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Meeting of TIBSHELF PARISH COUNCIL (Financial Year End 2020/21) held at 7:00 pm on THURSDAY 20th May 2021 in the Village Hall

MINUTES

Present: Cllr A Beckett
Cllr K Salt
Cllr R Vaughan
Cllr D Watson

In attendance: Locum Clerk Mrs Susan Coldwell
1 Member of the public

1. To receive apologies for absence.

Cllr R Heffer submitted his apologies at the Annual Meeting held 18 May 2021

2. Declaration of Members Interests.

No member declared any interests

3. Public Speaking.

Member of the public had no questions or comments

As this was the first meeting of the finance committee at the beginning of another council year and the terms of reference for this committee were agreed 18 May 21 at the Annual Meeting, the Chairman, Cllr A Beckett, proposed that Cllr R Vaughan hold the office of the Chairman for the Finance committee. Cllr K Salt seconded. Cllr R Vaughan in favour. Cllr D Watson asked for a record be taken that she was against.

Cllr D Watson expressed strong views that the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council should not be on all the committees. Reason being there is no checks and balances. Chairman and Vice Chairman will have the controlling hand. If any other Member of the Councillor disagrees with a decision and challenges procedures, there is concern those decisions will continue. Cllr D Watson compared the procedure to that of the District Council.

Cllr D Watson asked Cllr R Vaughan what experiences he had in finance. He responded by saying that he runs his own business, although not public funds, he has the understanding and has attended every meeting of the council which relates to finance.

Cllr A Beckett reiterated that all decisions, recommendations made at this meeting which is a sub-committee which Cllr D Watson said it was a committee of the council, are taken back to the parish council to be agreed and voted upon so all Members will have input. Any member who is not on finance can ask for items to be placed on the finance agenda and challenge any decisions made. They can also attend the finance meeting.

There was a lot of debates and arguments between Councillors regarding historical matters

The Locum Clerk suggested that advice be taken from D.A.L.C. regarding the Chairman and Vice Chairman being on every committee and one now nominated as Chairman as a legitimate question in a democratic society. The Locum also pointed out that, at parish level, according to the guidebook, politics should not be mentioned as Councillors are elected to serve the community. This is different obviously at District level.

Cllr K Salt and Cllr D Watson, with their experience at Bolsover District Council on Executive, scrutiny and council members compared making decisions made at parish level and discussed examples.

Cllr R Vaughan, as Chairman of the committee and that the meeting had started almost 30 minutes ago asked that the agenda continue.

4. Report from the Locum Parish Clerk-As Responsible Finance Officer

The Locum Clerk proceeded to go through each item listed with some documents and a report already circulated with the agenda

In summary, **items a) to d)** were discussed

Bank statements show cash balance on both accounts at £160,685.76

Trial balance shows cash balance on both accounts at £160,679.79

The difference of £5.97 which was an error prior to February 2021 has been rectified today

The error of £7,000 for key holder instead of £3,000 had been rectified also.

The £4,000 should have been posted to the Village Hall and not the cemetery

This is still expenditure but the R.F.O. was puzzled as to why, with the knowledge in the past that £4,000 is to be paid by the council for office space of the village hall, was the budget only set for £1,000

The member of public pointed out that the £4,000 was not actually paid during the financial year 2019/20 and budgeted for, but the R.F.O. based this payment on instructions from the previous Clerk and will investigate further via the Village Hall committee

Cllr A Beckett, having been a councillor for some years, suggested that this may be a historically figure paid by the council to the charity as they were struggling and may not be required now. However, the R.F.O. will investigate and report back to the council.

The 2 simple income and expenditure reports differ showing the financial position as it stands with the figure of reserves and the extra covid-19 grant removed.

At the end of the day, prior to adjusting for creditors and debtors and year end procedure on 25 May 2021 this shows that, without transferring funds from reserves and, without the extra funding, the council still had income over expenditure to around £4,000

The council zoomed in on the areas where expenditure was not spent in this exceptional financial year, such as section 137, £10,000. The R.F.O. asked if there was a limit of amounts given as she had not seen a policy on this. Cllr R Vaughan stated that there was not a limit on funds given as it depended on the purpose.

£10,000 Maintenance of play area

Fireworks, Christmas, carol service, 3rd party funding etc.

All expenditure not incurred due to covid-19 restrictions

It was a very pleasing result that the council were budgeting to transfer £71,532 from general reserves and it looks clearly like this is not necessary as there is an underspend.

There was a discussion and explanation regarding the budget/actual on a spread sheet compared to the accountancy system in addition to backlog of V.A.T. claims for explanation. The R.F.O. can look back on any of the figures and answer questions if given in advance.

Debtors/Creditors-4e) listed

R.F.O. explained as this journal was required for the year end on 25 May 2021. Committee agreed that all figures owing is to be included, no matter how small so this expenditure is accounted for in the 2020/21 financial year

Reserves-4f)

Cllr D Watson asked for clarification on the £32,174 and whether this included the £10,000 for the cemetery. The R.F.O. will investigate and report back to the council as this has been posted in the past as 1 figure but she will look at the bank statements and see if there is any documentation for the purpose.

As the council has not ring fenced any funds out of reserves in the past, the R.F.O. asked the council for suggestions so this can be recorded appropriately in the accounts.

A member of public has already made some suggestions

Cllr D Watson proposed reserving funds in order to renovate Shetland Road play area along with other suggestions around that area as this is the current vision regarding outdoor space.

Cllr A Beckett raised the figures from section 106 and why the parish council did not have any funds. The school and surgery had some funds

Cllr D Watson explained that the monies are for outdoor leisure for Tibshelf and managed by the district through their accounts. Further paperwork can be sourced to investigate further

It was suggested that the subject of reserves be placed on the agenda for the next parish council along with promotion to members of the public, survey, parish magazine etc. Some for immediate spending, some for future projects, not just called 'general reserves'

g) Extra days for Locum Clerk to work if required for External Annual Return process

Circulated with the reports was:

The written contract for the Locum Clerk, agreed and signed was on the understanding of there being a permanent Clerk in post to carry out the Annual Return/External Audit. Work is still required after 25 May 2021 to finalise the financial year end and it is unclear when a new Parish Clerk/R.F.O. is in place. The council need to consider allowing extra days, over and above the 22.5hrs per week for a new position to not have to undertake so swiftly.

There was no response from the committee

5. Date and time of next meeting of Resource/Finance

To be decided

The meeting closed at 8.15pm