



# Appleton Parish Council

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## Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at 9.30am

### Present

Councillor P Walker from 10.17am until 11am, Councillor J Wheeler, Councillor S Bengier and Councillor B Axcell.

Mrs J Monks (Clerk)

### 1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Councillor J Wheeler welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### 2. Members Code of Conduct

None declared.

### 3. Matters Arising

The clerk provided the following update from the previous Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020.

The documentation for the new bank account had now been received and the assistant clerk will arrange for the funds to be now transferred into the new savings account to take the balance to £50,000.

The clerk has contacted LiveWire requesting a refund for the hire of the BYP football pitches for the period 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 to 14<sup>th</sup> August 2020, however no refund has yet been received.

The clerk confirmed that the issue with the gents toilets has now been fixed, however the contractors had to visit twice to resolve the issue.

The clerk and assistant clerk had met the supplier with regards to the locks and this is on the agenda for this meeting.

The clerk confirmed that she had tested the Christmas lights at the Parish Hall and these were working.

### 4. New Locks for the Parish Hall

The assistant clerk had obtained three quotes for replacement locks at the Parish Hall. Issues were replaced that any fob/cards may not work and as such Hall Users would be unable to gain access to the Parish Hall.

It was **recommended** that;

Safeguard were employed as contractor to replace the locks at main entrance with a card system, with 100 cards and to replace the lock cylinder at the kitchen door at the cost of £995.00 plus VAT.

The clerk was asked to put this on the agenda for the consideration of the Parish Council meeting in October.

#### **5. Laurel Hedge between 24 Dudlow Green Road and Woodside Court**

The clerk had received a request from a resident to trim the laurel hedge between 24 Dudlow Green Road and Woodside Court. The hedge was last trimmed in October 2019 by All Seasons Ground Maintenance and they had confirmed that the cost would remain the same at £230.00.

**RESOLVED** that;

The laurel hedge was cut at the cost of £230.00.

The clerk was asked to arrange this accordingly.

#### **6. Parish Hall Income and Expenditure**

The quarterly budget review for the Parish hall was circulated. There had been no Hall Hire income from this date from 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 due to Covid-19 and the Hall has been making considerable loss each month.

The £10,000 Covid grant received from Warrington Borough Council however has not been included in this report.

**Recommended** that;

The Parish Council accepts the report on Parish Hall Income and Expenditure for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020. Details are as follows;

<b>Parish Income</b>	<b>Hall</b>		<b>Parish Hall Expenditure</b>		
<b>Apr-20</b>		242	Booking Secretary/Cleaner Wage		777.98
Furloughed Wages		600.57	Parish Hall Improvements	153.42	
			Utilities	778.17	
			Window Cleaning	0	
Less Expenditure		-1709.6	Safety Inspections	0	
<b>Loss</b>		-867		931.59	931.59
					1709.6
<b>May-20</b>		36	Booking Secretary/Cleaner Wage		777.98
Furloughed Wages		600.57	Parish Hall Improvements	9.14	
			Safety Inspections		
Less Expenditure		-1090.52	Window Cleaning	59	
<b>Loss</b>		-453.95	Utilities	182.48	312.54
			Refuse	61.92	1090.52
				312.54	
<b>Jun-20</b>			Booking Secretary/Cleaner Wage		777.98
Furloughed Wages		600.57	Parish Hall Improvements	44.13	
		0	Utilities	10	
			Window Cleaning	0	
Less expenditure		-835.83	Safety Inspections	0	
<b>Loss</b>		-235.26	Refuse Coll	3.72	57.85
				57.85	835.83
<b>Jul-20</b>			Booking Secretary/Cleaner Wage		777.98
Furloughed Wages		600.57	Parish Hall Improvements	230.66	
Less expenditure		-1342.7	Utilities	270.48	
<b>Loss</b>		-742.15	Window Cleaning	0	
			Safety Inspections	0	
			Refuse Coll	63.6	564.74
				564.74	1342.7
<b>Aug-20</b>			Booking Secretary/Cleaner Wage		777.98
Furloughed Wages		598.22	Parish Hall Improvements	1104	
Less Expenditure		-1958.3	Utilities	12.56	
<b>Loss</b>		-1360	Window Cleaning	0	
			Safety Inspections	0	
			Refuse Coll	63.72	1180.3
				1180.3	1958.3
<b>Sep-20</b>			Booking Secretary/Cleaner Wage		777.98
Furloughed Wages		523.45	Parish Hall Improvements	319.45	
Less Expenditure		-1467.5	Utilities	10	
<b>Loss</b>		-944.04	Safety Inspections	190	
			Window Cleaning	108	

		Refuse Coll	62.06	689.51
			689.51	1467.5

## 7. Quarterly budget review for all income and expenditure

The clerk had circulated the quarterly budget up to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020. This is now halfway through the financial year.

