

Minutes of Cherry Willingham Parish Council's Finance and General Purposes Committee,

held Virtually on Thursday 7th January 2021, at 10am.

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

No Members of the Public were in Attendance

1. Apologies for Absence

None

2. Councillors declarations of interest, gifts and hospitality

None

3. Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Meeting, held on 27th October 2020

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

4. To discuss the grass cutting tenders and recommend a contractor for appointment subject to Full Council Approval

Of the three companies invited, only two submitted tenders. A comparison of the two tenders was outlined by the RFO and the differences were discussed. The tender from Glendale was agreed by all and this is to be recommended to Full Council.

5. To review the proposed changes to the Finance Regulations-RFO

The RFO had identified that the Financial Regulations needed updating to reflect changes to some limits and procedures. A copy of the proposed changes was circulated prior to the meeting. One of the main changes was under Section 5. Banking and Authorisation of Payments. Currently the RFO is sending a schedule of outstanding invoices electronically to two members who are Cheque Signatories who then authorise payment if approved. This needs to be incorporated in the Financial regulations. A query was raised as to what happens when one of these members is unavailable and the RFO replied that there is another cheque signatory who could be contacted. Members approved the proposed changes subject to Full Council Approval.

6. To review the payment of Volunteer expenses and if necessary amend the Policy for payment of Councillor and Employee Expenses to include Volunteers.

Following on from a claim for expenses from a volunteer at Cherry Field Management Group which was brought to the last Village Improvement meeting in October, research has clarified that this claim was encouraged by a former Chairman but there was no written agreement. The Councils Policies and Procedures make no provision for such a payment other than to Councillors and Council employees. Following a lengthy discussion on whether the Policies and Procedures

should be amended, it was agreed that more information was needed before a decision could be made.

ACTION; Cllr Brylewski and the RFO will obtain more information from LALC on whether volunteers can be paid out of pocket expenses.

7. To consider grant applications received from village organisations

_____None received

8. To agree the Final Budget for 2021-2022 subject to Full Council approval-RFO.

Since the meeting in October, the grass cutting tenders have been received and also details of the contribution from LCC for grass cutting. It was confirmed that the budget would cover the Clerks CILCA training this year. The Final Budget for 2021-2022 was agree and it will be presented to Full Council

9. To consider rate fixing (Precept) for 2021/2022 subject to Full Council approval.

After a discussion on the pros and cons of keeping the precept at the same rate as the current year, it was **RESOLVED** to keep the precept static

10. To review all policies pertinent to this committee in addition to those mentioned in Items 5 and 6.

_____The following policies were discussed:

- Grants - to remain at a maximum of £250
- Procurement - to be amended after Financial regulations are agreed
- Risk management - needs further research
- Accounting procedures - needs further research

ACTION: The RFO and Clerk to review the policies and update the committee at the next meeting.

11. Items for report, or for inclusion in the next agenda.

_____None

12. Date of next meeting to be agreed.

The meeting will take place in April, the date to be agreed.

Signed, Chairman of the Committee

Date.....