. O’Neill, PCSO and Helsby members of the Weaver & Sandstone Cycle Forum were actively searching for land that could be suitable to build a cycle track. It was thought that s.106 money could be used to fund;
- Proposal to define something around the precept i.e. percentage rise per annum.

The 5-Year Plan was still being shaped and committee’s or councillors could ask for inclusions any time up to the point where it becomes adopted by the full council.

15. Date of the next meeting – 3rd April 2018.

The meeting closed at 8.38pm

Chairman’s signature..... Dated.....