



**Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Administration Committee.  
Held at Colden Common Community Centre, St Vigor Way,  
Colden Common, SO21 1UU  
on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2022 at 8:20pm**

**Present:** Cllr Hazel Crosthwaite (Chair)  
Cllr John Boyes  
Cllr Maggie Hill  
Cllr Richard Izard  
Cllr Brian O'Neill  
Cllr John Pearce  
Cllr Rob Veck

**Apologies:** Cllr Shaun Byrne  
Debbie Harding (Clerk)

**In attendance** Sophie Thorogood (Asst Clerk)

**F17/22 To receive any apologies for absence.**  
Apologies were received from Cllr Byrne and the Clerk.

**F18/22 To receive any Councillor declarations of pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests, in relation to any items on the agenda.**  
No declarations were made.

**F19/22 To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022.**  
The minutes of the Finance Meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022 having been circulated, were considered.

***The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting, proposed by Cllr Crosthwaite, seconded by Cllr Pearce and carried.***

**F20/22 Update on minutes, correspondence and other relevant matters not included elsewhere on the agenda (for information only)**

The Tennis Club have agreed to the contents of the letter of permission regarding the consumption of alcohol in the Social Room. but it has not been signed as yet.

Paul Ashton was on site on 5<sup>th</sup> December and has signed another certificate so a next stage payment will be due for the refurbishment costs.

The Clerk was successful in applying for a £10,000 grant for the Recreation Ground Pavilion refurbishment. This will help reduce the Parish Council's contribution towards the project.

The telephone box on New Road is now insured and on the Council's Fixed Asset Register. The Clerk will liaise with the Colden Common Shed regarding installation of new shelving inside.

All the grants awarded during the last Finance Committee meeting have been paid.

**F21/22 To agree the Finance Committee budget for the financial year 2023-2024**

**To make a recommendation to the Parish Council for the precept demand for 2023-2024**

The Clerk and Assistant Clerk had prepared a draft budget which was circulated to the Committee in advance. The Recreation Committee has already reviewed and agreed their Committee's budget, the Planning Committee will meet before the next Full Council meeting.

The tax base number has not been confirmed by WCC, but CCPC will have the final number for the Full Council budget setting meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

The draft budget includes a 10% precept rise initially and based on the same tax base as last year. Excluding the project expenditure of £65,000 for the pump track, which will be funded by the CIL grant already approved, the budgeted expenditure is £224K versus precept income of £228K. This severely reduces the Council's ability to increase the reserves.

Some 2022-23 projects might not be completed before the year end and would move into next financial year such as the illegal encampment works to the Recreation Ground.

Cllr Izard has been informed by WCC that where the CIL Grant for the pump track has been approved, if the project price increases before the project begins due to increased costs of supplies or inflation, the Council can approach WCC for an increase in grant funding. Cllr Veck asked if the Council can request further CIL funding for the Recreation Pavilion refurbishment, but this is not possible as the costs increased due to the Council changing the specification and asking for extra works, not due to inflation.

As part of the play area strategy document, the Clerk has already highlighted the potential risk to the Council of funding replacement equipment in the future. There are earmarked reserves towards the costs of the replacement equipment, but it is not enough to cover all of the predicted costs. It is already difficult for a Parish Council to obtain grants at present and funding streams are beginning to close. The Council may not be able to fund increased costs of the pump track so it is good that the Council can approach WCC to request increased CIL funding if the pump track goes ahead.

The Committee reviewed the Finance Committee budget; some areas to highlight

- The resolution to apply for a new bond with the Bank of India will be reviewed in January Full Council meeting as the application requires personal bank statements to be submitted for all the signatories. Therefore, the budgeted income for the bond will be reduced for 2023-2024.
- The £40,000 commuted sum is date dependent on the S106 being signed. This also means the £5,500 mobile mast income may reduce as part of the mast income is paid in quarterly stages; the first stage payment is April.
- The Policy, Procedures and Staffing Committee will review the 3 employee's salaries before the next Full Council meeting. A worst-case scenario has been included in the budget for salary, NIC and pension costs.
- 10% increase has been factored into areas such as IT costs, utilities, insurance.
- Another area of risk is the office rent will increase in 2023-2024. This current financial year is the last year at the agreed reduced cost. The Clerk is liaising with the CCCC Office Manager regarding agreeing the CPI rate which is factored into the signed lease agreement. £3,500 is the current budget but this may increase.
- Now that all of the awarded grants have been paid, it is recommended not to have a second round of applications and allow the nearly £2,000 savings currently shown this financial year to go back to reserves. Councillors decided to keep the grant funding budget for 2023-2024 at £6,000 like in previous years.
- There is a standing resolution to pay a maximum of £3,500 as a grant towards the printing costs of the newsletter. As costs increase, there is a chance the CCCA will approach the Council for extra funding.

The Councillors discussed that although the draft budget includes an initial precept increase of 10%, they felt that it was not sufficient especially considering the current cost of inflation impacting all of the Council's costs and other areas of financial risk, particularly the play equipment replacement schedule. An increase of 15% is only an extra £18.53 annual increase on a band D property.

***It was resolved to approve the Finance Committee expenditure budget for 2023-2024, as proposed by Cllr Crosthwaite, seconded by Cllr Pearce and carried.***

***It was also resolved to recommend to the Full Parish Council the precept demand for 2023-2024 to be an increase of 15%, from £123.54 to £142.07, as proposed by Cllr Hill, seconded by Cllr Veck and carried.***

**F22/22 To receive any questions from members of the public**

No questions were asked.

**F23/22 To agree any matters for the next meeting**

The calendar of meetings does not extend past March 2023, and the Clerk and Assistant Clerk will work on a new calendar. The next meeting of the Finance Committee will be due towards the end of April 2023, after the Internal Audit; this is scheduled for Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April. The King's Coronation and extra bank holiday will also impact the Full Council meeting schedule for May.