

WESTERLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday 17th October 2022 – 7pm at Manor Hall red brick annex

Present: Cllr Jon Lean (Chair), Cllr Rob McCullough, Cllr Bob Taylor, Cllr Carol Goddard, Cllr Kate Kelliher, Deputy Clerk Rachel Davis

Clerk/RFO Sue Simmons

357. Apologies for absence
Received from Tristan Clark due to clash with another PC meeting
358. Declarations of Interest under the Localism Act 2011
Cllr Lean noted a pecuniary interest and will not participate in discussions of Unity Bank and possibly others due to work involvement.
359. Pre-arranged items from members of public
None
360. Committee to APPROVE Minutes of F & GP meeting held on 18th July 2022
Approved by all and signed by the Chair
361. Committee to NOTE receipt of all Bank reconciliation and statements for Q2 2022/23
NOTED with no questions arising.
362. Committee to NOTE full list of payments for Q2 2022/23
NOTED with no questions arising.
363. Committee to NOTE full list of receipts for Q2 2022/23
NOTED with no questions arising.
364. Committee to NOTE information on 2022/23 Receipts & Payments vs Budgets and forecasts and discuss/approve any required decisions
The report showing all the net positions was clarified showing that all budgets and forecasts are where expected at six and a half months into the financial year.
365. Committee to discuss first draft budget proposals prepared by the RFO and make necessary next step decisions
(a) Payments
The pre-issued report showing a 'first look' at budget amounts and suggestions was presented and each item discussed. The line for Advertising/Communications & Rebranding was increased to £500. Charges from the largest contractor costs which include CPS for grass cutting and SGC for bins will be checked. It should also be noted that SGC may look at other localism charges in order to address their own budget deficit so information or consultation on this is awaited.
- (b) Income
Income will depend on setting new rental and fishing licence fees, the amount of CIL, and the Precept.
- This initial look does not raise any major concerns about balancing the budget but more information is needed before the next version can be prepared. A further F&GP date cannot be planned until this information is received.
366. Committee to discuss initial proposals relating to 2023/2024 Precept request
As above the Precept needs to have information on the Council Tax Base in order to calculate a nett zero increase which the Committee would aspire to do.
367. Committee to note correspondence relating to Finance matters
Redwood Bank have increased the interest rate to 1.6% from 14th October 2022 on the PC's 35 Day Notice Savings Account

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368. Committee to discuss & consider spread of funds across different bank accounts

Current fund spread across accounts.

A report was presented & discussed showing where money currently sits, and how the total breaks down into operational budgets (approx £89k), grant pot budgets (approx £132k) and reserves (approx £100k).

It was agreed that £84k could be moved to a new account in order to spread the risk and also gain interest, whilst remaining within the FSCS cover limit. Interest could be transferred to the current account if preferred.

Choosing a new account: Unity Bank was identified as one experienced ethical provider for Parish Council savings to be considered. (The Deputy Clerk used this bank in her last position) The amount to be invested limits the choice of accounts to an Instant Access, no fee account, currently paying 0.95%. Other banks such as [United Trust Bank](#), [Secure Trust Bank](#), [Charity Bank](#), will be researched before discussion at the next Full Parish Council meeting.

369. Committee to consider any other items required by the RFO

Committee informed that Swift Sports Coaching are increasing the day cost of holiday activities to £435 from April 2023. NOTED and accepted.

370. Committee to consider any decisions required as a result of the Clerk Appraisal meeting which preceded this meeting
The Chair, who is also Chair of the Staff Committee reported on the proposed outcomes of the Staff Appraisal which preceded this meeting.

Firstly, it is clear that hours were reduced too much in July (to 16 from 25) and as a consequence a build up of around 20-22 hours of TOIL has accrued. It is proposed to clear this by paying overtime at basic rate in October.

Secondly a salary scale increase of 2 points to SCP 30 is proposed as performance recognition.

Thirdly, Sue's hours should go back to 20 per week from January until a suitable time when the Deputy steps up and is happy.

The Committee said they were happy to APPROVE all these points and as 5 of 7 PC members were present this represents full APPROVAL to be NOTED at the PC Meeting for the Minutes of that meeting too.

371. Committee to consider any Planning Applications (necessary due to deadline dates) for comments

None

372. Items considered urgent or exempt by the Chairman

None

373. Dates of future Parish Council meetings/Committee meetings

Full Parish Council meeting November 14th 7pm Newman Room, Manor Hall, Coalpit Heath

It is hoped to hold the next F&GP meeting at the start of December if the necessary information has come through.

The meeting closed at 7.55pm