

Sedbergh Parish Council, Finance Committee

Minutes of Sedbergh Parish Council Finance Committee meeting, held Parish Council office, 72 Main Street, Sedbergh on Monday 9th January 2023 at 5.30pm

Present:

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

1. Apologies

All Members were present at the meeting.

2. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting held Monday 5th December 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 December 2022 had been circulated to Members and it was resolved that all payments (attached) were recommended for payment. These included final Principal Designer fees, grass cutting and parish lighting maintenance. In addition, a further pro forma invoice was recommended for replacement of polycarbonate at the playing field shelter following the Amenities Committee meeting held 4.1.23 - £850.58. The Clerk also confirmed that Cumbria County Council (CCC) had instigated the grant for the playing field pathway project - £40342.00. A further grant application, to CCC, was now due to be submitted for the proposed benches. The Clerk noted that the Direct Debit for Npower had still not been formally set up. The Bank Reconciliation, for December 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. It was noted that £5,000 remained reserved, on the Budget, for the proposed Bandstand at Queen's Garden (no longer progressing) following receipt of a grant from the Community Trust in 2022. The Clerk had written to the Trust, in October, to request if their Grants Committee would consider these funds for an alternative project at the Garden - refurbishment of the stone steps. The Clerk had now received a response, advising that the Council is welcome to apply for this new proposal, along with detailed costings, so that the Community Trust may consider further. Members resolved, therefore, to instigate establishing an indicative quote for any repairs/refurbishment as might be appropriate (steps and risers), as previously discussed in 2019/2020. Members would also need to consider any relevant Historic England advice/guidance, along with Yorkshire Dales National Park Planning/Listed Monument information. Finally, Members also noted the VAT for Quarter Three £2,919.25, which was checked and signed by Cllr Lancaster and will be submitted to HMRC by the Clerk.

i) **Precepting information 2023 – 2024 (awaiting information on 'parish grant' from South Lakeland District Council).** Members noted the formal Precept correspondence from South Lakeland District Council (SLDC) had now been received, confirming that the request must be completed (after formal resolution of the Council) prior to 31.1.23. Members were additionally made aware that, as SLDC will no longer exist and the relationship will transfer to Westmorland and Furness Council, they were currently unable to confirm if the 'parish grant' would be paid next year. SLDC confirmed that they have had a different policy in previous years in respect of parish grants and that no decision has yet been made by Westmorland and Furness Council on whether these will continue. Members resolved, therefore, to recommend the sum of £44244.10. This was equivalent of £40.65 for an average Band D property, an increase of 6.53% (or <5p per week). Whilst the increase was unfortunate in the current financial climate, as it assumed that no 'parish grant' would be allocated, it was necessary to meet rising expenditure as previously agreed for the 2023/2024 Budget

6. Grant Applications

There were no grant applications.

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

Work on the path was now complete, with final reimbursement of funds anticipated from Cumbria County Council. Notification received and awaiting reconciliation.

8. Online Banking

i) Bankline for Communities (NatWest) – Cllr Lancaster hopes to complete the Bank's administration duties when convenient, 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 and the Item could be removed from the Finance agenda

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

The Clerk confirmed that the Energy Saving Trust (EST) had formally passed on the application to (ORCS) to pursue the On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme, Office of Zero Emission Vehicles (ORCS OZEV) at both Joss Lane and Loftus Hill car park. The Clerk will now, concurrently, apply to Yorkshire Dales National Park Sustainable Development Fund, Cumbria Action for Sustainability, Sedbergh Community Trust, and Community Energy Cumbria for the additional funding required. The Clerk will also pursue initial enquiries about potential meter installations, in preparation, and if the project is successful.

11. Date of next meeting – Monday 13th February 2023 at 5.30pm Members resolved to meet in the Parish Council Office, 72 Main Street, Sedbergh (delayed one week, due to rescheduled monthly Parish Council meeting).