

**Minutes of Shevington Parish Council
Finance Committee Meeting
Held Wednesday 2 December 2020
8:20pm – Virtual Meeting**

Present: Councillor Ira Whiteley (Chairman), Councillors William McKnight, John Whiteley, Jessica Higham, Michael Crosby, Michael Grimes and Christopher Horridge
Three members of the public.

Officer in Attendance: Mrs K Pilkington (Clerk)

1. Apologies

Cllr John Ball

2. Declaration of Interests

None

3. Minutes of the Last Finance Committee Meeting (4 November 2020)

Resolved: The Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 2 September 2020 were approved as a true and correct record.

4. Quarterly Budget Monitoring

The quarterly budget monitoring report was received and discussed. With one exception, all cost centres were on line. The 'Allotments' cost centre was showing an overspend of £145. This had arisen because the repair and upgrade to the underground external water stop tap for the main allotments site had cost more than estimated. The reason for this was because the location of the mains water stop tap was unknown and, to cut off the water supply to the allotments supply stop tap in order to carry out the repair, the plumber had had to hire a freezer unit for a day.

Income from plot rents this year had come to £1,378, which was more than the £1,122 allocated to the 'Allotments' cost centre.

Resolved: The Committee approved a virement of £145 from the 'Allotments Income' to the 'Allotments' cost centre to cover the overspend.

The Committee noted that a VAT claim for £7,988 was submitted to the HMRC at the beginning of August, but had not yet been settled. The Clerk reported that the HMRC had confirmed verbally the previous day that, following an investigation, the claim had been discovered to have been closed. As no reason had been recorded for the closure, it had been re-opened and the Clerk had been assured that the claim would be settled the following week.

5. Preliminary Budget Preparation 2021-22

The Clerk reported that

- (a) Wigan Council had confirmed that the Parish Council would receive a Council Tax Support Grant of £8,813 in 2021.
- (b) It was not yet possible to carry out an impact assessment of possible precept increases on households in different bands, as the LA's Council Tax Department had not yet calculated the council tax base for the Parish.
- (c) The amount in the 'Memorial Park Drainage' cost centre had been removed from the Budget '21 column. This amount would return to a ring-fenced reserve of the same name at the end of the financial year, assuming it had not been spent before that.
- (d) The 'Loan Repayment' cost centre had been increased by the amount repayable next financial year for the new loan. This was subject to the Parish Council being permitted to borrow the funds and drawing down the full amount.
- (e) As requested by the Committee at its meeting in November, all cost centres had been increased by 1% wherever possible / necessary to allow for inflation.
- (f) Quotations were currently being sought for the Memorial Park grounds maintenance contract and the litter collection contract for next financial year and also for the tree surgery and felling in Memorial Park.

Cllr Mike Grimes outlined the options available to the Council with respect to the precept to be set for 2021. The matter would be discussed further by the Committee in January.

6. Review of Risk Assessments

The risk assessments had been circulated as a pdf portfolio. Members reported that they had been unable to open the portfolio, so the item was deferred to the Full Council meeting on 16 December.

7. Financial Aid Applications

None

8. Dates of Next Meetings

18 December(Council); 6 January (Finance Committee)

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Resolved: That, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the press and public be excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

The members of the public left the meeting.

9. Minor Maintenance Work

Quotations for several items of minor maintenance work in Memorial Park & Garden, at Forest Fold and outside Whiteacre Park were considered.

Resolved: The Committee approved the work and awarded the contract for items of minor maintenance (to the value of £1,514 in total) to John Parker.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 9 pm.

Chairman