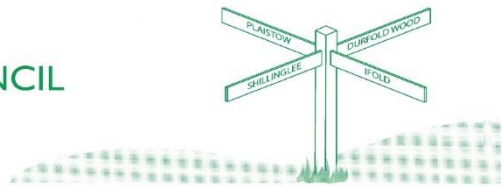


PLAISTOW AND IFOLD PARISH COUNCIL



MINUTES of the Finance Committee of Plaistow and Ifold Parish Council held on **Thursday 7th April 2022**, Kelsey Hall, Ifold.

Please note: - These minutes are to be read in conjunction with the [Clerk's Report](#), which was published on the Parish Council's [website](#) with the [agenda](#) in advance of the meeting. The Clerk's Report provides all necessary background information for the matters considered at the meeting.

Present Cllr. Phil Colmer (Finance Committee Chair); Cllr. Paul Jordan (Chair of the PC); Cllr. Nicholas Taylor and Catherine Nutting (Clerk & RFO)

No members of the public were in attendance either in person or via Zoom.

F/21/006 Apologies for absence & housekeeping

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. John Bushell and Cllr. David Ribbens.

F/21/007 Disclosure of interests

Recommendation: - To deal with any disclosure by Members of any disclosable pecuniary interests and interests other than pecuniary interests, as defined under the Plaistow and Ifold Parish Council [Code of Conduct](#) and the Localism Act 2011, in relation to matters on the agenda.

None received.

F/21/008 Minutes

The Finance Committee **RESOLVED** to **RATIFY** the minutes of Meeting held on 3rd November 2021. Which are published on the Parish Council's [website](#).

F/21/009 Public participation

Recommendation: - To receive and act upon, if considered necessary by the Committee, comments made by members of the public in accordance with relevant legislation and Plaistow and Ifold Parish Council's [Policy](#). Questions, or brief representations can be made either in person, or in writing provided they were sent via

email to the Clerk no later than 4pm Thursday 7th April 2022. Public Participation shall not exceed 10 minutes, unless directed by the Chairman. A speaker is limited to 5 minutes.

None received in advance of the meeting or requested at this item on the agenda.

F/21/010

Order for Payments – Year End

The Finance Committee **NOTED** the financial report for Year End, which includes income and expenditure since the last full Council meeting (09.03.2022) up to 31.03.2022 and **RESOLVED** to **AUTHORISE** the **EXPENDITURE** listed.

The meeting confirmed that the incorrect overpayment of £170 for legionella water sampling had been correctly repaid by the contractor and accounted for.

F/21/011

Interim Internal Audit Report

The Finance Committee **NOTED** the interim [Internal Audit Report](#) and the Auditor's recommendations and **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** as follows:-

- All future contracts for expenditure above £25,000 **MUST** be advertised on the Contracts Finder website in accordance with the requirements within Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
- **APPLY** for a debit card on the Council's bank account.
- The **CLERK** to **ATTEND** RBS **ACCOUNTING** system **TRAINING**.
- The Council **MUST** state that it is the sole trustee of the Plaistow Playing Field Charity (charity 305404) on its Annual Return.

Actions:
Clerk

F/21/012

Verification of bank reconciliations for Qtr. 3 (Oct – Dec 2021) and Qtr. 4 (Jan -March 2022)

The Finance Committee **NOTED** the bank statements, corresponding reconciliation statements, cash book and balance sheet for quarters 3 & 4 and **RESOLVED** to **APPOINT CLLR. TAYLOR** to verify/sign the documents via Secured Signing in accordance with Standing Order 9(d).

Actions:
Clerk

F/21/013

To consider Tranche 1 [grant applications](#) for 2022/23 (to be paid to groups no later than 30th April)

Action:
Clerk

The Finance Committee **CONSIDERED** the grant applications received from the following community groups: -

- Billingshurst Emergency Assistance Team (BEAT First Responders/Parish defibrillators) - £1,000
- Little Acorns Preschool - £1,500
- Winterton Hall - £1,500
- Plaistow Youth Club - £1,500
- Kelsey Hall - £1,500
- Plaistow Preschool – £2,000
- Home-Start Chichester & District - £1,408
- Parochial Church Council - Kirdford Church - £1,250
- The North Singers - £250
- Friends of Chichester Hospital - £50
- Kirdford Baby and Toddler Group - £500

And **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the amounts requested. Payment will be made no later than 30th April.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to write to the applicants to remind them that, in accordance with the Grants Policy, the money can only be spent for the purposes outlined in their application forms and if the money is not spent within 12 months, that it must be repaid to the Parish Council.

Please refer to the dedicated [Grants](#) and [Grant Expenditure](#) pages of the Parish Council's website for full details of the applications.

