

**KEDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL  
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING  
8<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

**Present:** Councillor Ann Naylor (Chair of Kedington Parish Council)  
Councillor Stella Wilsher (Vice-Chair of Kedington Parish Council)  
Councillor James Stranger  
Councillor Terry Wheeler  
One vacancy for Finance Committee

**In attendance:** Mr John Boxall (Clerk)

Meeting held under Regulation 6 of the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

## ACTION

**1 Election of Chair**

Although this had already taken place at the Finance Committee meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021, Cllr Wheeler suggested that as this is the first “proper” Finance Committee meeting of this year then technically an election would be a good idea for the minutes. Cllr Naylor proposed Cllr Wilsher to be Chair, proposal seconded by Cllr Stranger. There were no other resolutions; unanimously agreed.

**2 Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone present. There were no apologies for absence.

**3 To receive members’ Declarations of Interest on agenda items in accordance with the revised Suffolk Code of Conduct (and section 106 of the LGFA 1992) and to receive any member’s requests for Dispensations**

None.

**4 To agree as a true record the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

Cllr Naylor proposed the minutes as such, this was seconded by Cllr Stranger and unanimously agreed by all present. Cllr Wilsher signed the minutes as such.

**5 Financial Statements: Receive budget statements and any other financial reports; consider action:**

5.1 Receive budget statements effective 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021. All having been previously emailed to Councillors as follows:-

- a. Monthly breakdown of receipts and payments 1/4/21 to 31/3/22
- b. Summary of receipts and payments 1/5/21 to 31/5/21
- c. Payments list 1/5/21 to 31/5/21
- d. Bank reconciliation at 31/5/21 – to be approved by Clerk and Chair

Following a discussion over what was shown on each budget statement document all Councillors were happy that each showed the relevant information correctly and that these documents should be presented at each Finance Committee meeting.

Discussion about when to pay PAYE to HMRC and to claim back VAT. It was agreed that each should be done quarterly and at the same time as each other.

Discussion regarding the operation of Scribe for accounting and the Nat West bank account for online payments. It is unlikely there will be any cheque payments or receipts in the future, most or all payments will be by way of online transfers. Purchase orders and invoices will be scanned into Scribe for auditing purposes. Clerk said he will try and back date these. Cllr Wilsher said that photos can also be uploaded if necessary i.e. for evidence of damage and decay to. Scribe is an online automated cash book and auditing system with minimal paperwork. Scribe is backed up by the providers and Dropbox backs up any documents on the Clerk's computer. All Councillors in agreement with the use of the Scribe accounting platform.

Cllr Naylor disclosed that because what should have been unrepresented cheques at the end of year accounts were actually put on as creditors instead (because cheques weren't issued), fourteen March 2021 invoices totalling £5,454.58 that should have been paid out of last year's budget will actually come out of this year's budget. This means the accounts will show as under budget last year 20/21 and over budget for this year 21/22. Councillors agreed that Cllr Naylor will complete a narrative to explain this for this year's end of year accounts next March/April 2022.

Cllr Naylor

Committee agreed that wages for Clerk, School Crossing Officer and Village Cleaner are to be paid on the last day of the month or the nearest date before that taking into account when the Clerk will be working.

Clerk

Cllr Naylor explained that the previous Clerk's gratuity payment has been paid out of the reserves and will be accounted for in this year's budget as it couldn't be paid until after she had retired on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021. Clerk confirmed that the gratuity payment has actually been made from the precept money held in the Nat West account as the Bank Of Ireland account that holds the reserves has no online facility. This will be refunded from that Bank Of Ireland account, or the account that subsequently replaces it, once the signatories are updated.

Clerk confirmed that the Lloyds Bank account opening application (to replace the Nat West account) is in hand and could take up to four weeks. Use of the Lloyds debit card was discussed and Clerk advised it would mainly be for short notice purchases i.e. stamps, in order to negate the use of a third party account that would then need refunding.

- 5.2 Discuss and approve amended routine payments for financial year 2021/2022, having previously been emailed to Councillors

Cllr Wheeler queried how any varied wages are paid to the School Crossing Officer and the Village Cleaner and any other varying payments on this proposed schedule. Clerk and Cllr Naylor advised that this variation can be done at the time of payment on Scribe and the Nat West account. It's just typing a different value for the payment into each system. Cllr Wheeler in agreement with this.

Clerk's monthly broadband payment to be removed from routine payments list

Agreement to keep Zoom at £11.00 per month for communication purposes i.e. Clerk to other Clerks and training.

Agreement to add MD Landscapes, RMS Tree Services, HMRC, Suffolk Cloud and Scribe to the routine payments list.

