



Appleton Parish Council

Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road, Appleton, WA4 5EQ

Telephone 01925 268153 Email clerk@appletonpc.org.uk

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee on Thursday 2nd February 2023 at 9.45am

Present: - Councillor K Critchley, Councillor G Chapman, Councillor M Jervis, Councillor M Delaney and Councillor P Lewenz.

Clerk, Mrs J Monks and Assistant Clerk, Mrs I Derbyshire.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Councillor K Critchley welcomed everyone to the meeting and chaired the meeting. Councillor M Marshall, Councillor B Kidley and Councillor S Brookes sent their apologies for the meeting.

2. Members Code of Conduct

No declarations of interest were made.

3. Matters Arising

The following update was provided following the previous Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting on Thursday 1st December 2022.

The clerk confirmed that the second speed indicator device has been ordered and is expected to be delivered at the end of February.

4. Parish Hall Income/Expenditure and Hallmaster reports.

The Hallmaster reports were circulated with the agenda pack for the meeting.

Recommended that;

the Hallmaster reports were accepted by the Parish Council.

Parish Hall income and expenditure for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st December 2022 is as follows;

(Please note all figures are net)

Apr-22	Income	Accumulative	Expenditure	
	1870		Caretakers wage	846.27
	-2931.76			
	-1061.76	-1061.76	Parish Hall Improvements & Maintenance	778.33
			Utilities	1168.64
			Window Cleaning	68
			Safety Inspections	0
			Refuse	70.52
				2931.76
May-22	Income	Accumulative	Expenditure	
	2413		Caretakers wage	846.27
	-2274.82			
			Parish Hall Improvements & Maintenance	404.93
	138.18	138.18	Safety Inspections	0
			Window Cleaning	0
		-923.58	Utilities	961.6
			Refuse	62.02
				2274.82
Jun-22	Income	Accumulative	Expenditure	
	1,323.00		Caretakers wage	846.27
	-1,673.94			
	-350.94	-350.94	Parish Hall Improvements & Maintenance	0
			Utilities	619.93
		-1274.52	Window Cleaning	136
			Safety Inspections	0
			Refuse	71.74
				1673.94
Jul-22	Income	Accumulative	Expenditure	
	1965		Caretakers wage	846.27
	-2113.32		Parish Hall Improvements & Maintenance	484.13
	-148.32	-148.32	Utilities	509.02
			Safety Inspections	0
		-1422.84	Window Cleaning	0
			Refuse	74.9
			Training associated with Hall	0

			Booking System	199
				2113.32
Aug-22	834		Caretakers wage	846.27
	-2347.96			
			Parish Hall Improvements & Maintenance	972
	-1513.96	-1513.96	Utilities	469.57
			Safety Inspections	0
		-2936.8	Window Cleaning	0
			Refuse	60.12
				2347.96
Sep-22	1845		Caretakers wage	846.27
	-1980.42			
			Parish Hall Improvements & Maintenance	269.33
	-135.42	-135.42	Utilities	802.60
			Safety Inspections	0
		-3072.22	Window Cleaning	0
			Refuse	62.22
				1980.42
Oct-22	1851		Caretakers wage	846.27
	-3317.62		Parish Hall Improvements & Maintenance	1583.1
	-1466.62	-1466.62	Utilities	802.6
			Safety Inspections	0
		-4538.84	Window Cleaning	0
			Refuse	85.65
				3317.62
Nov-22	2424		Caretakers wage	846.27
	-2211.01		Parish Hall Improvements & Maintenance	880.05
			Utilities	420.5
	212.99	212.99	Safety Inspections	0
		-4325.85	Window Cleaning	0
			Refuse	64.19
				2211.01
Dec-22	2868		Caretakers wage	1574.1
	-3019.66		Parish Hall Improvements & Maintenance	1962.84
			Utilities	999.12

	-151.66	-151.66	Safety Inspections	0
		-4477.51	Window Cleaning	0
			Refuse	57.7
				3019.66

For the period 1st April 2022 to 31st December 2022, the Parish Hall made a loss of £4,477.51.

Recommended that;

The Parish Hall income and expenditure report was accepted by the Parish Council.

5. Parish Hall

- (a) Non return of tenancy agreements. To confirm who has not completed a new tenancy agreement and what action to take following non-return.