### **Recommended** that;

The quarterly budget as follows was approved at the next Parish Council meeting.

Staff costs are on budget as the Parish Council is halfway through the financial year.

There has been more spent on office supplies during the first two quarters as additional mobile phones have needed to be purchased due to Covid-19 and the clerk and assistant clerk had been receiving working from home allowance as the office has been closed, this was not budgeted for. The Parish Council has purchased virtual meeting software which is an additional item which was not budgeted for.

The Elections due in May 2020 where cancelled due to Covid-19 as such there will be no expenditure for this in the financial year 2020/2021.

A new website has now been purchased this did come in considerably lower than the budget of £5,000 as the charge was £1548.00.

With regards to grants, the clerk is aware that a large grant application is due for consideration at the Parish Council meeting in October.

Parish Hall improvements/maintenance. The Parish Council has purchased a lot of additional items to make the Hall Covid-19 secure. This was not budgeted for.

Given that is October the Emergency Grass cutting budget will not be required.

<b>Payments</b>	<b>Budget 2020/2021</b>	<b>Actual (to date)</b>	<b>Budget Balance</b>
Staff Costs including mileage	86500.00	41317.68	45182.32
Maintenance of Parish Council Assets	2000.00	0.00	2000.00
Utilities	3000.00	1263.69	1736.31
Insurance	2500.00	1642.80	857.20
Safety Inspections	1500.00	190.00	1310.00
Office Supplies	2600.00	1586.52	1013.48
Annual Subscriptions	1000.00	176.00	824.00
Advertisements	300.00	0.00	300.00
Elections	5000.00	0.00	5000.00
Website	5000.00	1548.00	3452.00
Grants	6000.00	3100.00	2900.00
Chairman's allowance	400.00	18.77	381.23
Training	2000.00	626.00	1374.00
Refuse Collections	1500.00	255.02	1244.98
Window cleaning	900.00	167.00	733.00
Equipment	1700.00	0.00	1700.00
Parish Hall Improvements & maintenance	10000.00	1860.79	8139.21
Bank charges	250.00	83.00	167.00
Environmental Working Group	11000.00	261.99	9,428.06
Media budget	1000.00	0.00	1000.00
PCSO	18000.00	8320.00	9680.00
Youth	2000.00	0.00	2000.00
Ranger costs	4500.00	1271.89	3228.11
Community projects	6500.00	0.00	6500.00
Library	300.00	0.00	300.00
General Contingencies	0.00	514.00	-514.00
Emergency Grass cutting	3000.00	0.00	3000.00
Events Committee budget	3000.00	0.00	3000.00
Net Payments		72696.54	-63941.16
VAT		1243.21	
Total Payments (excluding earmarked reserves)	181450.00	73939.35	

<b>Ear-Marked Reserves</b>	<b>Reserve brought forward</b>	<b>Utilised Reserve</b>	<b>Reserve carried forward</b>
Elections (ER)	4000.00	0.00	4000.00
Parish Hall (ER)	50000.00	0.00	50000.00
Youth Work (ER)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Parish Ranger Van Replacment (ER)	2000.00	0.00	2000.00
Environmental Improvement Schemes (ER)	8000.00	0.00	8000.00
Community Scheme/ consultant costs for PDO (ER)	25000.00	0.00	25000.00
South Warrington Library, Stockton Heath (ER)	15000.00	0.00	15000.00
Contingencies (ER)	75000.00	0.00	75000.00
			0.00
			0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>179000.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>179000.00</b>

No earmarked reserves have yet been utilised. However, a bill for the consultant costs for the PDO/Local Plan group is expected to be received in December 2020.