## **6 Clerk's Report**

- 6.1 Discuss and agree action on Clerk's Report and correspondence received

a. Clerk advised the Committee that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/21 had been sent to the External Auditor PKF Littlejohn LLP within the specified timescale.

b. Clerk advised the Committee that the Notice of Inspection of accounts had been posted on the website and noticeboards where space was available. Cllr Naylor confirmed that requirements were complied with as this Notice was available on the website.

c. Clerk advised the Committee that he had full access to the Nat West account and Cllr Wheeler was coming to the office on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> June to also get access. The Lloyds Bank account application had been submitted and could take up to four weeks to complete.

An application was submitted to the Bank Of Ireland on the 27<sup>th</sup> May to amend the signatories to the Clerk, Cllr Naylor and Cllr Wheeler. Unfortunately, the only way to do this is to submit a new paper account opening application advising of

the amended signatories. There is no specific form just to amend signatories.

An online application to open an account (Barclays) to replace the Bank Of Ireland account is still to be done. Cllr Wheeler suggested Clerk is to concentrate on changing the Nat West account to a Lloyds account. Once this is up and running complete the Barclays application and as we can run the Parish finances on the Lloyds account.

Clerk advised that Financial Regulations say a second account should be a high interest account. The Committee agreed this is not available at present as most accounts give only 0.01%.

The Lloyds debit card and the petty cash were discussed. Cllrs Naylor and Wheeler advised that theoretically we had a £50 petty cash allowance that the previous Clerk had used to reimburse her purchase of stamps etc. The petty cash allowance is now zero and stamps will now be paid out of Office Requirements. Clerk advised that in the future this will be done with debit card so that a third personal account is not used and receipts will be retained. Debit card limit discussed, Cllr Stranger believes it would be £750. Clerk advised he can't think of anything else other than stamps it would be used for and the main reason for getting it is to stop use of a third personal account. A record of transactions will be on Scribe, onto which receipts will be uploaded, and also on the Nat West account.

- d. Clerk advised the Committee that a VAT repayment of £4,412.93 for period 1/10/20 to 31/3/21 has been received from HMRC into the Bank Of Ireland account.

7

### **Street Furniture**

- 7.1 Clerk advised that two new dog bins had been installed on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May at the top of Kings Hill and on Old School Field at the Mill Road entrance/exit. Clerk advised that a "Look Both Ways" sign had been installed on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May, also at the Mill Road entrance/exit to Old School Field. Cllr Stranger advised that this sign is misleading in relation to the way it's pointing and Cllr Naylor agreed with this. To be looked at and moved as necessary.

8

### **Grounds Maintenance**

- 8.1 Receive quotations to fell diseased Poplar tree in Silver Street Park.

Clerk advised that a quote has been received from Tree Surgery Services to fell and clear the site. Urban Forestry have also been contacted and will send a quote to fell the tree and leave the wood behind as previously OR clear the site AND/OR grind the stump out. They are aware that the next Council meeting is on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> June. Committee decision to ask Tree Surgery Services for a quote to additionally grind out the stump so a decision can be made on quotes using the same specifications i.e. fell and clear and grind the stump out as the tree is diseased.

Clerk

<p>8.2</p>	<p>Consider cutting back front facing side of hedge bordering Old School Field in Mill Road by 25m to 30m to improve visibility for vehicles exiting School Road onto Mill Road</p> <p>Cllr Wheeler advised this is done twice a year, once around this time and once in October. Cllr Wilsher advised she has also had five people complain to her about the visibility being very dangerous when coming out of the main gate onto School Road, especially bearing in mind the age of children using the Field. The Committee therefore needs to consider cutting back the hedge in both areas along School Road and Mill Road. Only outside facing side to be done. Cllr Wheeler said MD Landscapes currently do this and are very good. Decision made to obtain a quote from MD Landscapes.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>8.3</p>	<p>Any other grounds maintenance matters</p>	
	<p>Discussion regarding the goal areas on Old School Field beginning to wear again but no conclusion reached.</p>	
<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>Play Equipment</b></p>	
<p>9.1</p>	<p>Receive Monthly Play Equipment Inspection Report previously emailed to Councillors; agree action.</p> <p>The only area that needs action is the weed growth in the roundabout area. Cllr Wheeler advised the Bury Parks Department (Simon Collins) should be contacted to see how to treat weed growth and any recommended contractor(s).</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p><b>10</b></p>	<p><b>Outstanding estimates awaited or work ordered</b></p>	
<p>10.1</p>	<p>Clerk advised that we have received three quotes to install a pedestrian gate at the Cut/Mill Road entrance/exit to Old School Field and there is one more to come. Decision to be made at the Parish Council meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> June.</p>	
<p>10.2</p>	<p>Clerk advised that two of the three emergency lights in the Parish Council office are not working. Quotes have been received from Efire and from Daryl Bloomfield. Quotes are both under £500. Cllr Wilsher proposed we accept Daryl Bloomfield's quote and this was seconded by Cllr Naylor. There were no other resolutions, unanimously agreed.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>10.3</p>	<p>Clerk advised that he contacted Chris Mortimer on 4<sup>th</sup> June for an update regarding supplying a goal for the Great Meadow. Cllr Stranger advised he has found details of anti-vandal goals post on line (Soccertackle.com) but they have no net on them. Cllr Naylor advised we don't want nets anyway as they'll be damaged. For discussion at forthcoming Parish Council meeting on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> June.</p>	

Cllr Stranger then spoke about nets for the Old School Field goals. He advised that we were one net short and that the previous Clerk was going to order a replacement pair and had assured him she had done that. He advised that only one goal has a net on it that he replaced. He asked that if this isn't the case then we could consider looking at the Soccertackle.com website again. Cllr Wheeler offered to measure goals prior to order.