The Parish Council approved a new tenancy agreement for Hall hires and the clerk sent a letter dated 5th October 2022 to all Parish Hall users. There are two groups who have not yet completed and returned the new tenancy agreements and risk assessments. Each have been sent several email reminders and telephone calls made asking for them to complete and return the new tenancy form.

RESOLVED that;

If the Parish Hall group has not returned the new tenancy agreement and risk assessment by 1st March 2023, they will not be able to continue to hire the hall and key access to the hall will be removed.

- (b) To consider the request received from a Hall User regarding storage charges.

The request received asked for a discounted storage charge from 1st April 2023.

RESOLVED that;

The Parish Council could not give any discounts on the Hall hire charge or storage charge for individual hirers.

The clerk was requested to ask them to consider applying for a grant from the Parish Council and to consider applying to Warrington Borough Council for a grant via the Community Initiative fund.

- (c) To consider the request for further compensation from a Hall User following the double booking error on Monday 16th January 2023.

The clerk reported that she had provided the following due to the booking error;

- Refund of the Hall hire for the 9.30 to 10.30 slot for 16, 23rd and 30th Jan.
- Offered to reprint leaflets with the amended time and dates.

The Hall User however has requested the following additional compensation;

- Two additional weeks at the 11.30 to 12.30 slot with free room hire. (Total of four weeks free room hire)
- Four weeks to decide whether the 11.30 to 12.30 will work.

RESOLVED that;

As a gesture of goodwill and as full and final settlement of request, the Finance and General Purposes committee agreed to provide the following;

Two additional weeks at the 11.30 to 12.30 slot with free room hire. (Total of four weeks free room hire)

Four weeks to decide whether the 11.30 to 12.30 will work.

6. Legionnaires Review

RESOLVED that;

Green Contract Services to be employed to undertake a two-year review and test for legionnaires at the Parish Hall at the cost of £295.00 plus VAT.

7. PAT testing for the Parish Hall

The clerk had received a training request from the Parish Ranger to undertake a PAT testing course in order to do the annual PAT testing at the Parish Hall. The clerk had investigated options and produced a report which has considered costs of the training and hire/purchase of the necessary equipment.

Recommended that;

the PAT testing at the Parish Hall was to be undertaken by a qualified electrician due to the costs of training and hiring of equipment.

8. Alternative energy sources for the Parish Hall

The clerk had been looking at alternative energy sources for the Parish Hall. The clerk had contacted Warrington Borough Council for advice however they have forwarded the request onto the Northwest Net-zero Hub.

One quote has been obtained to date for the installation of solar panels. The main issue is the roof is not south facing. A system facing East or West will yield around 15-20% less energy than one facing directly South.

The clerk reported that the Parish Council would require planning permission for the installation of solar panels for the Parish Hall.

Recommended that;

A further two quotes be obtained for the installation of solar panels at the Parish Hall.

Air Source Heat Pump

The company that quoted for the solar panels would not recommend the installation of an air source heat pump as the hall would require additional radiators. There is no big demand for hot water and the existing hot water set up is more efficient.

Recommended that;

Heat pumps would not be viable for the Parish Hall and this option would not be pursued at this time.

9. Parish Council Van

(a) To discuss and to authorise the repairs currently needed to the Parish Council van (approx. £400)

RESOLVED that;

The expenditure of up to £400 plus VAT was approved to repair the van.

(b) To consider the purchase of an electric replacement van and to make any recommendations.

RESOLVED that;

The purchase of a replacement electric van would not be purchased at this time.

10. Quarterly budget review for all income and expenditure

The quarterly income and expenditure from 1st April 2002 to 31st December 2022 is as follows;

Payments	Budget 2022/23	Actual (to 31.12.22)	Budget Balance
Staff Costs	102000	82780.60	19219.40
Maintenance of Parish Council Assets	2000	1473.96	526.04
Utilities	6000	7253.22	-1253.22
Insurance	2000	1646.46	353.54
Safety Inspections	0	0.00	0.00
Office Supplies	3000	2925.37	74.63
Annual Subscriptions	1500	465.00	1035.00
Advertisements	0	0.00	0.00
Elections	4000	0.00	4000.00
Website	0	310.00	-310.00

