

CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held virtually via Zoom on 5 January 2021 at 7.00pm.

Present Cllr K Small (Chair)
Cllr M Lucas (Vice-chair)
Cllr J Ballman
Cllr R Ballman
Cllr P Exell
Cllr S Exell
Cllr S Henderson

Officers A Reeves (Clerk/RFO)
A Briggs (Estates Manager)
A Cripps (Libraries Manager)
J Smart (Head of Finance & Governance)

Also Present Cllr J Yeowell

Public None

365 **Apologies**
No apologies were received.

366 **Declarations of Interest & Applications for Dispensation**
Cllr J Ballman declared that he is a Trustee of the Hreod Burna Urban Forest and member of the RSPB.

367 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**
The minutes of the Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) Committee meeting held on Tuesday 1 December 2020 were reviewed and approved as a correct record of the meeting.

368 **Transaction Logs**
Members noted that the most recent Transaction Logs had been checked by Cllr S Exell and there were no anomalies to be raised.

369 **Budget - Report November 2020**
Members noted the summary income and expenditure against budgets report to November 2020, a copy of which appears as Appendix A in the Minute Book.

Action: Head of Finance & Governance to provide the Chair with an update on the underspend up to the end of December ahead of the informal review on Capital projects.

370 **Capital Expenditure Projects**
Members noted the report of the Head of Finance & Governance regarding capital expenditure requests for 2021/22, a copy of which appears as Appendix B in the Minute Book.

Members agreed to defer this item until the Extraordinary Finance & General Purposes meeting, so that some items from the Community Wellbeing Committee may be added for consideration.

The Chair asked if any other Members required further additions to the list for consideration. Cllr S Henderson asked that his list emailed on 24 November be included for consideration.

There was some discussion around the use of Ward Allowance where the Chair confirmed that it would still be up to individual Members whether their allowance was used, but that the Head of Finance and Governance had recommended that some of the smaller projects could be dealt with in this way.

Cllr S Exell commented that there were some projects which had a crossover between the Community Wellbeing Committee and the Leisure and Recreation Committee.

There was discussion on how all Members of the Council would be informed of the process for agreeing the revenue and capital projects budgets and allocation. The Chair confirmed that he would go through the budget setting process, which will preface the revenue and capital budget debate.

There was discussion around consideration of revenue implications for capital projects, where the Chair confirmed that a capital project with a revenue implication which could not be met, would be unlikely to be approved.

371

Ward Allowance - Update

Members noted the report of the Head of Finance & Governance regarding Ward Allowance spend for the previous and current financial years, a copy of which appears as Appendix C in the Minute Book.

There was some discussion regarding the ward allowance underspend from 2019/20. The Chair enquired whether this underspend was still available, the Head of Finance & Governance stated that she would like to confirm that this amount has not already been included in the calculation of the capital reserves available.

The Chair proposed that any underspend (provided it had not already been included within the capital reserves) should be added to the capital projects fund. Cllr S Exell asked that her balance be reserved for the project at Mannington Rec for a second Cricket Wicket. Cllr P Exell requested that his allowance also be reserved for further spending at Moredon Library.

Members **RESOLVED** to include any underspend (if available) from the 2019/20 ward allowances in the capital projects fund, except for Cllr S Exell's remaining balance.

There was some discussion on how there was some committed but unspent balance from 2019/20. The Chair confirmed that this was due to projects not yet being completed.

372

Ward Allowance

Members considered a request from Cllr P Exell as follows:

1. Litter bin between St Andrew's Church and the junction of Moredon Rd/Bourne Rd.
2. Dog and/or litter bin in Olive Grove green space.
3. Dog bin in Olive Grove near school railings, across the road from the wall which divides Olive Grove and Pinetree Rise.
4. Litter bin at the top of a Church Walk South near the shops.
5. Any remaining ward allowance to be put towards the proposed works at the Moredon & Rodbourne Cheney Library - the water re-use and carpet.

The Parish Clerk has confirmed that this request adheres to the Councils Ward Allowance Procedure (January 2018).

There was some discussion on the use of ward allowance/parish funds on land managed by a property management company. The Clerk advised Members that there are some examples of Parish Councils supporting management companies in bringing an area up to the same standards of the local area. The Clerk commented that this is usually more agreeable when the management company is a made up of a resident's association rather than a commercial company.

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the request from Cllr P Exell to use his remaining ward allowance on the following items:

1. Litter bin between St Andrew's Church and the junction of Moredon Rd/Bourne Rd.
2. Dog and/or litter bin in Olive Grove green space.
3. Dog bin in Olive Grove near school railings, across the road from the wall which divides Olive Grove and Pinetree Rise.
4. Litter bin at the top of a Church Walk South near the shops.
5. Any remaining ward allowance to be put towards the proposed works at the Moredon & Rodbourne Cheney Library - the water re-use, furniture and carpet.

Cllr M Lucas stated that he still has £4,000.00 left in his ward allowance and that he was willing to allocate some to Moredon and Rodbourne Cheney Library.

373

Budget 2020/21

Members noted a verbal update from the Head of Finance & Governance regarding the 2021/22 budget setting process.

The Head of Finance & Governance informed Members that information has now been received from Swindon Borough Council to indicate what the tax base will be set at 9753.7 which is a 0.2% decrease on last year. The Council Tax Support Grant of £45,999.00 has been allocated which is the same as last year. Using these figures, the current budget requests from all Committees would result in a band D precept of £156.72 which is an increase of £27.76 per annum or 21.53%. The Head of Finance & Governance will now be working closely with the Chair and Clerk to produce a formal budget recommendation to an extraordinary meeting of this Committee for approval.

The Chair suggested that the Extraordinary Finance & General Purposes meeting be held at 6pm on 22 January 2021 with an Extraordinary Full Council Meeting on the same date at 7pm to approve the budget and precept setting for 2021/22.

The meeting closed at 7.56pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair of the Finance & Staffing Committee