

Minutes of The Finance Committee held at The Rackliff Centre on

Monday 2nd December 2021 at 7.30 pm

Members Present:

Cllr M O'Callaghan, Chairman; Cllr D Funnell, Vice-Chairman; Cllr E Ellicott, Cllr B Edwards and Cllr A Britcher-Allan

Officers Present:

Ms Linda Neusten, Deputy Clerk

Others and Members of the Public:

Mr Steve Nash

1. Enquire whether anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting
The Chairman confirmed he was audio-recording the meeting to assist with note taking.

2. To receive and approve apologies for absence
None.

3. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests
None.

4. Declarations of Lobbying
None.

5. Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd September 2021
These were agreed, and it was RESOLVED that the Chairman sign them as a true record

5.1 Matters outstanding from these minutes (not listed as separate agenda items):
Minute 8 – Environment Committee was established but not yet ready to submit budget proposals
Minute 9 – Fixed Asset Register updated, removing small items less than £250

5.2 Matters outstanding from previous minutes
None.

6. Minutes of the meeting held on 25th October 2021
Minute 3 be amended to replace 'was' with 'is' so this it reads "Cllr Britcher-Allan is a Commons Conservator". Subject to the amendment the minutes were agreed, and it was RESOLVED that the Chairman sign them as a true record

6.1 Matters outstanding from these minutes (not listed as separate agenda items):
Minute 6 – A quote for Anti-incursion measures at the cricket pitch had been requested directly from the contractors. It was hoped work would be completed by the Spring.
Minute 7 – A presentational cheque had been given to the Friends of the Commons for the all-access path, funds would be transferred in the coming week.
Minute 9(1) – Cllr Ellicott confirmed that Rusthall School had welcomed the offer of support, plans involved moving into the older buildings at the front of the site and new security measures would be needed.

Minute 9(2) – Cllr Britcher-Allan confirmed Town & County were charging their residents £3 per year that was used to keep vegetation back from the pathways, the area was deliberately being kept ‘wild’. This had resulted in litter accumulating and a litter pick would be arranged by the Environment Committee. It was believed that KCC was responsible for maintaining the path and lighting. TWBC should be able to advise what land was transferred when the properties were sold to Town & County.

Minute 9(3) – Cllr O’Callaghan confirmed that Dementia Friendly Society would be pleased to work with the Council, Surestart and KCC were pending.

Minute 10 – KCC had confirmed that a quote was being prepared for a traffic island on the A264, a meeting would be arranged with the County Councillors and officers once the quote was ready.

6.2 Matters outstanding from previous minutes

None.

7. Open session for questions from the public

None.

8. Consideration of finance survey initiatives

In discussion it was noted: The absence of the Clerk had made planning difficult. This budget should be seen as interim and likely to be amended in-year. There is sufficient scope within last year’s budget to accommodate any likely initiatives that arise throughout the year. Citizens’ Advice would be presenting to Full Council in March. Wildchild Activities were looking to repeat the event and were seeking further support, an invitation to apply would be extended.

9. Budget and Precept Planning 2022/23

The Chairman introduced Mr Steve Nash, a freelance Clerk who had been assisting with financial matters. In discussion it was noted: There were several budget lines on which savings could be made. The Council was only required to keep 6-months running costs in reserve, some recommended at least year 1-year. The Council held significant reserves. Utility costs, employment costs and key contracts were expected to rise in the near future. A full-time clerk would be able to fundraise and should be able to offset their salary and more with new income. The Council’s website was not good, a better one could be provided at lower cost. Support for KALC membership was mixed, to be maintained for the time being. The Council would be deciding in the near future whether to pursue a Neighbourhood Plan. Alternative sustainable income sources should be explored. The Finance Committee would meet quarterly at which any necessary adjustments to the budget could be considered.

RESOLVED –

1. Salaries budget (4100) be increased to £50k to facilitate a full-time clerk, if possible.
2. Full Council be recommended to approve 0% increase in the Precept.

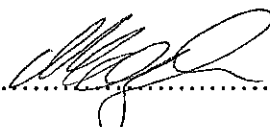
10. Items for Information

The Community Larder would be running on Christmas Eve and New Year’s Eve.

11. Next Meeting

Provisionally set for Monday 24 January 2021

The meeting closed at 9.00pm

.......... Chairman

Dated ...31st January 2022