Grants	6000	8638.00	-2638.00
Chairman's allowance	400	0.00	400.00
Training	1500	906.00	594.00
Refuse Collections	1200	609.06	590.94
Window cleaning	600	204.00	396.00
Equipment	1000	437.52	562.48
Parish Hall Improvements & maintenance	10000	8256.68	1743.32
Bank charges	250	167.30	82.70
Environmental Working Group	6000	1289.72	4710.28
Media budget	1000	0.00	1000.00
PCSO	18000	12480.00	5520.00
Youth	2000	0.00	2000.00
Ranger costs	4000	2306.64	1693.36
Community projects	0	0.00	0.00
Library	150	0.00	150.00
General Contingencies	5538	78.98	5459.02
Emergency Grass cutting	0	0.00	0.00
Events Committee budget	3000	3.44	2996.56
Net Payments		132231.95	48906.05
VAT		7188.57	
Total Payments (excluding ear marked reserves)		139420.52	48906.05
Total Payments (including ear marked reserves)		168357.44	

The clerk reported that was a significant overspend in the utilities budget of £1253.22 for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st December 2022 and the final quarter utility bills had yet to be paid. This was due to the dramatic increase in the gas and electricity bills for the Parish Hall.

There was no budget for the hosting of the website for 2022/2023 but a budget of £400.00 has now been included for 2023/2024.

The grant budget was over budget by £2638.00 for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st December 2022. The grant budget for 2022/2023 was £6,000 and up to 31st December 2022 the amount of £8,638.00 has been paid. The breakdown of the grants is as follows;

23/06/2022	Appleton Bawming	500.00
21/07/2022	Lumb Brook Millennium Green	2,750.00
20/10/2022	Tuesday litter picking group	288.00
17/11/2022	St Mary Magdalene Church	150.00
17/11/2022	Royal British Legion	200.00
15/12/2022	St Mary Mag car park	2,000.00
19/01/2023	Broomfield's Youth Project	2,750.00
	Total	8,638.00

In addition to this the amount of £1494.50 has been given to Stockton Heath Library but these funds were taken out of earmarked reserves.

The total amount of grants awarded for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st December 2022 was therefore £10,132.50.

The clerk is aware that several organisations have expressed interest in submitting further grant applications to the Parish Council, but these have not yet been received.

Receipts			
	Budget	Actual (31.12.22)	Budget Balance
Precept	169588	169588.00	0.00
Bank Interest	50	1478.32	-1428.32
Parish Hall	10000	17519.00	-7519.00
Other	0	113.85	-113.85
Net		188699.17	-188699.17
VAT	1500	3186.11	-1686.11
Total Receipts	181138	191885.28	-10747.28

Due to the rise in the interest rate the bank interest had increased. Income from the Parish Hall had already exceeded the budget target and has clearly recovered following Covid. Please note that the maximum income the hall has generated in recent years is £18896 which was in 2019/2020. The budget for Parish Hall income for the next financial year, 2023/2024 is £20,000. There is a limit on the amount of income as there is a maximum capacity of the hall.

Recommended that;

The quarterly budget review of income and expenditure was approved by the Parish Council.

11. Ear Marked Reserves

To confirm the earmarked reserves as of 31st December 2022.

The clerk confirmed that the earmarked reserves as at 31st December 2022 were as follows;

Ear-Marked Reserves	Reserve for 2022/23	Utilised Reserve	Reserve carried forward
Elections (ER)	10000	0.00	10000.00
Parish Hall (ER)	50000	17225.00	32775.00
Youth Work (ER)	30000	0.00	30000.00
Parish Ranger Van Replacement (ER)	20000	0.00	20000.00
Environmental Improvement Schemes (ER)	10000	0.00	10000.00
Community Scheme/ consultant costs for PDO (ER)	40000	5338.25	34661.75
South Warrington Library, Stockton Heath (ER)	3000	1494.50	1505.50
Contingencies (ER)	45400	0.00	45400.00
Queens Jubilee Lottery Grant (ER)	1379	1414.17	-35.17
Public Health (ER)	37500	0.00	37500.00
Public Amenity (ER)	37500	3465.00	34035.00
Total	284779	28936.92	255842.08

The clerk confirmed that the Parish Council has spent £28,936.92 in reserves for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st December 2022.

