

WARBLETON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Warbleton Parish Council Finance Committee held on Tuesday 10 December 2019 at 9.30 am in The Village Hall Bodle Street Green.

Present: Councillors – S Williamson, (Chairman), A Long, B Whitton, Mrs K Cook, M Smythe , Mrs P Velten

Clerk – Mrs M Smith

19/001 Apologies for Absence - None

19/002 Declarations of interest –

Councillor Whitton declared a prejudicial interest in The Luncheon Club grant application and a personal interest in the Warbleton Bonfire Society grant application.

Councillor Mrs Velten declared prejudicial interest in Bodle Street Green Village Hall grant application.

Councillor Long declared prejudicial interest in Warbleton Bonfire Society grant application and Warbleton and District Horticultural and Poultry Society grant application. In view of his personal interest in most of the other applications, he said he would not participate in the debate or in any recommendations for grants.

Councillor Smythe declared a personal interest in The Village Leaf grant application.

Councillor Mrs Cook declared a personal interest in The Village Leaf grant application.

19/003 Minutes

The Parish Clerk confirmed that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2018 had been seen and affirmed by the previous Finance Committee Chairman. It was noted that only three Councillors present at this meeting were also present at the 11th December 2018 meeting. The minutes were proposed as a true record and carried unanimously.

The Chairman said that he hoped that the minutes from this meeting would be available for review within a week and then circulated to Committee members. He did not want a situation where agreement to the minutes was deferred for a year.

The Chairman advised that Finance meetings will be held on a more regular basis with the next date to be arranged for January 2020.

19/004 Matters Arising from Previous Minutes Not on Agenda - No matters arising.

In introductory remarks, the Chairman noted that no precept details had been received from Wealden District Council prior to this meeting but details are expected shortly.

19/005 Grant Applications Received

The Chairman gave a summary of all grant applications received by the Parish Council by the closing date of 30 November 2019. These had all been circulated to Finance Committee prior to this meeting.

The Budget is £3000 and the Chairman advised the Committee when looking at the grant applications to keep this in mind as it would be helpful to increase the reserves.

The Chairman outlined the guidance notes for grant applications.

The Chairman noted that there is already an agreed grant to Heathfield and Waldron First Responders of £250.00.

1. Villages Luncheon Club- £400 request.

Discussion held and queries raised about the geographic location of the attendees and whether they were from within or outside the Parish. It was noted that the Club would be unable to run without financial help.

2. Warbleton Poultry and Horticultural Society - £500 request
Discussion held - recognised that this is a major village event which the Parish Council should support and that this is the first grant request received from the Society.
3. Dunn Village Hall - £1860 which is half the cost of works.
Discussion held – recognised that these are necessary works, support in principle.
4. Village Leaf – £322.80
Discussion held – no accounts included with grant application and therefore did not meet criteria for application. Recognised that this could be used by Parish Council as a communication vehicle and that it is run on goodwill.
5. Warbleton Bonfire Society – Amount sought £500-£1000
Discussion held – concern no accounts received, so not in line with criteria.
Big village event, with scale dependent on funding available. Members would like to support. Defer to discussion on donations.
6. The Chairman advised that Bodle Street Green Village Hall had submitted a grant application after the closing date for submissions. No paperwork available for this meeting. The Chairman advised he would review the details report to the next Finance Committee meeting.

Grant Decisions/ Recommendations

1. Village Luncheon Club. £400 request – Councillor Smythe proposed grant of £400.00, seconded by Councillor Velten and carried unanimously.
2. Warbleton & District Horticultural & Poultry Society £500 request – Councillor Whitton proposed grant of £500.00, seconded by Councillor Mrs Cook and carried unanimously.
3. Dunn Village Hall request £1086.83 – Councillor Smythe proposed support a grant of amount of £700.00, seconded by Councillor Whitton and carried unanimously.
4. Village Leaf – The Chairman advised that this application does not meet criteria, therefore declined, but further discussions about possible to be held in 2020, when debating wider communication issues.
5. Warbleton & Rushlake Green Bonfire Society - to be moved to discussions on Donations.
6. Bodle Street Green grant application. The chairman is to review details and to be discussed at the next meeting

19/006 Donations for 2019/2020

The Chairman advised of the budget line of £1000.00 for Donations and Subscriptions, of which Subscriptions already accounted for £457.47

Air Ambulance –

Full discussion, Noted that area covered was not just for East Sussex, but now included Kent, Surrey and Sussex. Suggested £300.00, but subject to a review of the wider resources of the Air Ambulance Service. This will be considered at the next Finance Committee.

