WALFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Finance Committee Meeting

Held Wednesday 10th January 2024 at 7:30pm
At Walford Village Hall

Present: Councillors: Berry – Chairman, Akers, Cole, Warburg, Petersen.
In attendance: N Richmond (Clerk) and a members of the public

1. **Apologies for absence:** - Cllr Terry reason accepted.

2. **Declarations of interest and written requests for dispensation**: - None made.

3. **Adoption of Minutes of previous meeting:** - It was **resolved** to adopt the minutes of the meeting held on 4th October 2023 as a true and accurate record and they were signed by the chairman.

4. **Public participation session**:
Grahame Morgan-Watson wished to know what the council expenditure at KBCL was for. Historically council have budgeted 25% of the management fees for maintenance of the site. Cllr Akers further advised that as Walford Parish Council own the site it is responsible for the maintenance of the site, and that the expenditure this year had included stone chippings for the car park, turf and fencing and tree work. Bridget Vine asked that the new format for the budget be explained noting that the new format no longer had red negative figures which she said were confusing.

5. **Financial information: -**

5.1. **To approve and sign bank statements and reconciliation up to 31st December 2023.**
The bank reconciliation was checked and signed by Cllr Cole and approved by the meeting.

5.2. **To review and consider the year to date accounts.**
The year to date accounts had been circulated. They were noted but no questions arose.

5.3 **To consider the draft budget for 2024/25 and agree a proposal for WPC on 17th January 2024.**
Cllr Berry having developed the new format with all income in one section and expenditure underneath colour coded he advised that it is very similar to that used by the clerk in his Woolhope parish accounts. The merits of the format were discussed particularly in relation to the Howle Hill Memorial Project. Cllr Akers proposed that both the income and expenditure be shown in a separate section at the end of the report. Cllr Warburg suggested that this was ok as long as the figures were included in a final total so the budget format was agreed. The discussion moved on to the individual elements in the budget and these expenditure amendments were approved: Rights of Way increased from £1,500 to £2,500, Community Engagement reduced from £3,000 to £1,500, Insurance increased from £600 to £700 and Canoe launch increased from £4,000 to £5,000. With these amendments it was agreed to submit the budget to full council on 17th January for approval. Cllr Berry then outlined the percentage increases in various elements of expenditure and suggested that the precept request be increased by 4.38% ie £1,220.00 from £27,825 to £29,045.00. Cllr Akers expressed the view that, given the limited achievements of council, the poor behaviour of councillors in meetings and the current cash position no increase could be justified. Cllr Petersen's view was that the behaviour of councillors was within it's control but should not influence financial considerations. Cllr Warburg proposed that the precept be increased by £1,220.00 This was seconded by Cllr Petersen and a vote taken with three in favour two against so was passed.

6. **Payments: -**

6.1. **To consider and approve the payments on appendix 3.**
Cllr Warburg questioned why Finance Committee were approving payments a week ahead of a full council meeting. The merits of this were discussed and the clerk agreed that the payments could be held over for the full council meeting, while pointing out that on occasions the individual consideration of payments took up valuable time at full council. Cllr Warburg accepted that line of thought. Cllr Cole proposed that the payments be approved en bloc. This was seconded by Cllr Akers and all agreed.

6.2. **To ratify the payments on appendix 3.**
There were no payments to ratify. The clerk advised that the January salary payments would be included to be approved at full council.

6.3. **To consider a response to PKF Littlejohn in respect of the 2022/23 AGAR.**
The clerk outlined the e-mail from PKF requesting a response regarding insurance matters and risk assessments relating to KBCL and the reply he suggested. Cllr Warburg asked to see the report that

raised the matters to be sure it would answer them, so the clerk will forward the report to the Finance Committee members for their consideration, and would in the meantime provide the signed performance management checklists and insurance details to PKF.

7. **Items for the next agenda (no discussion).**
   7.1 2023-24 Year end accounts
   7.2 Draft AGAR 2023-24
   7.3 Review of the KBCL Performance Management Checklist

8. **To consider the date and venue of the next meeting.**
   The clerk advised that the next meeting should be held in early April 2024 following the year end and will book a suitable venue.

The meeting closed at 9.12 p.m.

SIGNED ________________ DATE 10 - 04 - 2024