F/21/014

To consider the 2021/22 Budget Forecast Comparison spreadsheet at Quarter 4 / Year End

Please refer to the details contained within the Clerk's Report.

The Finance Committee **CONSIDERED** the [2021/22 Budget Forecast Comparison spreadsheet at Quarter 4 / Year End](#) and **NOTED** the highlighted areas of movement. The Committee expressed their satisfaction that the 2021/22 Annual Budget had delivered better than originally forecast.

The meeting was advised that the Clerk's salary has hitherto been based on the 2018/19 pay scale. The 2020/21 pay scale (approved by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) on 28th February 2022) will be applied moving forward. On 11th April, the full Council will consider the NJC's recommendation to backdate the pay to April 2021. This backdated pay and associated

oncosts (NI/Pension and Payroll services) are expressed in the £1,650 accrual.

F/21/015

Agreed Budget for 2022/23

Please refer to the details contained within the Clerk's Report.

The Finance Committee **CONSIDERED** the [Agreed Budget for 2022/23](#) as drafted and **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** it for **ADOPTION**, without amendment, by the **FULL COUNCIL** on 11th April 2022.

The meeting was advised that the salary budget includes the Parish Council's employer liabilities (National Insurance, Pension contributions and payroll administration charges). It also includes a potential 2022/23 1.75% pay increase which could be approved by the NJC and backdated. This would be an accrual at Year End *if* the notification of any pay scale increase is not known until the end of the financial year.

Costs have been generally uplifted to account for the rise in the cost of living.

The projected overspend, as at 31.03.2023, is less than was anticipated at the start of 21/22.

Without the outstanding loan amount, the Agreed Budget projects a reserve position as at 31.03.2023 of £17,873.96 and once the loan amount is taken into consideration, this rises to £53,470.39, which represents 56% of the annual Precept.

F/21/016

Employer [Pension Discretions Policy](#)

Please refer to the full [notes](#).

Action:
Cllr. Taylor

Parish Council employees (the Clerk) are enrolled in the Local Government Pension Scheme. This is a defined benefit scheme. The level of contributions made during the member's employment is fixed actuarially. Consequently, any change made by an employer to an employee's pension entitlement (for example, agreement for an employee to take early retirement) could give rise to their pension being under-funded. Any shortfall in funding would have to be met by the employer. For this reason, employers are obliged to set out in advance (and make public) their policies for exercising discretion in their application of pension arrangements.

By law, there are 5 compulsory discretions in which an employer must have a written policy:

The five areas are: -

(i) The Council's discretion to award additional pension (i.e. for someone to receive a pension greater than that which has been funded by contributions made during their employment)

(ii) The Council's discretion to make additional funding contributions (i.e. to increase the level of contributions made during a person's employment, so that they receive a larger pension when they retire)

(iii) The Council's discretion to allow flexible retirement: the ability for someone to take flexible (i.e. part time) retirement from age 55

(iv) The Council's discretion to waive actuarial reductions (i.e. to make additional contributions so that an employee could, for instance, retire early but still receive their full pension)

(v) The Council's discretion to switch on 'the 85 year rule': a complex and arcane set of arrangements for those whose age plus number of years' contributions into the scheme exceeds 85

On 16th February 2022, Cllr. Taylor attended a workshop to be briefed on the requirements. Cllr. Taylor presented the following recommendations to the Finance Committee: -

All 5 discretions would, if exercised, impose an additional cost on the Council. Furthermore, the timing and size of the cost could not be determined in advance. It is therefore recommended that the Council's policy in each case should be not to allow any of the discretions. (Note that the Council could revise these policies at any time in the future).

The Finance Committee **AGREED** with **CLLR. TAYLOR'S RECOMMENDATIONS** and **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** this **POLICY POSITION** to the **FULL COUNCIL** on 11th April.

Cllr. Taylor will draft the policy and submit to Hampshire Pensions Services.

F/21/017

Electrical work for the cricket pavilion

Please refer to the details contained within the Clerk's Report.

Action:
Clerk

The Finance Committee **REVIEWED** the [Electrical Instillation Condition Report](#) & [PAT Testing Report](#) and the works estimates and **RESOLVED** to **COMMISSION** the works and **INSTRUCT** Kevin Webber to: -

- Fully replace the Consumer Unit
- Decommission the burglar alarm, but not to reinstate
- Not to install fire alarms

The Pavilion does not house any expensive equipment to warrant a security alarm. It is not a building regularly used, or close to adjoining properties; therefore, a fire alarm is unnecessary.

F/21/018

Meeting Dates

The end of Qrt.1 meeting will take place in July 2022. Date to be agreed.

Actions:
Clerk

There being no further business to discuss the Chair closed the meeting at 20:30