

# Costessey Town Council

## Minutes of the Finance Committee of Costessey Town Council, held at The Costessey Centre, Longwater Lane, Costessey at 11am on 21 January 2022

**Present:** Cllrs G Jones (Chair), J Amis, D Burrill (Voting Substitute for Vacancy), G Dole, S Hannant, T Laidlaw and P O'Connor; H Elias (Town Clerk), N Bailey (Deputy Clerk) & L Trabucco (Minutes Secretary). Cllr G Blundell attended part of the meeting via Zoom as a member of the public

### **To receive apologies for absence**

**F001/22:** None

### **To receive declarations of interest**

**F002/22:** Cllr S Hannant declared a pecuniary interest in any item involving Barclays Bank as she is in receipt of a Barclay's pension.

### **To confirm and sign the minutes of the previous Finance meeting on 14 December 2021**

**F003/22:** *Min F209/21:* last paragraph should read "at the next meeting in *January 2022*" instead of "*February 2022*" and amend the recommendation to reflect this so it should read "and to review this after consideration of the figures provided for the *January 2022* meeting".

*Min F210/21:* first paragraph should read "was" happy with the accounts instead of "were"

**RESOLVED to approve the minutes as a true record with the above amendments**

### **To receive updates on the previous minutes** (No resolutions may be passed)

**F004/22:** Some of the action points were covered in the meeting agenda.

*Min F208/21: To consider future projects costs and set a WG date:* The Future Finances WG meeting could move to 11 February 2022 if the Staffing Committee were to meet on 4 February.

### **To consider the accounts for November 2021**

**F005/22:** The Chairman stated that the accounts were in order. Hall Hire figures in the narrative report needed to be amended to reflect the correct figures in the accounts; £12,500 income for Breckland Hall, £9,936 for Queen's Hill Community Centre. It was noted that these halls had recovered their income somewhat, although the current year's budgeted income was only 50% of pre-pandemic budget figures.

**RECOMMENDED to full Council that the November 2021 accounts be approved**

### **To consider the accounts for December 2021**

**F006/22:** The Chairman stated that the accounts were in order. It was noted that property maintenance costs were slightly higher than before as the buildings were getting older and therefore needed more work doing. The Property Maintenance EMR was there to iron out any large and major expenditure over the years. The Green Hills Woods Tree budget was unlikely to be spent and could be transferred to the Rolling Capital Fund at Year End, as could any other unspent funds, because there was no allowance in the 2021-22 budget or the 2022-23 budget for monies to be put in the Rolling Capital Fund for future projects

**RECOMMENDED to full Council that the December 2021 accounts be approved**

**F007/22:** Cllr Blundell joined the meeting via zoom at 11:29am

### **To consider the costs involved in the maintenance of the pitches**

**F008/22:** An explanation was given of the table provided, which showed the frequency per activity based on a 34-week season and an annual football tournament. The historic year-on-year comparison costing figures indicated sums spent on maintenance products only, and did not include staff time. The likelihood of increased costs for maintenance products and fuel should be taken into account. In

past years the Head Groundsman had managed to keep costs down using local farmers and other local contacts, but the farmer had moved away and costs would inevitably rise. A letter to inform Costessey Sports Club of all costs involved in the maintenance of the pitches to a “suitable standard” including current product costs, should be prepared. **ACTION: Deputy Clerk**

**To consider setting a *de minimis* amount for insurance claims (amount over excess)**

**F009/22:** A table showing the last six years’ history of claims was discussed. Only one claim was still pending, a payment from Zurich Insurance from October 2020. An explanation of procedures was given, including recurrent vandalism that would be considered for an insurance claim, possibly including graffiti. The three-year fixed contract with Zurich Insurance had made a great saving in premiums. It was agreed to not make a change in a *de minimis* amount for insurance claims (amount over excess) and keep to the previous meeting’s resolution to use an amount of double the excess as a *de minimus* level (amount over excess).

**RECOMMENDED to not make a change in the *de minimis* amount for insurance claims**

**To consider a request for a donation from the Norfolk Citizens’ Advice Bureau (CAB)**

**F010/22:** Given the rising cost-of-living and the probable need for the community to seek advice from Norfolk Citizens’ Advice Bureau (CAB), it was agreed to give a donation of £150.00

**RECOMMENDED to give Norfolk Citizen’s Advice Bureau (CAB) a donation of £150.00.**

**ACTION: Town Clerk**

**To receive a general update on Finance matters** (No resolutions may be passed)

**F011/21:** The phased budget reports from the new Rialtas module were good, but did not satisfy some Councillors’ expectations of monthly Year End forecasts eg for hall hires and other income generated and expenditure compared with the budget. The upcoming new sound equipment that was to be installed early February 2022 in the Jerningham Room at the Costessey Centre could generate an increase in revenue from the corporate / regular hires. **ACTION: Town Clerk**

**To confirm the date of the next Finance Committee Meeting on Friday 11 February 2022**

**F012/21:** It was recommended that a date should not be fixed until the Staffing WG meeting on 4 February 2022 had taken place. **ACTION: Town Clerk**

**F013/21: RESOLVED To pass a resolution excluding the press and public from the meeting under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 on the grounds that it was not in the public interest to disclose discussion on the items below due to the discussions relating to contracts.** No members of the press or public were present.

**\*THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WERE HEARD IN CONFIDENCE / BELOW THE LINE**

**To consider writing off an unpaid debt**

**F014/21:** Invoicing for hall hires a month in advance had been introduced seven to eight years previously. No outstanding amount had been unpaid for the past seven years. After some discussion it was agreed that unpaid debts should be brought to the Finance Committee meeting for discussion on a case-by-case basis. The County Court application fee cost £35.00, with enforcement of any judgement costing more and, on this occasion, it was agreed to write off this unpaid debt.

**RECOMMENDED to write off this unpaid debt as uneconomical to pursue. ACTION: Town Clerk**

**To consider any confidential finance items**

**F015/21:** A brief update was given about the installation of the new Multi-Play Unit Equipment at Breckland Park and the removal of the old wooden trim trail which had started on 4 January 2022

**F016/21: The meeting closed at 12:25pm**

**Chair:**

**Date:**