

## MINUTES of the GREAT BUDWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

### FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

held at the Parish Hall at 6.45pm on MONDAY 4<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2019

Meeting opened at 6.45pm

#### 1. ATTENDANCE

**ACTION**

Chairman: R. Collier

Council Members: H. Forwood (HF); A. Lee (AL); M. Torrance (MT); P. McAndrew (PMc); L. Hopkinson (LH); J. Travis (JT).

Also present: G. Ayres (Parish Clerk); 1 member of the public.

#### 2. APOLOGIES

H. Brudenell

#### 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared

#### 4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019 were agreed as an accurate record.

#### 5. BUDGET 2018 / 19

##### a) Review of the budget for 2018/19

In response to a query, it was explained that the £2,589 received in November referred to money reclaimed from HMRC for VAT incurred by the Parish Council. It covers a range of invoices paid over a period of time. Claims can be made up to 3 years after the supply of the goods / services but the Clerk will endeavour to do this on an annual basis.

**GA**

The only new items on the spreadsheet are Clerk's expenses £90 (Administration) and Treefellers invoice £5460 (Maintenance) following approval for payment at the January meeting.

Due to issues setting up a new standing order from the bank account (see item 6 below) the Clerk's salary has not been paid. The amounts due are

- January £295.92 (£369.72 gross minus £73.80 tax)
- February £286.85 (£369.72 gross minus £74 tax and £8.87 NEST)

and it was agreed that cheques will be signed for these amounts.

**PMc LH**

The budget for 2018/19 was reviewed against actual spend and accepted by the Council.

##### b) Payments

The following payments were reviewed and approved:

- Clerk Expenses £183.09 (incl. website hosting renewal; various stationery and printer cartridges; SLCC New Clerk Conference fee).

- Website £490.00 (refresh, training and meetings).
- PKF Littlejohn LLP £240.00 (Governance & Accountability Return 2017/18)
- Society of Local Council Clerks £106.00 (annual membership fee)
- John Eaton £45 (removal of filing cabinet)

**c) Update on VAT issue with Turner & Son (Construction) Ltd**

It was agreed that the Council will not pursue this matter in the Small Claims Court due to the costs and time involved in making a claim and the unlikelihood of getting any money returned, even if the judgement were to go in favour of the Council.

**6. NATWEST BANK**

The Clerk has thus far managed to change the address of the bank account and remove the previous Clerk as a signatory. The bank has also been asked to cancel the standing order payments to the previous Clerk and remove her internet access to the account. However, as the current Clerk still does not have access to the account, there is no way she can currently check this.

After numerous phone calls and visits to the branch, the Clerk is now advised that to access the account in order to check standing orders and the balance, she needs to be a signatory. This will require a resolution of the Parish Council and will be dealt with at the Ordinary Meeting to follow.

**GA**

Some progress has been made adding Cllrs. A. Lee and R. Collier as signatories on the account. The relevant form has been downloaded and signed by two existing signatories. This now needs to be taken by the proposed new signatories to the branch where they will need to prove their identity. The form was given to Cllr. R. Collier.

**AL RC**

**7. LOWER PUMPHOUSE RENOVATION**

Site meetings were held with two contractors – Trinity Renovations (8<sup>th</sup> Feb) and Bdp (11<sup>th</sup> Feb). Both expressed a keen interest in quoting to do the work but nothing has been received so far. The Clerk will chase them for their quotations.

**GA**

**8. BUDGET 2019 / 20**

The Clerk has updated the budget proposed at the last meeting. No allowance has been made for any VAT refunds from HMRC as their response to any 2018/19 claim cannot be guaranteed and actual VAT payments for 2019/20 cannot be anticipated.

The budget was approved, subject to the following items being included under expenditure on Parish Projects and Maintenance:

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| • Traffic Mirror Westage Lane             | £500  |
| • Tree work on the Avenue                 | £4000 |
| • Highways, parking, signage improvements | £6000 |
| • Lower Pumphouse renovation              | £6000 |

The Clerk will revise accordingly and circulate the agreed 2019/20 budget.

**GA**

**9. PRECEPT 2019 / 20**

Receipt of the precept application has been confirmed by CW&C.

## **10. USE OF P.O. BOX AS PARISH COUNCIL ADDRESS**

It was felt important to ensure continuity and avoid use of the Clerk's private address but the cost of a P.O. Box is expensive and will only be considered as a last resort.

It was agreed that a preferable way forward would be to install a lockable Post Box at the Parish Hall and use that as the Parish Council address. This would have the added advantage of giving a visible presence in the village and a way for local people without internet access to contact the Council.

Further thought will be given to who, apart from the Clerk, will have keys to access the post. In the meantime the Clerk will research boxes, preferably one that can be personalised with the Parish Council logo on it.

**GA**

Cllr. R. Collier and any other Cllrs present will raise the issue at the next meeting of the Parish Hall to agree siting of the box.

**RC**

Meeting closed at 7.20pm.

**Signed as a true record .....**  
**Chairman of the Finance Committee**