

SPEEN PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD AT SPEEN PAVILION SPEEN RECREATION GROUND ON THURSDAY 9^{TH} NOVEMBER 2023 STARTING AT 7PM

Parish Councillors present	Clive Hunt (Chair), Ian Wilson (Vice Chair), Jeanette Clifford
In Attendance	No Members of the Public present
Clerk & RFO	Jean Lindsell & Becki Hannington

Resolution	Item		Action
	1.	Apologies: Cllr Gourley	
	2.	Declaration of Interests - None declared	
	3.	Open Session – no Members of the Public present	
Resolved	4.	Minutes – to approve the Minutes of the Finance Committee held on 06-09-23 (draft)	
		Proposer: Cllr Wilson Seconder: Cllr Hunt Abstention: 1 In Favour: 2	
	5.	To discuss any matters arising from the previous meeting	
		Cllr Wilson confirmed the tree surgery to the Lime trees at Marsh Benham had been completed.	
		The bank mandate variation forms were duly signed by Cllr Hunt and Cllr Wilson.	
	6.	Financial Report	
	6.1	Bank balance as at 31-10-23 was reported as £74,196.47	
	6.2	To retrospectively note payments for September and October 2023	
		Duly noted by all members of the Committee.	
	6.3	To Review Finance Reports to 30-09-23	
		Reports duly noted by all members of the Committee	
		Cllr Hunt confirmed the Bank Reconsolidation Verification for September had been signed off with no exceptions.	
	6.4	To Review Finance Reports to 31-10-23	
		Reports duly noted by all members of the Committee	
		Cllr Hunt confirmed the Bank Reconsolidation Verification for October had been signed off with no exceptions.	
	6.5	To Review Budget v Actual Report Q2	
		Cllr Clifford queried why expenditure under General Maintenance did not follow a quarterly pattern.	
		The Clerk advised as General Maintenance covered play equipment and all other assets expenditure occurred as and when any repairs or maintenance were required.	
		Report duly noted by all members of the Committee	
	7.	Finance Committee Terms of Reference	

Page approved by (initials) and date:



Resolved	Proposal: To agree amendments to Finance Committee ToR and recommend to Full Council for approval				
	Proposer: Cllr Wilson Seconder: Cllr Hunt All in Favour				
	8. Policies and Procedures				
	8.1 Disciplinary Policy and Procedure				
Resolved	Proposal: To agree new Disciplinary Policy and Procedures and recommend to Full Council for approval				
	Proposer: Cllr Clifford Seconder: Cllr Wilson All in Favour				
	8.2 Grievance Policy and Procedure				
Resolved	Proposal: To agree new Grievance Policy and Procedures and recommend to Full Council for approval				
	Proposer: Cllr Wilson Seconder: Cllr Clifford All in Favour				
	8.3 Sickness Policy and Procedure				
Resolved	Proposal: To agree new Sickness Policy and Procedure and recommend to Full Council for approval				
	Proposer: Cllr Clifford Seconder: Cllr Wilson All in Favour				
	 WBC Libraries – to consider request for contribution to WBC Libraries and agree proposal to be presented to Full Council 				
	Cllr Clifford advised the libraries provided invaluable services to the community above and beyond the statutory provision funded by WBC and any contribution was for these additional services. Cllr Clifford acknowledged the Council's previous contribution had been £1293 ring fenced for the mobile library but suggested consideration be given to making a contribution of £1 per parish resident on this occasion but noted that it appeared mobile library usage had declined compared to the at home service.				
	The Clerk advised any contribution could be funded from S137 which had an underspend of £1060 for 2023/24 and any further contribution be made from unallocated reserves.				
	Cllr Hunt felt the libraries offered a beneficial service but expressed concern that if a further contribution was made the Council would be committed to continue doing so in future years.				
	The Clerk confirmed the Council was under no obligation to continue making contributions.				
	Cllr Wilson expressed his support for the libraries and suggested presenting a proposal to Full Council to contribute £2476 (£1 per resident based on data provided by WBC Libraries) ring fenced for the mobile library and the at home service funded from \$137 \mathcal{L}1060 and unallocated reserves \mathcal{L}1416.				
	All members of the Committee agreed				
	Proposer: Cllr Wilson Seconder: Cllr Clifford All in Favour				
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Clerk (Jean Lindsell) to email WBC Libraries to clarify ring fencing for two library services and to obtain further information on why usage of the mobile library had decreased.	Clerk
10. 2024/2025 Budget	
10.1 Budget Forecast 2023/24 – to review forecasted spend to 31 st March 2024	
The Clerk advised on the following:	
 Environmental Maintenance underspend due to anticipating higher costs when setting 2023/24 budget regarding contract renewal 	
 Clerk Salary likely to have overspend due to outgoing and incoming clerk costs 	
Street Lighting current underspend would reduce as further repairs required	
Budget Forecast duly noted by all members of the Committee.	
10.2 Projected Unallocated Reserves Summary 2023/24 – to review projected financial position at 31 st March 2024	
The Clerk advised the Projected Unallocated Reserves Summary was based on the current forecasted budget underspend.	
Duly noted by all members of the Committee	
10.3 2024/25 Budget – to consider draft Budget and agree any revisions	
Clerk went through each budget category and the rationale behind the draft costs.	
Cllr Hunt queried why Clerks Salary was lower in the 2024/25 draft budget than the current budget.	
The Clerk advised the costs for 2023/24 had been based on a 12% increase as the LGA pay award was unknown at that time however actual increase had been 3.88%. The Clerk added the costs for 2024/25 were based on a 6.6% increase following research into what % increase other parish councils were applying.	
The Clerk advised the electricity supply contract for Speen Pavilion was due for renewal on 1 st February 2024 and the contract for Street Lighting due for renewal 1 st September 2024.	
The Clerk further advised subsequent to preparing the draft budget a quotation for both contract renewals with SSE had been obtained through Utility Aid being the UK's largest energy broker for the not-for-profit sector and partners with NALC and based on this information the budget costs should be revised. The Clerk added it was unknown what renewal costs SSE would propose if Council wished to contract direct with them.	
Cllr Wilson suggested accepting the quotation from Utility Aid for both contracts and budget costs be based on those quoted.	
All members of the Committee agreed to accept the quotation from Utility Aid.	
Clerk (Jean Lindsell) to action.	Clerk
It was agreed to decrease Speen Pavilion utility costs from £800 to £700.	
The Clerk advised prior to agreeing the costs for Street Lighting future maintenance required discussion as this was included in that budget category.	
The Clerk advised the current contract with Volker Highways was due for renewal on 1 st April 2024 and the terms of the contract were that expenditure was only incurred as and when any repairs arose and had included a preliminary amount of £500 in the draft budget for repairs. The Clerk advised it was extremely difficult to predict the level of repairs that could be required e.g., if the two remaining post top 35w SOX lanterns which are no longer manufactured were to fail these were not suitable for retro fit LED	



