

# Costessey Town Council

## Minutes of the ONLINE Finance, Budgets & Staffing Committee of Costessey Town Council, held via Zoom at 11am on 22 January 2021

**Present:** Cllrs G Jones (Chair), J Amis, G Blundell, G Dole, S Hannant, T Laidlaw and P O'Connor; H Elias (Town Clerk) & N Bailey (Deputy Clerk)

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

**F019/21:** None

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

**F020/21:** 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 FB&S meeting on 5 January 2021**

**F021/21:** RESOLVED to approve the minutes as a true record with the above amendment.

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

**F022/21:** The Budget had been approved by full Council and the Precept demand sent to SNC.

### **To consider the accounts for December 2020 and receive a budget report incl payments over £500)**

**F023/21:** Cllr Dole arrived. The expenditure was less than had previously been thought. A Broadland Guards cheque is still unrepresented, but should be in full and final payment. The refund for the failed order for spades for the Greenhills Wood project has appeared in the December accounts. The three pages of petty cash information could be streamlined. Cllr T Laidlaw lost connection at 11.07am and returned at 11.10am, but was unable to vote.

**RECOMMENDED to full Council that the accounts for December 2020 be approved.**

### **To receive a revised 2020/21 forecast (GJ)**

**F024/21:** It was noted that Cllr Jones was finding it increasingly difficult to forecast as the year progressed. SNC had informed CTC it would continue to pay a regular amount in Business Interruption Grant. It was likely that there would be a £70,000 - £80,000 surplus at Year End on the current budget, which had already been taken into account in setting the 2021-22 deficit budget, so that the Band D rate could be held and the shortfall made up from the reserves. The following year 2022-23 might also require a lesser deficit amount to be funded from the reserves.

### **To consider cemetery fees for 2021-22**

**F025/21:** The Fees and Charges WG had only considered the pitch and hall hire fees for 2021-22. RPI was very low at present. A fee for the transfer of Exclusive Rights of Burial to another holder could be considered, but a decision would be needed on how long the rights should then last. A note should be added explaining that CTC's interment fees did not include the Grave Digger's fees, as he was not a Council employee.

**RECOMMENDED to full Council that the cemetery fees remain the same for 2021-22**

### **To consider the Internal Auditor's Report**

**F026/21:** This was an excellent report with no action plan being needed. A query was raised as to whether the months checked were always April and October, or whether they were chosen at random. Thanks were expressed to the hard work of the staff in satisfying the audit demands.

### **To review the Financial Risk Assessment**

**F027/21:** Further amendments and wording were suggested for the Financial Risk Assessment which has to be reviewed annually.

**RECOMMENDED to full Council that the amended DRAFT Risk Assessment be approved**

**To receive a general update on Finance, Budget or Staffing matters**

**F028/21:** Internet banking: Barclays bank still recommended Barclays.net for organisations with a complex mandate. A report was being prepared for the next F,B&S Committee re Hall Hire refunds.

**F029/21:** Queen's Hills Community Centre: FTTC (Fibre to the Cabinet) would be provided as the Wi-Fi there had dropped off completely and hirers expected Wi-Fi access. FTTP (Fibre to the Property) should be considered when it was available in future.

**F030/21:** Costessey Centre / Longwater Lane Premises Licence amendment: This would best be done when an event was planned, and would require permission from the DPS if the field was added into the Costessey Centre licence.

**F031/21:** Business Interruption Grants: SNC had confirmed a payment would be made for each of the three halls for the rest of the financial year.

**F032/21:** Parish Partnerships: The Westcotec costings require a slightly higher contribution from CTC than the £5,000 quoted in the original submission.

**F033/21:** **RESOLVED** to confirm the date of the next **ONLINE F,B&S Meeting** as **Friday 12 February 2021** at 11am via Zoom.

**F034/21:** **RESOLVED** to exclude 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 exempt information on staffing and employment contracts.

No members of the press or public were present, but the meeting was live streamed to this point.

**\*THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WERE HEARD IN CONFIDENCE**

**\*To consider Staffing issues**

**F035/21:** Staffing deployment during lockdown was detailed.

**F036/21:** An update was received on staff training.

**F037/21:** A letter to be sent to a former Councillor requiring the return of a Council device within seven days. **ACTION: Town Clerk**

**F038/21:** Cllr G Dole left at 12.03pm and returned at 12.05pm

**F039/21:** The meeting closed at 12:12pm

**Chair:**

**Date:**