Warbleton Bonfire Society

Councillor Smythe proposed £250.00 Councillor Whitton seconded and carried unanimously.

19/007 Review Income /expenditure 2019/20

The Chairman gave an overview of the projected position up to the end of the Financial Year. This would be updated following the discussions on grants and donations.

The Chairman proposed changes to the Financial Statement next year to show CiL funding and defib monies, as separate from the ongoing budget.

Councillor Long advised that Linda Butcher fee will be £500.00 and Mulberrys will be £999.00

19/008 Review of Budget Lines for Financial year 2020/2021

The Chairman outlined the initial budget proposal for 2020/2021 as circulated prior to the meeting.

The Chairman noted that Clerk's Salary was based on a national salary spine. National negotiations on an increase would not take place until January 2020

Councillor Long advised that the Clerk's hours are to be reviewed due to additional workload arising out of governance reviews. Hours worked over and above the 8 hours contracted need to be recorded. He also noted that the Clerk is required to deliver Council documents to Councillor Reading and Councillor Long, which may increase mileage costs.

A discussion took place over Churchyard maintenance and whether this is a statutory obligation. Once this was determined a review would take place on the level of funding.

Clock winding - the Chairman said there had been a request to increase the charge to £150. Cllr Smythe questioned whether this was an appropriate activity for the Council to pay. Cllr Whitton confirmed the Parish Council owned the clock. It was agreed to consider further at the next Financial Committee meeting.

Flowers Rushlake Green – annual amount varies, but has not exceeded £125, therefore the budget line could be reduced to £125.00

Election expenses – reduced amount as no election due, but agreed to maintain an annual amount to build up reserve ahead of future elections.

Grants – The Chairman suggested a reduction in the amount available, to help balance the budget.

The Chairman noted that Finger Post expenses had moved from the General fund to CIL funding in the last 2 years. Councillors needed to be aware that this might need funding as CIL funds were uncertain and none received in 2019/20.

19/009 Changes to Format of Finance statement for 2020/2021

The Chairman advised that he had checked other Parish websites and many use a set format /standard template. He felt that our Finance Statement is confusing and will present a change of format to Full Council to approve before changing. He suggested using a template such as Mountfield/Dallington Parish Councils. He also would propose that there was a cut off at the end of each month and this would be the figures used for presenting to the Parish Council.

19/010 Consideration and recommendations of Precept for Financial Year 2020/2021

At time of this Financial Meeting no details had been received from Wealden District Council regarding the Precept. There had been no increase in the Precept in 2019/20. The details for this year will be assessed once details received from WDC and options will be presented at the Financial Committee Meeting in January 2020.

19/011 Summary of Actions/Recommendations

Recommendations Grants applications £1850.00

Donations - Agreed £250. Agreed to review Air Ambulance Donation at January 2020 Finance Meeting.

Budget 20/21 – review of Clerk's hours worked review of Statutory and non statutory payments, including a review of Churchyard maintenance.

Chairman to present options for setting Precept at next meeting

19/012 Items considered urgent by Chairwoman

The Chairwoman noted that small Parish Councils had an obligation to publish all amounts made in excess of £100 and did not believe this had been done by Warbleton. He asked that the Parish Clerk begin to collate all such payments for 2019/20.

Date of Next Meeting

The next Finance Committee meeting to held in the Dunn Village Hall, Rushlake Green on 7th January 2020 at 9.30 am.

Meeting Closed at 11.40am

Signed..... Date.....

DRAFT