<b>Receipts</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual (to date)</b>	
Precept	150955.00	150995.00	nil
Bank Interest	1000.00	0.02	999.98
Parish Hall	18000.00	278.00	17722.00
Other	0.00	14417.57	-14417.57
reserves	11495.00	0.00	11495.00
		0.00	0.00
Net		165690.59	-165690.59
VAT		1938.96	-1938.96
Total Receipts	181450.00	167629.55	13820.45

The annual precept has been received. There has only been a small amount of Hall Hire income due to the closure of the Hall from March 2020, the amount of £278.00 is unpaid late Hall Hire fees from March 2020. As the Parish Hall was been closed the budget of £18000 will not be achieved however the Parish Council has received other income which was not accounted for. The breakdown of the 'other' income is as follows;

Furlough Income	£4,341.78
Covid-19 Business Grant	£10,000
Refunds	£14.99
NatWest Compensation	£60.80.

Bank Interest of 0.2p has been made from the Hanley Building Society Account. The Nationwide pays interest at the end of each financial year as such this will not be received until 31.03.21. The Mansfield Building Society interest is paid on 31.012.20.

The monthly banking reconciliation is as follows;

**Bank**

<b><u>Reconciliation</u></b>	31/03/2019	30/04/2020	31/05/2020	30/06/2020
Balance b/f	189661.46	£179,087.21	£166,256.91	£308,501.84
Plus Receipts	2101.54	£1,878.75	£153,049.97	£10,000.00
Less Payments	-12675.79	-£14,709.05	-£10,805.04	-£8,537.52
Balance c/f	<u>£179,087.21</u>	<u>£166,256.91</u>	<u>£308,501.84</u>	<u>£309,964.32</u>

**Bank Accounts**

Natwest	£38,603.47	£25,773.17	£168,018.10	£139,964.32
Mansfield	£85,000.00	£85,000.00	£85,000.00	£85,000.00
Nationwide	£55,483.74	£55,483.74	£55,483.74	£85,000.00
Hanley BS (opened from 01.08.20)				
Less unrepresented cheques		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Other adjustments				
	<u>£179,087.21</u>	<u>£166,256.91</u>	<u>£308,501.84</u>	<u>£309,964.32</u>

<b><u>Bank Reconciliation</u></b>	31/07/2020	31/08/2020	30/09/2020
Balance b/f	£309,964.32	£302,876.07	£288,782.98
Plus Receipts	£1,511.29	£605.29	£584.25
Less Payments	-£8,599.54	-£14,698.38	-£8,050.14
Balance c/f	£302,876.07	£288,782.98	£281,317.09

<b><u>Bank Accounts</u></b>			
Natwest	£132,876.07	£118,682.98	£111,217.09
Mansfield	£85,000.00	£85,000.00	£85,000.00
Nationwide	£85,000.00	£85,000.00	£85,000.00
Hanley BS		100.00	£100.00
	£302,876.07	£288,782.98	£281,317.09

Councillor P Walker arrived at the meeting (10.17am)

## **8. Bawming Tree/Appleton Thorn Improvements**

Following a request from the Appleton Thorn volunteers and confirmation from Councillor J Wheeler and Councillor P Walker, turf and plants were purchased to the value of £55.60 plus VAT for improvements to Appleton Thorn. The Parish Ranger has turfed the area concerned and the volunteers will do the planting. Additional topsoil was also purchased for this area.

There is a grassed area in the Green Lane on the western side of the war memorial which the Parish Ranger will strim and weed killer as requested by the Appleton Thorn volunteers.

The bench at Appleton Thorn also requires attention as such the materials have been purchased by the Parish Ranger in order to make improvements to the bench.

The clerk confirmed that she had instructed the contractor to trim the Bawming Tree as requested at the Parish Council meeting in April 2020. The cost of this is £100.00.

There has been a request to send a letter of thanks to certain residents regarding their volunteer work.

**RESOLVED** that;

The clerk was requested to send a letter of thanks to the residents concerned.



## **9. Remembrance Day arrangements**

The clerk will arrange the provision of a wreath.

**RESOLVED** that;

The Parish Council would donate £200.00 to the Royal British Legion for a donation to include the cost of the wreath.

Councillor J Wheeler may not be able to attend the Remembrance Service at St Cross, she will try and be there but may be able to lay the wreath. Councillor P Walker will also be unable for the laying of the wreath on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November at St Cross Church in Appleton Thorn as such the clerk was requested to put this as an agenda item for the Parish Council to confirm who will represent the Parish Council at this ceremony.

