

**Minutes of Shevington Parish Council
Finance Committee Meeting
Held Wednesday 25 January 2023
7pm - The Community Centre at Vicarage Lane Fields**

Present: Councillor William McKnight (Chairman), Councillors John Whiteley, Christopher Horridge, Ira Whiteley, Michael Crosby, John Ball and Michael Grimes
Four members of the public

Officer in Attendance: Mrs Krystyna Pilkington (Clerk)

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and wishing them a 'Happy New Year'.

1. Apologies

Cllrs Vicky Galligan and Jess Diggle

2. Declaration of Interests

None

3. Minutes of the Last Finance Committee Meeting (7 December 2022)

Resolved: The Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 7 December 2022 were approved as a true and correct record.

4. December 2022 Budget Monitoring Information

In December the Finance Committee had agreed that most of the figures recorded in the Reserves table in the quarterly budget monitoring information circulated at the time were correct. However, there had been discrepancies in relation to the estimated final figures on 30 November 22 in the 'General Reserve' and, consequently, in the total reserves. These figures had been reviewed and the figures presented in December had been revised.

Documents containing the revised figures and explanations behind the discrepancies had been previously circulated and were received. Their contents were noted and accepted.

5. DRAFT Budget & Precept 2023-24

Papers containing proposals for the DRAFT budget and precept for 2023-24 had been previously circulated and the contents were discussed at length. Figures originally presented to the Committee in December 2022 had been updated to take into account recent expenditure and changes to current reserves. As requested, the Clerk had

included a more detailed report explaining why some of the 2021-22 out-turn figures had been higher than anticipated.

During the discussion observations made by members included the following:

- A balanced budget out-turn could be achieved in 2022-23, but things would be very tight.
- The current economic climate was precarious throughout the world and people everywhere were suffering as a result.
- The Parish Council had a responsibility to all of its residents and needed to ensure that precept charges were affordable.
- The Parish Council should maintain its existing provision and focus on keeping it going.
- The future sustainability of the Parish Council's projects needed to be taken into account when setting the precept.

The Clerk reported that:

- Contractors employed by the Parish Council had not altered their charges by very much for more than ten years. However, due to high inflation rates, costs to them had also increased. Until contractors' quotations for 2023-24 had been received, the likely cost of contracts could not be gauged accurately.
- This was an election year and the Elections Officer had provided the Council with indicative costs for a contested election. This would present the Council with a sizeable financial outlay.

The cost of the loan repayments for the Memorial Park project were discussed. Increases in cost of both the repayments and the project itself were anticipated. It was agreed that progress with the project would be an agenda item for the Full Council meeting on 22 February 2023.

Resolved: The Committee recommended a budgeted expenditure of £98,959 (*including Expenditure Contingency*) to the Council for approval. The budgeted expenditure would be subject to adjustment throughout the year as new or renewed contracts were agreed.

The Precept for 2023-24 was discussed further.

Resolved: The Committee recommended a precept of £84,615 to the Council for approval. This constituted a 5% increase on 2022-23.

6. Dates of Next Meetings

25 January (Council); 1 February (Policy & General Purposes Committee)

There being no further business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 7:40 pm.

Chairman