

**Minutes of the meeting of Belbroughton and Fairfield Parish Council Finance Committee held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021 by video conference facility.**

**Present: Parish Council**

**Councillors:**

A Mabbett;

Dr R Morgan;

S Nock; and

S Wilkes.

(observing)

Clerk: C Powell

R Mullett

(observing)

**Public**

There were 0 members of public in attendance

**214/21 Apologies.**

Apologies were received from Councillors Gibbs and Hood and these were accepted by the Committee

**215/21 Declarations of interest.**

There were no declarations of interest.

**216/21 Dispensations Requested.**

There were no dispensations requested,

**217/21 Minutes of previous meeting.**

Although the Chair had requested the Clerk send the minutes to him to proofread the minutes of the meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> September, 18<sup>th</sup> October and the 15<sup>th</sup> November would not be accepted by the Committee as a correct record as it was felt they were not in a suitable condition to be agreed due to errors being found after further review by the Chair. It was decided that the minutes would be agreed at January's meeting.

**218/21 Update on outstanding items**

Wicksteed had attended to repair the damaged playground surface on the 17<sup>th</sup> November. The Clerk informed the Committee that an invoice had been received and would be included in the month's round of payments.

**219/21 Bank reconciliations:**

Councillor Mabbett had reviewed the month's spreadsheet noting the following anomalies:-

- i. Invoices for IDG Services and Wicksteed Ltd were not included in column D
- ii. Gross and net salary payments were recorded incorrectly
- iii. Invoice for Amazon had been included twice

Councillor Nock noted the amount of £37.19 appears twice and this would need to be removed for accuracy. For clarification, the Clerk stated that discussion of the payments were in line with the revised spreadsheet amended by Ruth Mullett and Chair. The Chair noted that he and Ruth Mullett had checked the payments schedule again and had agreed on the same amount for the December payments. The Clerk stated no payments had been made at this point of the discussion as the Committee were responsible for signing off the final figures to be paid in any given month.

Councillor Nock noted that as the current banking arrangements limits electronic payments to £2000.00 per day, that the Finance Committee might take advice from Ruth Mullett as to how she handles payments of this kind, with her experience from other Parish Councils. Ruth Mullett uses Unity Trust Bank is the preferred bank of most Parish Councils. Ruth Mullett stated she has full access to view the accounts but no authorisation to move any money or to make any payments. With Unity Trust Bank all Councillors would have their own log in and the Clerk would have responsibility for arranging the payments for that month and Councillors would need to log in to the accounts using their log ins to authorise each payment raised by the Clerk. Ruth Mullett recommended the move to this way of Banking and would place this item on the Finance Agenda for consideration by the Committee.

Councillor Mabbett queried a missed payment to HMRC in August 2021 as the previous Clerk had received a statement to this effect. Councillor Mabbett also requested the Vat return is reviewed for the previous quarter.

**ACTION: That the electronic payments are paid and a cheque payment is raised for Worcester County Council.**

**That the spreadsheet amended by the Chairman and Ruth Mullett be used as a true and accurate reflection of the payments to be made in December 2021.**

**The current banking arrangements are reviewed and discussed as an agenda item at the meeting scheduled for 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022.**

**The Clerk review the HMRC website to reconcile the (missing) August payment.**

#### **220/21 Accounts for Payment**

The clerk had previously circulated the November list of items for electronic and cheque payments to be made. A revised spreadsheet was discussed at the meeting<sup>1</sup> showing electronic payments of £3,707.43 and a cheque payment for £16,874.40. Councillor Mabbett and the Committee confirmed and agreed the revised payment schedule for December instructing the clerk to make the revised payments.

**ACTION: Councillor Nock review the payments for January 2022.**

#### **221/21 Draft Budget**

Councillor Mabbett informed the Council he had reviewed the Parish Council's main items of expenditure and based on the assumption that the precept would remain at £65,000.00, the Council may face financial stress based on this amount.

