

**Minutes of Shevington Parish Council
Finance Committee Meeting
Held Thursday 11 January 2018
7pm Shevington Library**

Present: Councillor I Whiteley (Chairman), Councillors J Ball, W McKnight, C Horridge, K Shaw and J Fletcher.
One member of the public was present.

Officer in Attendance: Mrs K Pilkington (Clerk)

1. Apologies

Cllrs C Miles, A Bland and J Calderbank.

2. Declaration of Interests

None.

3. Minutes of the Last Finance Committee Meeting (7 December 2017)

Resolved: The Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 7 December 2017 were approved as a true and correct record.

4. Budget & Precept FY2018

The draft budget plan and other supporting papers were received. The budget plan, the precept and the reserves were discussed at length.

The Clerk reported that she had recently been informed by the LA that the funding for the introduction of CCTV for the centre of Shevington had been approved and that the project was going ahead. In view of this and the fact that the Parish Council had agreed to fund its maintenance the 'Risk Management' cost centre was increased by £1,000. The funds were transferred from the General Reserve.

Members raised issues about the speed of progress in relation certain projects. These were discussed. The Chairman reported that the Vicarage Lane Fields Working Party had held a site meeting in the latter part of 2017 and would be meeting in February to discuss the ideas put forward during the site meeting and other suggestions.

The need to have the trees in Otters Croft and Crooke Woods professionally assessed was discussed. The Committee agreed that the cost centre relating to the woodlands should be increased to £500. This amount too was transferred from the General Reserve.

Potential maintenance issues in relation to the children's play area in Memorial Park and the terms of the SLA with Wigan Council relating to it were raised and discussed. The Committee agreed to set aside a reserve of £3,000 for the play area. This was transferred from the General Reserve.

Resolved: The Committee agreed a budgeted expenditure of £80,130 (including Expenditure Contingency) and recommended it to the Council for approval.

Proposals for the precept were considered.

Resolved: The Committee agreed a precept of £69,449 and recommended it to the Council for approval.

A member requested a recorded vote.

FOR: Cllrs Whiteley, Ball, McKnight, Horridge, Shaw and Fletcher.

AGAINST: None.

5. Response to Article in Local Life Magazine

The November edition of Local Life magazine had carried an article about the finances of the bowling green. At the December meeting of the Council it was suggested that members discuss the possibility of issuing a response. The options open to the Council were discussed briefly.

Resolved: It was agreed that no response to the article would be issued.

The first section of the article had consisted of information readily available on the website. The article had also included a statement which, it had been claimed, had been made by the Parish Council. A member raised concerns that the Council had not met in order to discuss and agree a statement to issue and asked about the source of information. During the ensuing discussion the following were reported:

- The Clerk had supplied the information, following consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, in response to written questions submitted by the newspaper;
- Both the Chair and the Vice Chair had been sent copies of the questions and the replies submitted to the newspaper;
- There had been no time to call a meeting of the Council to discuss replies to the questions within the deadline that had been given;
- The replies had reflected the known policy of and decisions made by the Council with respect to the Bowling Green – information that was also available on the website;
- The Clerk's job description included the preparation of press releases, in consultation with the Chair, about the activities or decisions made by the Council.
- The phrase 'Shevington Parish Council told Local Life' had been inserted by the journalist – it had not been submitted by the Clerk.

6. Financial Aid Applications

None.

7. Dates of Next Meetings

18 January (Council); 1 February (Policy & General Purposes Committee).

There being no further business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 7:58 pm.

Chairman