

Minutes of the meeting of Belbroughton Parish Council Finance Committee held on 17th November 2014 in the Jubilee Room Belbroughton Recreation Centre.

Present: Councillors J Bradley (Chair), C Scurrall, I Dalziel, T Jones, R Morgan, D Roberts, and P Shotton. **In attendance:** John Farrell (Clerk). 0 members of the public.

429/14 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs. K Green, A Mabbett, and S Pawley.

430/14 Declarations of interest. No interests were declared.

431/14 Dispensations. None were requested.

432/14 Minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes of the meeting on 20th October 2014 were approved, and the chairman signed the minute book.

433/14 Bank reconciliation:

The bank reconciliation for the Council's operational bank account was noted. Cllr. Bradley signed the bank statements and the 'Quickbooks' reconciliation prints.

434/14 Accounts for Payment

The clerk circulated the list of items for payment in November totalling £2,750 and detailed the transactions involved. The payments were authorised and Cllrs. Jones and Scurrall signed the cheques.

435/14 Parish Meeting Room Belbroughton

The Committee noted the communication from the tenant regarding her financial position. The clerk confirmed that the terms of the lease required that the rent deposit should be at the level of six times the monthly rent. The Committee recommended that the tenant is requested to ensure that the correct rent deposit is in place in time by making eight monthly equal instalments from 1st January 2015.

436/14 Council Budget 2015/16

The clerk informed the Committee of the budget setting Working Groups recommendations and had circulated information detailing the Council income and expenditure to date, the anticipated out-turn for 2014/15, a copy of the budget 2014/15 and, a proposed budget for 2015/16. The clerk further advised that the District Council had now confirmed that the cost of the May 2015 parish council elections would be approximately £1,800 for each of the two wards should the elections be contested.

The Tax Benefit Support Grant £3,000 in the budget for 2014/15 is not being paid over by the District Council and thus this income is omitted from the 2015/16 budget as there has been no indication on the District Councils policy for next year.

The Committee noted the budget proposals but also recommended the following amendments:-
Increases in the Open Spaces budget to enable more gardening services in both villages.

£1000 of the Parish meeting room rent receipts would be allocated to 'Ordinary Activities' income to offset the costs of hiring rooms for parish meetings – since those costs would not be incurred if the Parish meeting room was available for meetings.

An allocation of £1,800 would be made available to cover potential election costs – should there be two contested elections then the additional costs would need to be taken from 'contingency' allocation.

A proportion - 25% - of the clerks salary costs would be placed to 'Other Activities' expenses since the Committee felt this was a realistic estimate of how the clerks time was used. The Committee recommended maintaining the Precept for 2015/16 at the existing amount of £65,000.

The proposed budget shows a surplus of £1,777 on 'Ordinary Activities' and £1,600 on 'Other Activities' and thus an overall surplus of £3,377.

437/14 District Councillors Ward Members Fund

The Committee noted the criteria for applying for moneys from the District councillors allocated funds. The clerk advised that Cllrs. Boswell and Sherrie had each committed £578 and Cllr. Lewis £426 for Parish Councils. The Committee recommended that initial bids be made to cover the costs of the strimmer which is a capital item used by the volunteer footpath wardens and the costs of the new trees commemorating the First World War at the Fairfield Recreation Ground.

438/14 Council Finances

The clerk circulated the Council Financial Planning and Investment strategy document and an updated schedule of the Council's assets position. The Committee noted the document and schedule but due to timing constraints deferred a full review of the strategy document until the December Finance Committee.

439/14 Maintenance Work

Cllr. Jones requested that dangerous wet leaves on Stourbridge Road near the junction of Bournheath Road in Fairfield were collected by the parish council gardener.

The Committee recommended that residents were encouraged via a note in a newsletter to clear leaves emanating from trees and shrubs on their properties for the benefit of the community.

440/14 Any other Finance Business

Cllr. Bradley advised that the clerk had received further information from the Belbroughton United Charities following the enquiry regarding their accounts and their beneficiaries. The Committee noted the accounts and comments on beneficiaries and recommended that the minor grant requested for £150 was not made since it felt that the charity had sufficient funds itself for the purpose of the grant.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

Signed.....Chairman