



Helsby Parish Council

Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held virtually at 7.09pm on Monday 29th June 2020 via Zoom

Present:

Cllr. Terry O'Neill – Chairman
Cllr. Sarah Temple – Vice Chairman
Cllr. Mags Porter
Cllr. George Randles
Cllr. Peter Duffy (from 7.14pm)

Also present:

Claire Jones Parish Clerk

1. Election of Chairman
Proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. Temple and **RESOLVED – that Cllr. Terry O'Neill be elected as Chairman of the Finance Committee to serve until the Parish Council AGM in May 2021 – F06/20.**
2. Election of Vice Chairman
Proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Porter and **RESOLVED – that Cllr. Sarah Temple be elected as Vice Chairman of the Finance Committee to serve until the Parish Council AGM in May 2021 – F07/20.**
3. Public Air Time. Proposed by Cllr. Porter, seconded by Cllr. Temple and **RESOLVED – that the meeting be suspended for public participation – F08/20.** There being no matters brought to the committee's attention it was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Randles and **RESOLVED – that Public Air Time be closed and the meeting reconvened – F09/20.**
4. Apologies for absence. Cllr. Alan Gardner informed the clerk that he had a previous commitment and would try to attend but was absent for the full meeting.
5. Declarations of interest. None were received/reported.
6. Minutes of the previous meeting. Proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Duffy and **RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 6th January 2020 be accepted as accurate and duly signed by the Chairman – F10/20.**
7. Matters arising from the previous meeting – none reported.
8. Review of grants and earmarked reserves c/f from 2019/20 and also provided for, received and spent in the current fiscal year. Cllr. Temple suggested a number of amendments to the future burial figures.

9. Review of investment programme. The following figures were duly noted:
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|---|------------|
| a) Co-Operative Bank Business Select Account as at 19/6/20 | £76,383.87 |
| b) Monmouthshire Building Society Corporate Bonus as at 20/6/20 | £77,238.09 |
| c) NatWest Business Reserve as at 20/6/20 | £25,221.00 |
- Committee members were made aware of the rights under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme of £85,000 per banking group. It was noted that this limit had been exceeded with the 2 NatWest accounts (including the current account balance of £69k) but it was agreed to proceed as usual given that some large payments were anticipated shortly. It was also agreed that the Clerk would ensure Mrs Hughes had been removed from all bank mandates and complete bank mandate forms to include herself as a signatory for the Monmouthshire and Co-op accounts. It was confirmed that she was now a signatory for both NatWest accounts.

10. Annual Audit – Internal Auditor’s recommendations Year Ending 31st March 2020:

- a) The Audit Report had 2 recommendations as follows:
- (i) ISSUE – An incorrect balance is entered on the annual return for ‘Box 8 Total value of cash and short-term investments’. It is stated as £132,457 when it should be £133,070 which is the reconciled bank balance. RECOMMENDATION – the annual return should be amended. **To be noted that these figures were amended during the audit.**
 - (ii) ISSUE – We could not find evidence that three quotes were obtained for the following contract as per the financial regulations of the council (which requires three quotes for contracts over £250): Maddocks Landscaping £380. RECOMMENDATION – Contracts should be awarded as per the financial regulations of the council. Council should ensure when the periodically review the financial regulations that procurement levels remain appropriate. **Noted. Council to review financial regulations to ensure that levels remain appropriate.**

Proposed by Cllr. O’Neill, seconded by Cllr. Duffy and **RESOLVED to increase the lower limit for requiring three quotes for any contracts to be increased to £500 – F11/20.**

- b) It was noted that the 2019/20 Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) would be sent to PKF Littlejohn before the deadline date of 31st July 2020.

11. Budget Analysis as at 1st June 2020. Various amendments were suggested to the table as circulated. It was suggested that any further amendments should be agreed with members via e-mail following the meeting. Clerk to circulate to members all items of expenditure so far this year against all budget headings.

12. Council Assets. Various comments were made to the draft as circulated. Clerk to review the latest register of assets as at 31st March 2020 in relation to value of assets, replacement value and any depreciation, taking advice from Jim Stockton where appropriate.

13. Helsby Community Centre. Following correspondence from Helsby Community Association requesting to use the CW&C grant to cover their losses as a result of COVID-19, it was proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. Temple and **RESOLVED to forward the £10,000 COVID-19 grant to Helsby Community Association to be used for this purpose - F12/20.** It

was also suggested that the clerk meet with representatives from the Community Association to fully understand the responsibilities of both organisations in relation to the management of the centre and to request some information about the costs involved. The clerk was also requested to look into the centre's insurance cover before the next renewal date in April 2021 to ensure the council continues to get best value for money. Clerk also to look at the council's own insurance policy with BHIB in relation to its fidelity cover which is now likely to be under the £250k threshold.

14. Helsby Community Sports Club. Cllr. O'Neill updated members on the latest position with the lease agreement for the new office. It is currently with the club's solicitors and the council is waiting for a response.
15. RSK. It was agreed to review the position at the next available Council meeting in relation to their rent deferral for the three months up to 30th June 2020. The clerk to make contact with RSK in the meantime to see what their position is on the repayments.
16. Risk Assessment. The clerk to liaise with Jim Stockton to consider a review of the council's Financial Risk Assessment by the next meeting in September.
17. Review of Financial Regulations. The clerk to consider any amendments using model regulations as drawn up by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) in July 2019. The clerk to liaise with Jim Stockton for advice and then forward any recommendations to committee members in advance of the next meeting in September.
18. 5-Year Capital Plan. Cllr. O'Neill to update and circulate to members in due course.
19. Review of direct debits and standing orders. The following were outlined (payments to be approved by members at the next meeting):

Standing Orders			
Arndale Transport Ltd	Office rent	£320.00	monthly
Direct Debits			
NEST	Clerk pension - HPC contribution 3%	£47.77	monthly
ICO	Data protection fee	£35.00	yearly
Water Plus	Community centre water	£30.48	monthly
Scottish Power	Community centre electricity	£166.00	monthly
Siemens	Photocopier (rental)	£147.81	quarterly
	Photocopier (service fee)	£60.00	yearly

20. Urgent matters – none were raised.
21. Date of the next meeting – 28th September 2020.

The meeting closed at 8.34pm

Chairman's signature Dated