	and costs could be higher to convert to LED.	
	Vote to extend meeting over 2.5 hours to ensure all items of the Agenda considered.	
	Proposer: Cllr Wilson Seconder: Cllr Hunt All in Favour	
	The Clerk further advised that structural testing of steel columns was recommended after $15 - 20$ years of age and there were no records available to indicate the age of the lights or any evidence of any previous testing being carried out together with visual inspection of concrete columns.	
	Cllr Clifford felt the Council had a duty of care to ensure this testing was carried out as soon as possible.	
	Cllr Hunt expressed concern regarding the potential for significant costs if any tests were to fail resulting in the replacement of columns and asked for clarification as to how many would require testing.	
	Following further discussion it was agreed:	
	Clerk (Becki Hannington) to further investigate age of street lights, confirm number of steel and concrete columns and obtain costs for structural testing.	Clerk
	Clerk (Becki Hannington) to obtain cost for replacement of 2 x post top 35w SOX to LED.	Clerk
	Clerk (Jean Lindsell) to revise draft budget when all costs obtained to be presented to Committee at the next meeting on 13 th December.	Clerk
	Cllr Clifford asked for consideration to be given for the inclusion of an amount for future planning in the budget in light of diminishing unallocated reserves and the potential for increased costs relating to street lighting maintenance.	
	The Committee agreed to address this at the next meeting.	
Resolved	10.4 2024/25 Precept – to consider level of Precept required	
	The draft precept was reviewed by the Committee and it was agreed to defer further discussion until the revised budget was presented at the next meeting.	
	11. Speen Recreation Ground	
	Proposal: To approve quotation for removal of hedge encroaching on parishioners garden fence at a cost of £281 +VAT	
	Proposer: Cllr Clifford Seconder: Cllr hunt All in Favour	
	12. Speen Pavilion Defibrillator – update from Clerk	
	The Clerk advised the defibrillator at Speen Pavilion was being installed on 15 th November.	
	The Clerk further advised on the requirement for adequate lighting to enable easy identification of the defibrillator in darkness and signage indicating its location. The Clerk added the existing light had an external sensor which appeared to be tampered with resulting in the light not working.	
	Clerk (Becki Hannington) to investigate options regarding lighting and obtain costs.	Clerk
	Clerk (Becki Hannington) to purchase required signage.	Clerk
	13. Matters for information only arising after the preparation of this Agenda which the Chair agrees to take as urgent – none raised	
	14. Date of Next Meeting – 13 th December 2023	



	The meeting closed at 9.50pm		
Signed:		Name (print):	Date:
		Position:	