The new roof for the Parish Hall had been taken from the Parish Hall earmarked reserve.

The costs for the Local Plan for the period 1st April 2022 to 1st December 2022 was £5,338.25. The clerk noted that there will be additional costs to be taken from this fund for the Local Plan and for the public inquiry for the Six56 development.

A grant for 2022/2023 of £1494.50 had been given to Stockton Heath Library and the cost of this has been taken from the South Warrington Library earmarked reserve.

The amount of £3465.00 taken out of the public amenity earmarked reserve is for the purchase of the speed indicator devise. A second speed indicator devise has been ordered but not paid for so there will another £3055.00 to taken out of the public amenity earmarked reserve.

The ear marked reserves will be reallocated after 31st March 2022, after year end.

Recommended that;

The earmarked reserves were approved.

12. Five Year Review of income and expenditure

The five year review of income and expenditure is as follows;

Payments	Budget 2023/2024	Projected 2024/2025	Projected 2025/2026	Projected 2026/2027	Projected 2027/2028
		5% increase	3% increase	3% increase	3% increase
Staff Costs	122078	128182	132027	135988	140068
Maintenance of Parish Council Assets	2000	2100	2163	2228	2295
Utilities	29000	30450	31364	32304	33274
Insurance	2000	2100	2163	2228	2295
Safety Inspections	0	0	0	0	0
Office Supplies	3500	3675	3785	3899	4016
Annual Subscriptions	500	525	541	557	574
Advertisements	0	0	0	0	0
Elections	4000	4200	4326	4456	4589
Website	400	420	433	446	459
Grants	6000	6300	6489	6684	6884
Chairman's allowance	100	105	108	111	115
Training	1000	1050	1082	1114	1147
Refuse Collections	1000	1050	1082	1114	1147
Window cleaning	600	630	649	668	688
Equipment	500	525	541	557	574
Parish Hall Improvements & maintenance	9000	9450	9734	10026	10326
Bank charges	200	210	216	223	229
Environmental Working Group	4000	4200	4326	4456	4589
Media budget	0	0	0	0	0
PCSO	20000	21000	21630	22279	22947
Youth	0	0	0	0	0
Ranger costs	4000	4200	4326	4456	4589
Events Committee budget	1000	1050	1082	1114	1147
Total Payments including staff costs	210878	221422	228065	234906	241954

Recommended that;

The five-year review of income and expenditure was approved by the Parish Council.

13. Investment Strategy

The assistant clerk had produced an Investment Strategy Report, and this was discussed.

Recommended that;

The Parish Council opens an instant access account with Skipton Building Society from 1st April 2023 and deposits the amount of £85,000 when the precept is received at the end of April.

The situation with regards to the finances will be reviewed again in May by the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

14. Contract for Planters at Bridge Lane

- (a) To discuss the invoice received for the 2022 summer and winter bedding and to consider the price increase and to approve any expenditure.

The contract for the summer and winter bedding at Bridge Lane shops was awarded to All Seasons for the cost of £940.00.

The invoice received for this is £1,000. The reason given was they had to pay more for the plants as the prices had increased. However, a new invoice has now been issued for the original quotation of £940.00.

RESOLVED that;

The invoice for £940 was approved as the original agreed amount for the summer/winter bedding and watering at Bridge Lane planters for 2022.

- (b) To discuss the quotes received and to make a recommendation for the contract for 2023.

RESOLVED that;

All Seasons are notified that they are no longer required to undertake the planting at Bridge Lane shops for 2023.

RESOLVED that;

Northwich Town Council are employed as contractors to undertake the summer and winter bedding plants at Bridge Lane shops with the summer planting to take place before 1st May 2023 and for the winter bedding to be undertaken before 1st October and for watering twice a week for 18 weeks at the cost of £1574.00 plus VAT.

15. Changes of procedures for grant applications

Recommended that;

The grant policy was amended.

16. Grant application from Stockton Heath Festival for 2023

A grant request for £1100 has been submitted to the Parish Council towards the running costs of Stockton Heath Festival for 2023.

Recommended that;

The Parish Council refuses the grant of £1100 towards the running costs of Stockton Heath Festival due to substantial reserves being held by them at the present time.