

Minutes of Sedbergh Parish Council Finance Committee meeting, held Parish Council office, 72 Main Street, Sedbergh on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at 5.30pm

**Present:**

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

Part I

**1. Apologies**

All Members were present at the meeting.

**2. Declaration of Interests**

There were no Declarations of Interest for this meeting.

**3. Minutes of the Last Meeting held Monday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

The minutes were agreed and signed as a true record, by the Chairman Cllr Lancaster

**4. Financial Summary and Bank Reconciliation**

The Financial Summary for March 2022 had been circulated to Members and it was resolved that all payments (attached) were recommended for approval. It was noted that the payment for Npower included a small sum (£1.79) for a (supply) MPAN number that was unidentified, however, since Npower had not requested payment for Parish Lighting since December 2021, this monthly amount should be paid in good faith for general ongoing supply. Members will consider switching to Direct Debit for Parish Lighting when Npower have completed the migration and consider other suppliers in the future. In addition, it was noted that the following payments were recommended for approval - £382.06 CALC (Cumbria Association of Local Councils) Annual Subscription, £322.07 (plus VAT and carriage) Paragon (car parking tickets). Members also requested that the Clerk ask the ticket supplier what the additional cost would be for potentially printing the reverse of the tickets with, say, advertisement from local business. £170.85 Viking (stationery, including ink and paper) and £275.00 Sedbergh School standing order (Loftus Hill car park). The standing order arrangement, for the lease at Loftus Hill car park, is due to alter in the near future when the new lease is finally completed (see also interim payment to Solicitors for ongoing work for the lease). VAT £548.07 was also noted for the Quarter 4, with the Clerk advising that a switch to Making Tax Digital was required for Quarter 1 of 2022/2023. Finally, it was also highlighted that some repairs were needed at the playground following a report of a broken cradle swing. Cllr Arnold hoped to source parts as soon as practicable for this, and other identified issues with the swings. It was recommended that costs, up to £250.00, be recommended for approval to allow the repairs to take place in a timely manner. The Bank Reconciliation, for March 2022, was checked and found to be correct and signed by Cllrs Brooks and Capstick.

**5. Income and Expenditure 2021-2022 and 2022 - 2023**

The up-to-date Financial Summary report for 2021/2022 was circulated for information. It was recommended, by the Finance Committee, that anticipated expenditure due in April/May be delegated to the Finance Committee for approval on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2022. This date had been amended due to the Elections (5<sup>th</sup> May 2022).

**i) Annual Governance and Accountability Return and Internal Audit (AGAR).**

Provisional preparations were being made by the Clerk. Members noted that the previous Internal Auditor was able to continue this year. It was acknowledged that finding a successor was proving difficult, as an increased knowledge of Local Council practice was needed alongside the more general finance checks etc. PFK Littlejohn continue to be the External Auditor for Parish Councils, with a final submission required prior to 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022. It was also noted that NALC (National Association of Local Council) had recently highlighted an amendment to JPAG (Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (2022)), Section 5, noting a slightly amended recommendation for Internal Audit timetable.

**6. Annual review of Policies, including Standing Orders/Financial Regulations, Asset Register and Risk Assessment.**

Members reviewed the attached, noting the minor amendments to the Risk Assessment/Standing Orders in preparation for online banking. The Clerk also noted that a future further review of the Asset Register might be considered to include, for example, Queen's Garden and other tangible assets, such as walls, gates, fencing etc might also be considered.

**7. Grant Applications**

There were no Grant Applications, however, it was noted that the Sedbergh Economic Partnership would be making a request for a contribution to the Sedbergh Economic Advisor role – details were awaited.

**8. Playing field path – update on potential pathway project, Howgill Lane**

Tenders received would be available for Members to consider at Full Council on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2022. The Clerk will also continue to liaise with Cumbria County Council on the project.

**9. Online Banking – future provision of banking arrangements**

i) The Clerk continues to progress an application for Bankline (NatWest). Members had recommended that Cllrs Lancaster, Capstick and Brooks remain as signatories, along with the Clerk and that Cllr Arnold should be added to the mandate. However, Bankline has provision for a maximum of four signatories. As the Clerk (Miss J Hassam) is required as an administrator to set up payments, it was resolved that Cllr Capstick would be removed from the mandate, leaving the Chairman – Cllr Kevin Lancaster and Chairlady of Amenities – Cllr Margaret Brooks, as signatories, alongside the Clerk, with the addition of Cllr Simon Arnold as Vice Chairman of the Council. All payments would remain as dual authorisation, in line with Standing Orders.

**10. Date of next meeting – Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2022 at 5.30pm Members resolved to meet in the Parish Council Office, 72 Main Street, Sedbergh (to approve anticipated payments/expenditure ahead of Parish Council Elections, as might be required and resolved by Full Council).**

**Part II**

**11. Review of Terms and Conditions**

Members discussed the terms and conditions for the Clerk and a verbal update will be presented to Members on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2022. In addition, Members will consider a review for Contractors.