

**BLEWBURY PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting held on Monday 8th January 2018 at 7.30 pm at The Benefice Centre.

Councillors present: Chris Lakeland (chair), Michael Penington, David Lomas

Also present: Michelle Taylor (Clerk and RFO)

1. Apologies for absence. Mark Blyth, Charlotte Cameron.

2. Election of Chair

Chris Lakeland was elected to chair the meeting

2.1 The Chairman thanked Councillor Lomas for acting as substitute member as provided for in Standing Orders 15(iv)

3. Declarations of Interest

No declarations made.

4. Estimates of Income and Expenditure for 2017-2018

Members of the committee examined the records of income and expenditure to the 31st December 2017, and the Clerk's estimates for the full year 2017/2018.

Income

Income is as expected apart from cemetery fees which were more than anticipated.

Expenditure

Expenditure is likely to be as expected on Lengthman's hours and slightly higher on Clerk's salaries due to having two Clerks for the handover period. Repayments to the new PWLB have started this financial year. There is a current small surplus for this year which will probably be used for identified repairs and replacements of playground materials.

Expenditure was only slightly more than anticipated for the

- CIC grants for the Plant Room

Expenditure was less than budgeted for in the following areas:

- Additional hours for Lengthman
- Tree and general village maintenance
- Legal costs

5. To establish estimates of income and expenditure for 2018/2019.

Anticipated income

The Government support given to the Vale which they in turn pass on to parishes (CTRS), will cease, meaning a full in income of £400.00. Expected income from cemetery fees was kept at the same level, as was the fundraising from the BVS for the play areas.

Expenditure

Administration:

Audit fees are anticipated to be slightly higher due to having to appoint a new auditor for the year 2018-19.

Provision for the clerk's salary was made based on a spinal rise and possible 1% increase for 2018-19.

The Lengthman's budgeted hours were based on calculations previously made.

Plant room and Clubhouse: Another £3000.00 has been set aside for the next financial year as a contingency for general repairs if necessary.

Small grants: The grant to the Citizens Advice Bureau remains at £150 and South and Vale Carers Centre's grant will remain at £50. It was agreed to continue with a grant to the DVTG for the Wallingford bus which would come to £400 for a whole year. Once again funds have been made available should a village organisation ask for a grant. £250 has been set aside for this purpose.

Grass cutting contract: We are in the second year of a three year contract, previously agreed upon by the Parish Council.

Replacement machinery: Up to £2,500.00 towards equipment has been agreed.

Footpaths: The amount for gravel for footpaths has been kept the same at £400.

Cemetery: No specific projects have been agreed for the cemetery.

Risk Management: A professional tree survey needed in 2017, which did not take place. It was agreed to continue with £1000.00 in the budget towards the survey in 2018, and to cover any tree work as necessary.

Legal and professional advice: the amount for legal advice remains at £1000.

6. Reviewing of grants:

6.1 CIC grant included at £1000.00

6.2 Other regular grants: Didcot CAB and South & Vale Carers Centre remain unchanged.

6.3 DVTG grant increased by £100.00

7. Review of salaries of Clerk and Lengthman

Provisions for Clerk's salary was made based on a possible 1% increase and one spine point as per NALC guidelines. A contingency was again included to cover any additional staffing costs due to Village Hall project.

8. Reserves. *To agree the level of reserves needed for the next financial year.*

The current reserves were circulated. The "black swan" reserve had been reduced to £10,000 last year. Earmarked reserves are kept for the play facilities, cemetery fundraising, emergency village maintenance and the village hall refurbishment project.

Capital projects. *To establish reserves available for capital projects and to agree the budget for capital projects.* The Village Hall refurbishment project will hopefully start very soon. The PWLB loan has been obtained and repayments started.

9. Precept for 2018/19 *To agree the precept for the next financial year and make recommendation to the full Parish Council*

It was agreed to recommend to the Council that the precept be increased by only 4% to cover the fact that the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) grant paid by the Vale has ceased. The level of increase will be alleviated by an increase in housing stock resulting in a less 'per household' increase in reality. The final Precept figure being £58,344.00.

10. Review of physical assets and liability. The review was done prior to the insurance renewal and will be carried out prior to the next renewal.

11. Any other business

None.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.