## **10. Small Grants for Road Safety**

Councillor J Wheeler had been contacted by a member of the public regarding road safety concerns on Longwood Road to the play area on Dudlow Green Road. Councillor J Wheeler had contacted the Highways Department of Warrington Borough Council who had stated that this would not be a priority, however they could possibly look at signage.

Information regarding applications for small grants for Road Safety was provided by Cheshire Police. The clerk had circulated the information regarding the application criteria for the attention of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The main points were;

The closing date for any applications is 21<sup>st</sup> October 2020.

The minimum amount of grant was £20,000 and the maximum was £50,000.

Any scheme would not be funded 100%, match funding would be required from the Parish Council.

**RESOLVED** that;

The Parish Council would not proceed with an application at this time. Councillor J Wheeler will pursue the complaint with the Highways Department as a Borough Ward Councillor.

## **11. Christmas Lights and Trees**

The clerk had confirmed that the Christmas lights at the Parish Hall were working as such no repairs were necessary.

The clerk received an email from Warrington Borough Council regarding the costs of installation of Christmas Trees. The cost per tree is approx. £3,136 plus VAT per tree. This however does not include any lights.

The cost of an electrical connection to a streetlight column depends on the location and the services within the ground. The starting costs for a socket install is £643.60 plus VAT.

There is however no streetlight column near the corner plot at Bridge Lane shops.

The clerk has contacted Northwich Town Council for a quote, and they had quoted approx. £3,000 without any lights.

The cost for the Christmas tree for Stockton Heath is approx. £1,650.00 however there is an existing electrical connection.

Lymm Parish Council purchase a Christmas tree with roots and then donate the tree to a local school for planting.

**RESOLVED** that;

This was explored at a future date for installation of Christmas trees at various locations for Christmas 2021.

The clerk was asked to contact St Mary Magdalene's church to offer to loan them the spare Christmas lights for their display at the hall and to see if they wanted a donation from the Parish Council towards the cost of a Christmas tree.

## **12. Fire Extinguishers Servicing**

The clerk confirmed that the Fire Extinguishers required an annual service. The cost was £45.00 plus VAT.

**RESOLVED** that;

The Fire Extinguishers could be serviced at the cost of £45.00 plus VAT.

## **13. Electrical work for toilet sensors**

At the last Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting the Parish Council received a quote for £160.00 plus VAT for the replacement of the sensor lights. The contractor then attended the Parish Hall and said that the current lights did not need replacement and the issue was with the wiring. The cost rewiring would be £263.61 plus VAT. Currently the sensor lights are permanently on and the office and storeroom light is not working.

**RESOLVED** that;

KDE are employed to rewire at the cost of £263.61 plus VAT.

## **14. Society of Local Council Clerks membership for Assistant Clerk**

Both the clerk and assistant clerk are members of the Society of Local Council Clerks. The assistant clerk's membership is due for renewal from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2020. The cost of the annual renewal is £180.00.

**RESOLVED** that;

The assistant clerk's Society of Local Council Clerk's membership is paid at the cost of £180.00 plus VAT.

**15. Parish Hall and Covid-19**

The clerk confirmed that the NHS Track and Trace QR code for the Parish Hall is in place and in addition to this there is a visitors' book in the entrance. The clerk has drafted a temporary Track and Trace Privacy Notice.

It was **recommended** that;

following amendments, the Parish Council adopted the NHS Track and Trace Privacy Notice.

The clerk reported that anyone under the age of 16 cannot use or download the NHS Track and Trace application as such it will have to be made a condition of hire that any hall hirer collects this information.

The clerk reported that several contractors who had attended the Parish Hall had refused to give their details for NHS Track and Trace.

**RESOLVED** that;

If any contractor attends the Parish Hall and refused to give details then they are not granted access to the Hall.

The clerk also reported that ACRE are now issuing weekly changes regarding Hall Hire and use following changes in Central Government legislation.

The clerk reported that the Parish Hall was dirty as it has now been empty for over six months and has not been cleaned since the middle of March as the cleaner has been on furlough.

**RESOLVED** that;

The clerk was asked to arrange for the Parish Hall to be deep cleaned at the cost of £597.75 plus VAT and this was to be undertaken as soon as possible.