

**Minutes of Shevington Parish Council
Finance Committee Meeting
Held Wednesday 7 December 2022
7:55pm - The Community Centre at Vicarage Lane Fields**

Present: Councillor William McKnight (Chairman), Councillors John Whiteley, Christopher Horridge and Michael Grimes
Two members of the public

Officer in Attendance: Mrs Krystyna Pilkington (Clerk)

1. Apologies

Cllrs Ira Whiteley, Mike Crosby and John Ball

2. Declaration of Interests

Cllr Chris Horridge wrt Item No.6 (*personal & prejudicial*)

3. Minutes of the Last Finance Committee Meeting (7 December 2022)

Resolved: The Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 7 December 2022 were approved as a true and correct record.

4. Quarterly Budget Monitoring

The previously circulated quarterly budget monitoring report was received and considered. The tracker currently indicated that the Council would have a balanced budget – possibly with a small surplus – at the end of the financial year. There did, however, appear to be an error in the figure for the General Reserve, which had increased since April. The Clerk was asked to check the figures for the reserves and report back.

5. Preliminary Budget Preparation 2023-24

The preliminary proposals for the 2023-24 budget had been previously circulated and were considered. It was observed that, with inflation being at the level that it was and showing no signs of reducing within the next twelve months, it would be difficult to set a balanced budget and precept for the next financial year. It was noted that at the end of 2021-22 the out-turns for some of the cost centres were higher than the proposed allocations for the same cost centres in 2023-24.

The Clerk was asked to prepare a more detailed report with reasons why the 2021-22 out-turns were higher than anticipated for the next meeting in January, when proposals for the budget and precept were due to be discussed again.

6. Allotment Rent Review

The Committee reviewed the current plot rents. Several options were discussed.

Resolved: The Committee agreed that, in view of the anticipated increases in costs, both the charge for the initial 100m² of a plot and the amount charged for each additional m² would be increased by 10%.

7. Financial Aid Applications

Shevington Methodist Church Kitchen

Shevington Methodist Church had submitted an application for a grant towards the costs of the refurbishment of their new kitchen. The Committee considered the application.

The Clerk advised that local councils were not permitted by law to give grants to religious institutions if the funds were to be used for religious purposes, but they were allowed to award grants if the funds were to be used for the wider community. The kitchen at the Methodist Church was used to prepare and serve refreshments for events open to the wider community.

Resolved: The Committee approved a s137 grant of £250 towards the cost of refurbishment of the church kitchen.

8. Dates of Next Meetings

14 December (Council); 11 January (Finance Committee)

There being no further business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 8:57 pm.

Chairman