



Meeting held via 'Zoom' video conferencing starting at 7.30pm.

Councillors in attendance: Chairman: Gerard McCloskey (GM), Adrian Collins (AC), Max Harwood (MH) and Steve Williamson (SW).
Clerk: Debbie Harknett.

There were no members of the public in attendance.

Chairman: Gerard McCloskey

www.rogateparishcouncil.gov.uk

Clerk: Debbie Harknett

gerard.mccloskey@rogateparishcouncil.gov.uk

clerk@rogateparishcouncil.gov.uk

1) Election of Chairman/Vice-chairman

SW's proposal that GM continue as Chairman was seconded by AC and, with MH in favour, GM remained as chair. SW's proposal that AC continue as Vice-chairman was seconded by GM and, with MH in favour, AC was happy to continue.

2) It was noted the meeting would not be recorded.

3) There were no apologies for absence as all members were in attendance.

4) Declarations of interest were made by MH in relation to START and the Clerk in relation to Rogate & Terwick PCC's.

5) The Minutes of last meeting held on Monday 26th April 2021 were approved to be signed as a true record.

6) There were no representations from the public.

7) Chairman's report - GM noted there was nothing beyond items covered on the agenda.

8) Review of finance committee terms of reference – circulated prior to the meeting.

As there were no changes or questions it was agreed these were clear and comprehensive so SW's proposal of **resolution 'to adopt finance committee terms of reference'** was seconded by AC and unanimously approved.

9) Review of expenditure against budget 2021/22

a) GM/Clerk went through expenditure to date (halfway through year) & expected to year-end.

b) It was acknowledged staff salary was anticipated being over budget because there was no budget increase last year. Clerk noted when salary goes over certain threshold employer incurs additional costs in the way of national insurance and pension contributions.

c) Clerk explained there is no power for the council to incur expenditure to purchase plants or gifts etc and it shouldn't be classed as miscellaneous cost. Many parishes utilise the Chairman's allowance to cover this type of expenditure and it could also provide an avenue to gift a voucher for a volunteer that does a lot for the council. Her suggestion to create this budget line is not because of the change in Chairmanship but to put the accounts into proper order. SW's proposal of **resolution 'to incorporate a budget item for £200 Chairman's allowance within Councillor expenses'** was seconded by GM and unanimously agreed.

d) There was a lot of discussion about gym lease legal fees; MacDonald Oats have finally quoted £350 for last year's licence and £750 for the lease. Draft lease has been received but raises concerns about being poorly written and possibly not fit for purpose – we rely on the solicitor to say if it is correct or missing vital bits but we have not got the confidence in him we should have. GM offered to read the document/comment.

e) Clerk noted £1,000 in budget for new village shop noticeboard so £874.08 quote is within this. Placing of the order had been agreed via email to save a £100 price rise so **resolution 'to purchase notice board for the shop from The Noticeboard Company at a cost of £874.08'** was unanimously approved. AC asked if the old board be kept for use elsewhere.

f) Youth Club quote from Sussex Clubs for Young Children had been circulated prior to the meeting. Clerk has spoken to their treasurer who is looking at figures in more detail. The club accepts that without volunteers they are going to have to pay for more administrative costs but the proposal for year-round opening could be reduced to term-time only and they need to check VAT status. SW reminded the meeting historically the council have met the cost of the

youth worker. After discussion, it was agreed there was unlikely to be a cost for the current financial year but £2,000 should be allowed in next year's budget.

- g) MH noted woodland management costs for the removal of holly at Terwick Woodland and gorse at Oliver's Piece are approx. £1,050. There are some pine trees due to be thinned at Terwick Woodland but it is possible they will raise some income.
- h) GM noted reserves at the beginning of the year were £35,121 and will probably remain over £30,000 at the year-end.

10) Discretionary funding – Clerk noted grant budget has £2,800 for churchyards, £300 for CAB plus £1,700 for other grants, less £200 already awarded this year towards the hall strimmer. Information on all requests had been circulated ahead of the meeting.

- a) Rogate Church graveyard – after consideration of the shortfall in their 2020 accounts and additional tree works necessary it was agreed to award a grant of £2,000.
- b) Terwick Church graveyard – after consideration of the excess in their 2020 accounts it was agreed to award a grant of £800.
- c) START CLT – Clerk explained we normally do not provide grants for running expenses but the committee accepted this organisation was different and trying to provide affordable housing so it was agreed to award a grant of £300.
- d) Age Concern – after discussion of their application and in the knowledge they support elderly people in the village it was agreed to award a grant of £300.
- e) Petersfield Citizens Advice Bureau – agreed to grant £300 allocated in the budget.
- f) Midhurst Foodbank – the members felt horrified this exists but grateful it does. After discussion, and in the knowledge they are supporting several families in Rogate, it was agreed to award grant of £300.
- g) Rogate Tennis Club – application for £1,250 towards expected £27,000 resurfacing costs After much consideration of their accounts, noting they intend to use their reserves as well as applying for grants, it was agreed to award them £600 from the current year's budget and include £650 in next year's budget on the basis they report to the next annual parish meeting the provision they give the wider community and school.
- h) Youth Club – covered under 9f).
- i) MH noted Rogate Hall suggested noticeboard/Cupola repairs but haven't made an application.

11) To consider purchase of

- a) Notice board for wall by Rogate Village Stores – approved under 9e).
- b) Information board for Fyning Recreation Ground – AC noted Open Spaces Committee have recommended the purchase of an information board for £645 from the same supplier as made Garbett's Wood noticeboard. After discussion, SW's proposal of **resolution 'to recommend the purchase of High Weald information board from the current year's budget at a cost of £645'** was seconded by AC and unanimously approved.

12) Chairman's allowance – covered under budget comparison 9c).

13) Draft budget 2022/23

- a) There was much discussion about this and consideration as there hadn't been an increase for 7 years; the last few years have been using reserves.
- b) SW felt there needed to be a headline reason (something tangible) behind an increase while others noted having no increase for 7 years was justification.
- c) Given the late hour it was agreed to have a further discussion before taking a figure to full council for approval.

14) The next Finance Committee Meeting was scheduled to be held at 7.30pm on Monday 29th November via zoom video conferencing.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.23pm.

.....
Chairman

.....
Date