Cllr  
Wheeler

## 11 Grants

### 11.1 Uptake

Clerk advised that on 4<sup>th</sup> June he had transferred £150 to Fresh Start New Beginnings and £250 to East Anglia's Children's Hospices. He had also transferred £800 on 7<sup>th</sup> June to St Peter and St Paul Church and had subsequently received thanks for this in a phone call from Father Giles.

Cllr Stranger asked how we get to the figure of £4000 for the allocation of grants. Cllr Wheeler explained that we can legally claim approximately £12000 based on the number of Parishioners. However, based on previous applications we know our grant uptake is only ever up to £4000 simply because people don't apply for them. Also, if we were to successfully apply for more it would increase the precept that would in turn increase the Council Tax. Cllr Stranger asked if we could apply for £5000 and Cllr Wheeler said we could if the Parish Council agreed it in November when setting next year's budget.

### 11.2 Applications

Clerk advised there were none

## 12 New business (receive any items of new business for discussion only)

Cllr Naylor suggested that for the next three months the Finance Committee continue meeting as we currently do but then perhaps meet once every other month.

Cllr Wheeler advised it depends what matters arise but stated that once Scribe is running there wouldn't be much that would come up that would need immediate attention. He thinks we'll have the meetings but they will be much shorter. He suggested leaving things as they are and once we're happy with the new systems we might find we have fewer agenda items. If that's so we can then decide if there's anything that needs immediate discussion and if so leave it to the Parish Council meeting and let the Council decide or call a quick Finance Committee meeting and deal with it there.

Cllr Naylor suggested meeting during the day and Cllr Wilsher agreed. Cllrs Wheeler and Stranger said it would depend on their availability. Cllr Naylor advised that if the Clerk is engaged in meetings in the evenings then he's not doing his "day job". So the Committee could meet with the Clerk in the morning for an hour once a month and things could be actioned quicker.

Agreement to leave as is but if the agenda reduces then consider it.

Agreed to review in September as there are no August meetings.

Cllr Wheeler suggested we could consider adding the Finance Committee meeting to the Parish Council meeting or have a quick Finance Committee meeting in the day time.

## 13

### Payments

#### 13.1 Ratify payments made since last meeting

Clerk advised the Committee of the following payments that had been made since the last meeting and the Committee ratified them:-

- a. £1196.84 paid to Marion Farrant for Clerk's hours
- b. £1304.91 paid to John Boxall for Clerk's hours
- c. £179.60 paid to Pauline Beasley School Crossing Officer
- d. £114.16 paid to Dennis Brownlow Village Cleaner
- e. £180.00 paid to Wayne Blackman
- f. £1126.08 paid MD Landscapes
- g. £27.30 paid to Marion Farrant for Clerk's mileage
- h. £7.65 paid to Marion Farrant for Petty Cash
- i. £150 grant paid to Fresh Start
- j. £250 grant paid to East Anglia's Children's Hospices
- k. £11,634.50 paid to Marion Farrant for Clerk's Gratuity
- l. £800 grant paid to St Peter and St Paul Church

#### 13.2 New payments – ratify supplier payments as at 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021

Clerk advised the Committee of the following that are due for payment and the Committee ratified them:-

- a. Mortimer Contracts - £660
- b. OneCom - £62.00
- c. Trevor Brown internal auditor - £261.40 (accrual)
- d. Bridget Turner – Accountant - £500.00 (£380 accrual)
- e. John Boxall – refund to Clerk - £182 re audio recorder
- f. Buildbase – £25.93
- g. SALC - £30.00
- h. STP/Bluefish - £124.02
- i. STP/Bluefish - £30.39
- j. RMS Tree Services – May cut £378.52

Cllr Stranger asked who checks that work has been completed to a satisfactory level before payment is made. Cllr Wheeler confirmed this should happen and suggested that in future any work carried out by contractors for the Parish Council will be checked by the Chair who can also delegate it and a copy of the relevant invoice could be emailed to Chair.

Cllr Naylor

The next meeting of the Finance Committee will be on Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> July 2021 at 7.00 p.m. in the Meeting Room of the Parish Council Office, Arms Lane, Kedington.

The meeting closed at 8.45 p.m.

Signed..... Date .....