

**PEWSEY PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING HELD ON 25<sup>th</sup> MAY 2022**  
**IN THE PARISH OFFICE, BOUVERIE HALL, PEWSEY**

**PRESENT:** Cllr Mrs Stevens (Chair), Cllr Morris, Cllrs Ellis, Mrs Humfress, Mrs McGarry, Mrs Pullen, Kerry Pycroft, Cllrs Ford and McGarry.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Alison Kent (Clerk).

**1. APOLOGIES:** Cllr Mrs Brindley, Mrs Cobbing, Mrs Hunt, Judy Kunkler, Mrs Mundy and Cllr Giles.

**2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST:** None.

**3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:** All being in agreement, the minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021 were signed as a true record by the Chair.

**4. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

Having received the only valid nomination, Cllr Morris was proposed by Cllr McGarry, seconded Cllr Ellis, all in favour

**5. FINANCE:**

As a reminder, and for the benefit of newer members, the Clerk explained the process of preparation of the accounts, the monthly internal audit and annual external audit requirements. An accounts session may be considered in due course, if members felt that it would be a useful aid.

The budget comparison report, as at 31<sup>st</sup> March, had been circulated to all members.

Cllr Kerry Pycroft had submitted questions prior to the meeting which Cllr Morris and the Clerk had fully answered. Additionally, she asked for a budget to be set in the upcoming Precept considerations for Climate Change/Biodiversity expenditure. Cllr Morris asked for an indication to be given in due course on what it would likely be spent on. He reminded members of the youth reserves that were held and welcomed costed projects to be brought to the committee.

The annual donation to The Messenger would be postponed until it was known whether production would continue.

Cllr Suzanne McGarry asked why only £500 had been spent on Carnival instead of the budgeted £1,000. The Clerk explained the money had been budgeted annually for cleaning up costs. There had been no large carnival events, so it was considered appropriate to halve the donation.

Current balances as at 25<sup>th</sup> May: Santander Current Account £218,233.18

Santander Community Instant Reserve Account: £46,755.76

Lloyds Business Account: £60,706.00

Nationwide Savings Account: £85,283.73

Cambridge Building Society: £85,000.00

Unity Trust Savings Account: £85,051.35

Santander Community Instant Reserve Account (Admin): £7,132.17

Cllr Mrs Pullen asked how much of a contingency was set off against the precept. The Clerk advised, based on current balances, approximately £26,000 outside of the reserves and precept held.

**6. PRECEPT 2023/24:** The precept was usually set in November, but consideration would start to be made on what may affect any decision to increase. Particular things to note at present was the cost of living increases, especially on fuel and utilities. Each budget heading was estimated on previous years' expenditure in consultation with the Chairs of each committee. Cllr Morris explained that budget headings could be added or removed as required.

The IdVerde contract was index linked and to be renegotiated for April 2023. The Clerk reminded members of the ability to vire monies from one budget to another unless specifically earmarked, should it be required. Careful consideration would be given to ensure the council was run as efficiently as possible to enable it to deliver services it was responsible for.

The Clerk briefly explained S.106 and CIL monies to Cllr Suzanne McGarry.

Cllr Kerry Pycroft asked about the grant received for the Neighbourhood Development Plan; the Clerk advised that the £50,000 had been earmarked towards the Community Land Trust project.

Cllr Ellis asked about the business grant; the Clerk advised it had been awarded during the pandemic to assist the economy. The 'Pewsey Is Open' day used a small amount of this funding to promote all the businesses in the village. Cllr Morris had previously stated that some of the funding could be used for the beautification of the centre of the village.

Cllr Mrs Pullen said it was important to keep the precept as low as possible, whilst delivering the services the council has.

**7. BUSINESS PLAN:** Cllr Mrs Stevens had been reviewing the plan and getting input from the Chairs and Vice-Chairs to move it forward. Cllr Ellis felt it required more detail on specific projects; Cllr Morris felt figures should be incorporated as they had been in previous versions.

Cllr Mrs Pullen asked how far we consulted with the community, Cllr Morris answered that it used to be shared at the Community Day prior to the pandemic but also as part of the role as a councillor. More publicity could be made via The Messenger, website and social media communication with a view to being more proactive.

The website needed to be overhauled to make it more user friendly. The Clerk updated it regularly with the content provided by members, but a lead councillor was needed to work with the web designed to make the necessary improvements.

**8. TO CONSIDER DONATION REQUESTS:** None had been received.

**9. FULL COUNCIL INFORMATION:** Cllr McGarry advised that Cllr Ellis had attended the Area Board meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> and would report on it at the next Full Council. He advised that he and the Clerk would be attending the Town and Parish Councils meeting at County Hall on 27<sup>th</sup> May. He asked members to include him and the Clerk on any emails so that he was kept informed. He spoke with the Clerk daily and requested that anything urgent should be reported to her who would contact him as necessary whilst he was at his workplace.

The missing defibrillator had been returned but without its case. The new benches for the Market Place had arrived and would be installed in due course.

**10. ITEMS VIA THE CLERK:** None.

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 7.58pm after thanking members for attending.

Signed.....

Date.....