

Minutes of the meeting of Belbroughton and Fairfield Parish Council Finance Committee held on 16th November 2020 by video conference facility.

Present: Councillors: A Hood, G Ingram, A Mabbett, S Nock and Dr R Morgan.
In attendance, the clerk. 1 member of the public.

309/20 Apologies. None Received. **310/20 Declarations of interest.** None.

311/20 Dispensations. None requested.

312/20 Minutes of previous meeting.

The minutes of the meeting of 19th October 2020 were approved by the Committee.

313/20 Bank reconciliation.

The Committee noted that the monthly operational bank account and 'Quick books' reconciliation had been carried out by Cllr.Hood, which he had confirmed by an e mail to the clerk for Council records. Cllr. Nock would carry out the reconciliation procedures for the month ending 30th November 2020.

314/20 Accounts for Payment.

The clerk had previously circulated for perusal the November list of items for payment totalling £4,227.05 The Committee noted and authorised the payments instructing the clerk to make the electronic payments.

The Committee confirmed authorising an order and payment for two new wooden benches at now circa £375 each plus required fixings' costs. These are to replace two damaged aging benches on The Green, Belbroughton.

315/20 Health and Safety Tree work.

This item was deferred until a future Committee meeting as not all quotes for the required works had been received.

316/20 Investments

The Committee noted the maturing £50,000 two year bond with United Trust Bank Ltd (an F.S.C.S. covered institution.) on 3rd December and agreed that this should be renewed for a further two year term. It noted that the current fixed rate quoted was 1.2%.

Action: the clerk to arrange the reinvestment in December.

317/20 Covid – 19 Support

The Committee, further to the delegated authority given by the full council of 2nd November, approved giving support in the form of supermarket vouchers to the value of up to £500 each for distribution by the two village primary schools head teachers to families in need this Christmas. It further approved a grant payment of £500 to a Bromsgrove 'Community Hub' which was set up to provide meals assistance to qualifying families. The funding of £1,500 would be taken from the overall Grants budget which had to date been underutilised, due to the health crisis.

Action: Cllr Mabbett to confirm need with the schools and with the clerk arrange the purchase of vouchers and the distribution to the schools.

318/20 Parish contractors

The Committee noted the new parish upkeep schedule produced by Cllr. Patchell along with the schedule of remaining grass cutting sites. It agreed that the schedules should be combined, and one contractor sought.

It further agreed that the new contractor should be offered initially a one year contract.

Action: The clerk was requested to seek tenders.

87.

319/20 Parish Budget year 2021/22

The Committee noted and then considered the draft budget and commentary produced by the clerk. It agreed the budget and therefore recommended to full Council an unchanged Precept at £65,000. It noted that pending agreement of new contracts for grass mowing and parish upkeep services relevant lines in the budget would need to be adjusted to accommodate but overall income and expenditure would be maintained balanced and thus would not affect the recommended Precept level.

It noted that there was significant expense likely for lighting columns replacement and conversion of lanterns to l.e.d.s, however in view of an expected surplus by the end of the present financial year it would consider how these costs would be covered next April, when a balancing amount may need to be allocated from reserves. The Committee would then consider how these reserves would be repaid and over what term.

320/20 Village sign – Holy Cross Lane, Belbroughton

The Committee noted that the sign repairs would be completed shortly and agreed that it should be returned to its existing location. It would be secured with godfathers rather than be fully concreted in, thus enabling any future change of location to be a simpler procedure.

321/20 Maintenance Work

Cllr. Mabbett advised that the grass bank at the junction of Brook Rd and Bournheath Rd. Fairfield had seen a lot of churning up of the grass close to the utility pole. On reference to the County Council they advised they would take no action. The P.C. could possibly install verge protectors at its own expense but with W.C.C. permission.

Prior to an official approach to W.C.C. Cllr. Mabbett would attempt to trace the vehicle ownership and request improved driving.

322/20 Other Finance Business

Cllr. Mabbett advised that the Fairfield First School had had a burglary with laptops and the server stolen. It was not known if insurances covered the loss. The Committee acknowledged however that the Parish Council policy was not to give support schools as this was the role of the higher tiers - the County Council and National Government. Any change to policy would need to be considered by the full Council.

The Meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.

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