

**Minutes of Cherry Willingham Parish Council's Finance and General Purposes Committee,
At The Millennium Hall on Tuesday 27th October 2020, at 10am.**

Present: Cllr Brylewski (Chairman) Cllr Fleetwood (Vice-Chairman) Cllr Baker, Cllr Mellor and Cllr Palmer, Christine Hodgson (RFO) Gill Shaw (Parish Clerk)

No Members of the Public were in Attendance

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies accepted from Cllr Longley who had previous commitments

2. Councillors declarations of interest, gifts and hospitality

None

3. Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Meeting, held on 5th May 2020

The minutes from the last meeting were approved as a true record and signed

Proposed: Cllr Palmer. Seconded: Cllr Mellor. All in Favour

4. To receive a review by the RFO of the Council's Expenditure Year to Date against the Budget for the year 2020/21

RFO first looked at the expenditure to date as of the 30th September 2020 and stated that the future forecast shown was only predicted but a considerable surplus is likely by the end of the year. The budget this year is £74,885 and current spending is £26,000 and estimated spend of £60,000 by the end of the year. The surplus is mainly down to grass cutting.

Discussion on outstanding maintenance which can be completed in this financial year. RFO estimates only about £2000 will be spent from the budget for the Village upkeep of £3500. The VIC meeting had discussed replacing the missing flagpole and highlighted the maintenance needed on the Millennium Hall.

ACTION - get estimates for work needed on the Hall

Item B4 on the budget sheet relates in part to an estimate for a gate at the play park and this will go to L&A

Cllr Fleetwood pointed out that this is an unusual expenditure year due to Covid-19. RFO also stated that the income has been affected as there is no income from the hire of the Hall and also the playfield users rent had been waived (B9).

Next financial year's budget – West Lindsey wants an estimate of the Parish Precept by 27th November. The estimate needs to be approved by the Full Council in November. The final figures are due to West Lindsey before 29th January. The estimate can be reviewed by the Full Council in January.

Maintenance Budget

Wages have been estimated on the high side due potential overtime by The Clerk and RFO. The office equipment has been reduced from £500 to £200 as new equipment has already been bought. Cllr Baker stated that extra cloud storage space will have to be bought. Cllr Fleetwood asked for the necessity of a TV licence to be checked.

ACTION - RFO to investigate

The payment for Microsoft Office is to be reviewed this year as one subscription should cover several devices.

ACTION – RFO will investigate upon renewal

Grass cutting contribution from Lincolnshire County Council is due to be notified November, but Cllr Fleetwood stated that this may be dropped this year due to County Councils expenditure during Covid

Budget for Village Upkeep (Section E)- this year £18000 and next year £13200

The budget for grass cutting of the play parks has been set provisionally at £3,000 but will be put to L&A at their November meeting.

Burial Ground - not as much income this year as anticipated. Burial costs are being reviewed for the next financial year by the burial sub-committee and L&A.

Millennium Hall budget has been slightly decreased as most work has been carried out.

Cllr Fleetwood expressed his interest in reducing the precept this year.

Project budget – safety resurfaces work is needed at Laburnum next year. Also request for new play equipment for L&A to discuss.

Cherry Fields have requested a Project Budget of £2500 as per their three year plan and agreed at the last VIC meeting in October

Village Improvement plan – speed gates on Fiskerton Road are proposed to assist speed reduction. Cllr Baker asked about the flashing speed warnings. Also the proposed erection of a Bandstand has been held over at the VIC meeting due to extremely high cost. The £500 for grave markers is an estimate as we have not yet received a quote.

ACTION - RFO – to follow up on the grave markers

The maintenance and project budgets total £73,000 which is less than this financial year.

RFO asked if this year's reduction of £ was enough and if not, where can more be saved.

ACTION – RFO and Clerk to get new tenders for the grass cutting.

Item A12 -Hall hire costs incurred as now hiring The Vine for meetings due to Covid restriction on numbers in Millenium Hall.

Suggested that there could be a potential saving on the erection of speed gates but this is awaiting a meeting with the County Council about where they are to be sited.

Possibility of spreading the cost of all the gates over several years. RFO stated reluctance on any further loan being taken out.

Allotments - costs unknown and could impact on several of the budgets. Money that is in reserve could be used if Full Council so decides.

Cllr Fleetwood expressed his desire to reduce expenditure on the projects and in

- the precept this year. Discussion on how much a reduction on the council bill would be relevant to residents. The reduction % made by the Parish Council may be more important. Cllr Brylewski suggested that it would be more important to draw attention to the fact that the Parish Council are not putting the precept up again this year. Cllr Palmer felt that it was important to have village improvements to show the village such as Cherry Fields. Cllr Brylewski suggested showing to the public the difference paid from last year within each band.

RFO asked the committee to accept the provisional budget to go before Full Council in November. Proposed by Cllr Brylewski Seconded by Cllr Baker Approved (Cllr Fleetwood voted against)

5. To consider grant applications received from Village organisations

None received

6. To consider rate fixing for 2021/2011 and to review all Provisional Budget amounts and agree them if necessary subject to referral to Full Council

This was discussed under item 4

7. To review all policies pertinent to this committee and to consider the necessity to obtain 3 quotes for all amounts over £500

The Finance committee has numerous policies, 7 documents in total including Financial Regulations. RFO highlighted the authority to spend on revenue items shown on her copy states expenditure limit for the Full Council for all items over £1,000 and £500 and over for a committee. However, the office copy refers to a Committee having only up to £500. and amounts over £500 need Full Council Approval

ACTION - need to clarify which is correct by referring to historic Minutes. Other documents also need checking and updating with a view to taking them to Full Council in May.

Cllr Brylewski suggested that John be invited to help and be paid. Cllr Fleetwood suggested full notes on Policies and their updates be kept in one document for ease of future reference. It was discussed and finally agreed that 'model' policies could be used as a template but each individual Parish Council could amend it as necessary and then it would be confirmed by Full Council. Cllr Fleetwood suggested contacting West Lindsey Council for guidance and possible template for the policies.

ACTION - Contact West Lindsey and LALC for up to date information

Discussion on whether the need to get 3 quotes for expenditure over £500. Cllr Brylewski requested this be increased to £1,000. She gave examples of the difficulties of obtaining 3 quotes especially for long term projects such as the 3 year maintenance plan for play parks where existing contractors could be used, pending price negotiations. Cllr Fleetwood stated that the present limit was there to protect the RFO and Councillors and proposed it remains at the present limit. Cllr Baker suggested that where possible, 3 quotes are requested so there is a paper trail even if not all respond. RFO highlighted that getting approval from a committee and then waiting for Full Council approval was very time consuming for smaller jobs. Cllr Palmer suggested that if this committee could not agree then the matter should go to the Full Council.

Proposed by Cllr Brylewski and seconded. The matter was voted with 2 for and 2 against. The Chairman used her casting vote that the limit of £500 be increased to £1000 and this is to go to Full Council.

Items for report, or for inclusion in next agenda

_____ Final report on financial regulations and agree final precept.

8. Date of next meeting.

Date of next meeting set for Tuesday 5th January 2021 to be held at The Millennium Hall at 10am