

Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council
Minutes of a virtual meeting of the Finance Committee held on Tuesday
19 May 2020 commencing at 2.00pm

Due to the COVID-19 social distancing restrictions, the meeting of the Planning Committee was held virtually via Zoom, in accordance with the Coronavirus Act 2020, clause 78(2).

Present: Cllr V Ngwenya
Cllr Mrs Brammer
Cllr M Brown
Cllr J Kelly

In attendance: Mrs A de Jager, Parish Clerk
Ms K Law, Assistant Clerk/Finance Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr P Nightingale (work).

2. Declaration of Interest

None

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 18 February 2019 were agreed and will be signed at the next physical meeting of the Finance Committee

4. Parish Council

4.1 The accounts for the year ended 31 March 2020 for the Parish Council and Sports Centre were RECEIVED and NOTED. The Finance Officer noted that both the Parish Council and Sports Centre had performed better than budgeted. The Parish Council General Reserves have increased by £6,896 due to increased income from an increase in membership of the Lunch Club and the receipt of a grant from Kent County Council. Burial Ground income was higher than budgeted. Expenditure was reduced in training and donations, office costs are kept to a minimum and the new photocopier contract is less costly than the previous one. The Bulletin has not been produced due to the COVID-19 pandemic and therefore costs not incurred. The grant to the Sports Centre was over budget due to the installation of the air source heat pumps for the squash courts. The underspend on youth is because we have not had a provision . The Sports Centre had a budgeted deficit of approximately £9,000, but the actual deficit is £811, so overall has performed better than planned. Staffing costs are under budget as the Clerk and Assistant Clerk continue to cover 1 shift a week and provide holiday cover. The contingency budget has not been used.

4.2 Current financial position – The Finance Officer took members through the reports noting that the Parish Council has received 50% of the precept

increasing general reserves to approximately 5 x monthly running costs. Members were taken through the reports noting that salary increases have not been agreed by the government and any award will be backdated. The annual email charge has been paid along with the majority of subscriptions as they fall due in April. Software licences have increased due to the pressure from HMRC to submit VAT returns digitally. An interim payment in the amount of £33,000 has been paid for the erection of the Memorial Wall in the Burial Ground. Lunch club income will be reduced as we are providing 16 take-away meals instead of approximately 30 sit in meals. Income for recycling sacks is over budget as the Village Association Office is closed more residents are coming to the Parish Office for bags. Due to the reduction in staff because of COVID-19, Lloyds bank are not providing direct payments and so all payments are being made by cheque. Cllr Mrs Brammer PROPOSED that the Finance Officer registers with Lloyds Bank for internet banking. SECONDED: Cllr J Kelly and AGREED. Cllr M Brown PROPOSED that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is used for the Memorial Wall in accordance with the guidelines on the Government website. SECONDED: Cllr Mrs Brammer and AGREED. Cllr Mrs Brammer PROPOSED that the ground maintenance budget is left as is and is reviewed in autumn. SECONDED: Cllr M Brown and AGREED.

4.3 The current reconciled bank statements were initialled by Cllr J Kelly.

4.4 It was NOTED that the Internal Audit scheduled for 29 April has been rearranged for 8 June 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.5 The review of the Fixed Asset Register was carried out without amendment.

5. Sports Centre

5.1 COVID-19/Furlough – the Sports Centre is not eligible for the £10,000 small business grant as we are a precepting authority. The furlough payment for the April wage bill in the amount of £3,028 has been received. The Parish Council had agreed that staff would receive their full salary for the months of April and May. Cllr M Brown PROPOSED that going forward, the Government's Job Retention Scheme is adhered to regarding the payment of wages and that the Parish Council will not contribute to the scheme. SECONDED: Cllr Mrs Brammer and AGREED. Cllr V Ngwenya confirmed that no annual leave will accumulate for staff members while on Furlough.

5.2 Current Financial Position – The Finance Officer took members through the reports, noting that the Sports Centre is currently running at a deficit of £4,705 due to the payment of wages and no income as all members have been asked to stop their standing orders. Utilities have not been paid as the meters have not been read. The telephone bill, VAT and wages are being paid.

5.3 The current reconciled bank statements were initialled by Cllr J Kelly.

6. Dates of Future Meetings

The dates of the meetings of the Finance Committee are as follows:

21 July 2020 at 9.45am

20 October 2020

The meeting closed at 3.08pm

Signed:

Date:

Chairman