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<sup>1</sup> See minute ref 219/21

**ACTION: A working group is convened to review and agree a budget prior to final sign off in January. Membership to include Ruth Mullett, Councillors Nock and Mabbett.**

**222/21          Outturn Figures**

Councillor Mabbett suggested this item is deferred until the budget has been agreed

**223/21          Fairfield Recreation Ground**

Councillor Mabbett outlined the process that Full Council looks at the evidence regarding the future of Fairfield Recreation Ground. This may or may not involve the existence of Fairfield Villa Football Club as the design of the lease will depend on the revised lease. The Full Council needs to take the decision over the renewal of the lease given the 'feelings' in the community. The Clerk noted that an email had been sent to the solicitors to understand if any restrictive covenants have any precedence of Fairfield Recreation Ground.

Councillor Morgan discussed a public meeting the Parish had been invited to by Fairfield Villa Football Club. Mrs Mullett felt that in the current climate it would not be in the best interests of the Parish Council to attend.

Councillor Wilkes provided an update on the development of the paper-based questionnaire, which would be ready for review in the New Year.

**2224/21        Parish Contractors**

Councillor Mabbett requested an update and the Clerk had discussed the current contracts that may need to be reviewed as part of its re-negotiation schedule. It was noted that a procurement exercise may need to be carried out to determine the most cost-effective choice for the Parish Council. Ruth Mullett suggested the hire of an individual solely responsible for Maintenance duties to assist with the work of the Lengthsman.

**225/21          Maintenance Work**

Councillor Morgan noted the footpath at High Street and Holy Cross Lane has become overgrown and requires some maintenance to enable pushchairs to access this route.

Councillor Wilkes noted that the pavement from the Swan down to grassed area at Fairfield Court has a substantial amount of twigs and soil. This is becoming a health hazard and would require some general maintenance to improve the pavement width.

Councillor Mabbett noted three posts to the entrance to the Fairfield Recreation Ground will need to be replaced as these have gone missing. Councillor Mabbett assumed they may have been removed due to them starting to rot.

**226/21          Any other Finance Business**

No further business discussed at this meeting.

The Meeting closed at 20:40

To be agreed as a true record by future Committee Meeting.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

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## Belbroughton and Fairfield Parish Council – Finance Committee’s outstanding issues

Minute Ref.	Agenda Item	Action Required	Correspondence Sent	Deadline	Status
205/21	Accounts for payment	Circulation of November payments for approval	N/A	N/A	Complete
221/21	Parish Council Budget 2022/23	A working group is convened to review and agree a budget prior to final sign off in January. Membership to include Mrs Mullett, Councillors Nock and Mabbett.	N/A	10.01.21	In progress
184/21	Pepperwood	The Clerk to discuss the implications and origins of the proposed contribution with Councillor Patchell.	Email sent to Cllr Patchell requesting clarification	10.01.21	In progress
186/21	Purchase of the Clerk’s phone	For the current BT contract to be terminated and the Samsung Galaxy A12 for Business is purchased.	04.10.21 - Passport and utility bill sent to O2 for identification purposes.  Email sent to previous Clerk with last quarterly bill attached for action. Samsung Galaxy A12 for Business to be purchased.	13.12.21	<b>Not Required</b>
187/21	Maintenance Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planters in Fairfield</li> </ul>	Clerk to review the contract to understand what work has been outlined in the contract.	10.01.21	In progress
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground repairs</li> </ul>	Works have been carried out on 17.11.21 – awaiting confirmation and pictures for audit purposes	01.12.21	<b>Complete</b>

			An onsite meeting took place on 21.09.21 with Wicksteed to assess the work required to repair the affected areas in the Playground. Email sent to Councillors outlining the timescales required to carry out repairs		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The paths leading to Bradford Lane from Bradford House require general clearance</li> </ul>	Text message sent to Lenghtsman requesting attendance and to carry out work required.	18.10.21	<b>Complete</b>

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