



AUDLEM
PARISH COUNCIL

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Chair: Derek Winskill
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Minutes of meeting of Audlem Parish Council
FINANCE COMMITTEE
held in the Methodist Church, Shropshire St. Audlem
on Monday 12th December 2022 at 6.00pm.

Present: Cllrs Tim Lawton [TL] (Chair), Geoff Seddon [GS] (Vice Chair), Derek Winskill [DW]

In attendance: Cllrs. Jean Stainthorpe [JS] and Paul Cawood [PC], Dr Kate Howe (Locum Clerk).

Members of the public (MOP): 2

22/1 Apologies for absence received from Cllrs. Ralph Warburton [RW] (Vice Chair)

22/2 Public Participation / Open Forum

MOP raised concern - in January there was £154k in APC accounts. No financial statements have been published since. Chair responded no councillors on Council at the time. New members came on board in June. Locum Clerk explained since July CHALC had made payments on behalf of APC. A payments schedule had been circulated monthly and approved by Council. Accordingly, there was no APC bank reconciliation to approve. MOP questioned why payments schedule not available on the website? GS (Vice-Chair) thanked MOP for raising this matter which was an oversight. Committee agreed to consider best location on website for publication of payments schedule. JS (Chair of Communications Group to action).

MOP questioned – has APC any money left at all? Chair responded a very small amount in the new Lloyds account.

MOP queried – why November Council minutes not available on the website? JS (Chair of Communications Group) explained they had been, but unfortunately due to tech issues seemed to have disappeared, being addressed.

MOP questioned – has complaint been made to Ombudsman? Clerk confirmed yes.

MOP questioned – has insurance claim been notified? Clerk confirmed yes.

22/3 Declarations of Interest – there were none

22/4 Requests for Dispensations – there were none

22/5 Confirmation of Previous Meeting Minutes

Committee **NOTED** only DW was on Finance Committee at last meeting. Hence, DW stated to his recollection they were correct. Committee **RESOLVED** on basis they believed they were accurate to approve the Minutes of the last Finance Committee meeting held on **16th December 2021**.

22/6 Recommendation of new member of Finance Committee

Due to councillor resignation following last full Council meeting, TL proposed, GS seconded, Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to Council the appointment of Jean Stainthorpe as a new member of the Finance Committee

22/7 Budget Matters

- a) Committee considered suspension of the APC grant programme due to lack of funds. TL proposed, GS seconded, Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to full Council the suspension of the grant programme for 2022-23 and forthcoming programme for 2023-24 due to ongoing financial challenges.
- b) GS (Vice-Chair) explained a slight change to the circulated draft budget due to an additional invoice received for grass cutting. Committee considered the amended budget as supplied. TL proposed, GS seconded, Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to full Council approval of the amended draft budget (identifying budget savings and accurate budget projections for remaining financial year (December 2022 to end March 2023))
- c) Committee considered, TL proposed, GS seconded, Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to full Council the draft budget 2023/24 (as circulated).
- d) GS (Vice-Chair) explained how calculation was arrived at. APC have no funds at all. APC must have a minimum of 3 months funds in place to cover pre-committed costs such as loan on Turnpike Field, insurance, staff salaries and contracts to keep toilets open. APC must repay ChALC loan to cover payments. There has been no increase in precept for the last 3 years. Inflation has impacted costs significantly so it's not just about recouping losses resulting from apparently fraudulent transactions. Last year low precept request was to have been funded from £22,000 reserves. Committee considered, TL proposed, GS seconded, Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to full Council the estimated £129k (130% increase) precept request based on the draft budget 2023/24. This would be £2.32 per week for a Band D Property.
- e) Committee **NOTED** the update on actions being taken on reclamation of VAT. APC in process of recovering £6k in VAT which will be paid direct to ChALC as repayment. Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend these actions to full Council.

22/8 Internal Auditor

GS (Vice-Chair) informed Committee that Kevin Mellor (previous internal auditor) has volunteered to do the internal audit again for the Accounts year ending 31st March 2023. His fee will be £100 in form of donation from APC to First Responders. GS proposed, TL seconded, Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to full Council accordingly.

22/9 Items for Future Agenda

None notified.

22/10 Date of Next FINANCE COMMITTEE Meeting

Committee **NOTED** the next meeting will be held at **7pm on Tuesday 7th March 2023** in the Methodist Church, Shropshire St, Audlem, Crewe CW3 0AE

Chair thanked Councillors and MOP's attending for their time and interest. **Meeting closed at 6.30pm.**

FINAL DRAFT