

Minutes of the Meeting of Sedbergh Parish Council Finance Committee

Held online via Zoom @ 5.00pm Monday 11th January 2021

Present:

Cllrs Lancaster, Capstick, McPherson, Brooks and the Clerk, Miss Hassam

1. Apologies

All Members of the Finance Committee were present.

2. Declaration of Interests

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting held Monday 7th December 2020

The minutes were received, agreed and confirmed by Cllr McPherson (signing of the minutes will be processed when reasonable).

4. Urgent Business (Lockdown announcement 4th January 2021)

Following the new Lockdown announcement on 4th January 2021, it had been confirmed that Cllr Welti had (along with the original group of volunteers) fully reopened the Covid Support Group/telephone help line. The Clerk was able to confirm that current Lockdown guidance permitted public toilets, car parks and play areas to remain open at this time. She had, additionally, contacted the Parish handyman to confirm his contentment to carry out his role, and continuation of enhanced cleaning at the public toilets etc in line with the current Risk Assessments.

5. Financial Summary and Bank Reconciliation

The Financial Summary for December had been circulated to Members and all payments were recommended (attached) for approval at Full Council. These included a pro forma invoice for electrical items so that repairs could be completed by Cllr Longlands at Main Street toilets (Gents). Payments also included the Parish Council infrastructure for the Festive lights and a further invoice for water consumption at Main Street toilets, currently being queried by the Clerk. The Bank Reconciliation for December was checked and found to be correct. All cheques approved for payment, will be signed following the Full Council online meeting on 14th January 2021. In addition, it was noted that a preliminary sum of £16,350 had been received in respect of the legacy from Mr RN Lord. Members wished to express their thanks, again, for the generous contribution to Sedbergh Parish Council, with funds being reserved for a) infrastructure and benefit of local people and b) encourage young local talent in areas such as music and the arts and farming and the local economy.

6. Income and Expenditure 2020-2021

The Income and Expenditure report for 2020/2021 was circulated for information.

- i) **Precept Requirement 2021/2022 and impact on future Budget.** Following the agreement of Sedbergh Parish Council to maintain the Precept at the current rate for 2021/2022 the Clerk was able to confirm the tax base figure that had recently been issued by South Lakeland District Council and a reduced Grant. It was noted that the tax base had (as anticipated) reduced and, therefore, to keep the Precept at the same figure (and maintain a 0.00% increase on Council Tax in 2021/2022) the Precept request would be for the sum of £37,885.68. This meant a small reduction of <£500 on the previous year, this reduction would be absorbed from Reserves as a gesture to residents in Sedbergh Parish Council and was **recommended** to Full Council. The current Budget for 2021/2022 would be continually monitored throughout the forthcoming year, as with all years, and more so in the ever-changing economic climate of the pandemic.

7. Grant Applications

There were no Grant applications for December 2020.

8. Loftus Hill car park – proposed lease, Sedbergh School, update awaited.

The Clerk was asked to clarify with Sedbergh School and the Council's Solicitor what the current situation was in respect of the ongoing revised lease agreement.

9. Electric Vehicle Charging

i) **proposed lease at Joss Lane car park and the People's Hall car park, Charge My Street (CMS).** Following sight of a draft lease and further legal advice and some initial liaison with South Lakeland District Council (landlord), Members **recommended** that the proposal for EV points at Joss Lane car park be progressed with CMS (not withstanding any potential delays in regard to Lockdown) as soon as practicable. In respect of the People's Hall car parking area (PH), Members **recommended**, without prejudice, that given the current opposition by the PH Committee to the electric vehicle charging points at the car park – that the Council place a **temporary hold on progression**. It was noted that during the current pandemic, Members had other matters of priority however, will progress the proposal (as appropriate) when the current situation has eased and Members had the necessary time commitment to progress.

ii) **revised price for EV points proposed at Loftus Hill car park, Sedbergh School.** Members noted that the original guide price for installation had increased significantly and would, therefore, need to be considered again when appropriate. Members were additionally advised that the project had been placed on hold by the School during the current Lockdown/pandemic.

10. Wednesday Market – ongoing consideration of Market during current Lockdown.

Members acknowledged that some residents relied on the Market for food provisions, however, also noted some concerns raised in respect of the current Lockdown guidance/wearing of face coverings etc. Following discussion, it was **recommended** that the Clerk liaise directly with stall holders for their thoughts/feedback, for example, on the wearing of face coverings by stall holders and customers whilst in attendance at the market, before the Full Council meeting on 14th January 2020 so an informed decision could be made for the future. In the meantime, the Parish Handyman should be urged to wear a face covering when present at the Market and the Clerk was asked to speak with him directly.

11. Date of next meeting – Monday 8th February 2021 at 5pm, Members resolved to continue the Finance Committee meetings via Zoom at this time.