

Minutes of the Fressingfield Parish Council Finance Committee meeting held as a 'Zoomed' meeting on 03/12/2020 at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors Tom Lindsay, Nick Stolls and Neil Venton.

Also in Attendance: Andy Parris, clerk to the council and responsible finance officer (RFO).

- 1 Welcome by the Chair: NS clarified that the purposes of the meeting.
- 2 Apologies for absence: There were none.
- 3 Members' declarations of interest: There were none.
- 4 To discuss committee members' access to the Excel Workbook used by the RFO: The RFO explained that he had not been able to do this. It was agreed that the current system of councillors having a copy of the workbook but not any associated files satisfied their requirements.
- 5 To review of expenditure and income compared to the budget plan: The committee discussed the lines of the budget plan that were over or under expected levels. Recent changes to the clerk's hours and the purchase of a laptop were the most significant changes. Also, some items were moved to lines in the budget that the RFO judged to be more appropriate.
- 6 To consider a budget revision: The RFO explained the reasons behind suggested changes to the original budget plan. The revision is based on the third quarter figures for income and expenditure (agenda item 5). Also changes to section 137 donations and the effect of buying two speed indicator devices have been incorporated. The committee discussed the application for a section 137 grant from the scouts. There was a discussion about how contingencies are used, and how best to show them on the worksheet.
The committee recommends that the council provides a grant for £350 to Fressingfield 1st Scouts Group.
The committee recommends that the council accepts the budget revision.
- 7 To agree a draft budget for 2021 – 2022: The RFO said that this draft budget plan is drawn from the budget revision for 2020-21. Any anticipated changes were added to this base budget. Then inflation factors were added to individual lines. These were either 3% or 5%. After discussions it was agreed that any projects from the Village Improvement Plan would be funded from the £5,000 under assets development (line 33 in the draft budget plan). There was a discussion about how to record VAT paid and when to re-claim that from HMRC. It was agreed that this should be done annually, as long as no amount was missed. The RFO assured the committee that the worksheet he had developed summarised all the VAT paid, making claiming it that much easier.
The committee recommends that the council accepts the draft budget for 2021-22.
- 8 To prepare advice on the precept 2021-22: The committee discussed various influencing factors on next year's precept. These included the rate of inflation and the possible roll-on effects in years 2022-23 and 2023-24.
The committee recommends a 3% increase in the precept.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Signed: 

Chair. Date Dec 27, 2020

FYI: The date of the next Finance Committee meeting is Tuesday 9 February at 7.30pm.

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Final Audit Report

2020-12-27

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