

Sedbergh Parish Council, Finance Committee

Minutes of Sedbergh Parish Council Finance Committee meeting, held Parish Council office, 72 Main Street, Sedbergh on Monday 7th November 2022 at 5.30pm

Present:

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

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Arnold and accepted by the meeting.

2. Declaration of Interests

Cllr Capstick – Item 6 (Grants)

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting held Monday 3rd October 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 October 2022 had been circulated to Members and it was resolved that all payments (attached) were recommended for payment, including the legal fees for the completion of the lease at Loftus Hill car park, the donation to Sedbergh Information Centre (CIC) for Late Night Opening and £45.00 for a Christmas Tree at the corner of the public toilets (as previously). In addition, a £50.00 donation was recommended in respect of the wreath for Royal British Legion. Members also noted the increase for Scribe Accounting going forward (equivalent of £7.80 month extra), the completion of a direct debit for NPower (Parish Lighting) and resolved to increase (backdated as required to 1.4.22) the Standing Order for payroll, for the Clerk, following the recent national pay award (notified by National Association of Local Council NALC). Members also noted that the hedge work/cutting (agreed at the October meeting) had now been completed and an invoice was awaited – the areas included Millthrop Bridge to the Golf Club (Dent Road), Ghyllas lay-by and the playing field. The Bank Reconciliation, for October 2022, was checked and found to be correct and signed by Cllrs Capstick and Brooks.

5. Receipts and Payments 2022 - 2023

The up-to-date financial report for 2022/2023 was circulated for information. Members noted that due to potential increased saving interest rates now available, the Clerk would gather information on any alternative arrangements for reserves. The Clerk advised that, following the External Audit Appointment review (Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments Ltd - SAAA) that Cumbria External Audits would be completed by Moore from 2022-2023 to 2026/2027.

i) **General ongoing review of Budget 2022 – 2023 and Draft Budget for 2023 – 2024 (attached).** The Clerk circulated the Draft Budget, for information, while awaiting any requests for projects in 2023/2023. The Draft included an uplift of approximately 10% based on previous years due to the current economic climate/rising costs, however, the Tax Base was not yet known from South Lakeland District Council (SLDC). It was also not yet known, if SLDC would be allocating their usual grant for 2023/2024 as the Local Government Reorganisation progresses (vesting day 1.4.2023). Information should be available from SLDC in the coming weeks. A 10% increase, would be equivalent <10p per week on an average Band D property.

6. Grant Applications

Gladstone House Community Group - £150 – Members received a grant application for the sum of £150 to assist the Community Group to pay for their ongoing costs, notably, Public Liability Insurance. Members noted the support/warm space/social interaction the group gave to the community and recommended a Grant of £500 to support the Group to continue. (Cllr Capstick took no part in discussion for this Item). The Clerk also took no part in discussion due to her volunteer role as part of the Gladstone House Community Group.

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7. Playing field – update on potential pathway project, Howgill Lane

Work on the path was now complete, with final works to the boundary fence awaited. Members wished to thank the contractor for the works completed so far, noting that positive feedback had been received. The Clerk was asked to contact the contractor, to seek additional work on an area of fencing (now uncovered due to hedge cutting) that also needed repair. A further quote would be sought as soon as possible. Members also recommended that two benches be purchased (alongside the picnic table needed at Ghyllas) for the alcove/passing places along the path (Amenities to contribute 1 x bench as part of their rolling contract to review/replace benches). Once work had completed, and invoices received, the Clerk will liaise with Cumbria County Council for reimbursement of costs. Finally, Members noted that whilst the 'no dogs' policy remained on the playing field/play area, anyone walking along the new path with a dog/s, must always keep the dog/s on a lead. New signs would be considered to indicate the change in due course.

8. Online Banking

- i) Bankline for Communities (NatWest) – Cllr Lancaster hopes to complete the Bank's administration duties as soon as practicable, to progress the setup of electronic payments in the future.

9. Ongoing review of Contracts - update

Members noted that the Amenities Committee will be considering the grass cutting/field maintenance contract as part of their ongoing general review of contracts, particularly regarding budgetary impacts for 2023/2024. The Clerk was asked to write to the current contractor asking for an update on fees/arrangements, due to the review, and confirming any outstanding monies for 2022/2023.

10. Electric Vehicle Charging – proposed installation, update on grants

Following the update from The Energy Saving Trust (EST) in October, the Clerk/Cllr Ian McPherson had met with a further contractor and an additional quote was awaited. Therefore, there was no further update available for the proposed - On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme, Office of Zero Emission Vehicles (ORCS OZEV) at both Joss Lane and Loftus Hill car park.

11. Date of next meeting – Monday 5th December 2022 at 5.30pm Members resolved to meet in the Parish Council Office, 72 Main Street, Sedbergh.