



# Finance Committee Meeting - Minutes Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Meeting held in Rogate Village Hall Pavilion starting at 7.00pm.

Parish Councillors in attendance: Chairman Adrian Collins (AC), Mike Galley (MG), Max Harwood (MH) and David Seddon (DS).  
Clerk: Debbie Harknett.

There were no members of the public in attendance.

Chairman: Adrian Collins  
adrian.collins@rogateparishcouncil.gov.uk

www.rogateparishcouncil.gov.uk

Clerk: Debbie Harknett  
clerk@rogateparishcouncil.gov.uk

- 1) **It was noted the meeting would not be recorded.**
- 2) **Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman**
  - a) MH's proposal that AC stand as Chairman was seconded by MG; AC agreed and took the chair. DS arrived.
  - b) AC's proposal that DS stand as Vice-chairman was seconded by MH and, with MG in favour, DS agreed.
- 3) **Apologies for absence** were received and accepted from Angie Simonds (AS).
- 4) **Declarations of interest** - MG noted he was a member of the Rogate PCC and Clerk added she is their Treasurer though it was accepted neither would have any financial benefit should any grants be awarded.
- 5) **The Minutes of last meeting** held on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2023 were approved to be signed by the Chairman as a true record.
- 6) **There were no representations from the public.**
- 7) **Chairman's report** – AC welcomed DS to the committee and noted spending is well within budget and the bank interest (earned because of Operation Watershed funds held) has been an unexpected bonus generating approx. £900 interest to date.
- 8) **Internal auditor – interim report**
  - a) AC was pleased to note there were no matters of concern raised within the thorough report and said the Clerk had done well.
  - b) The internal auditor had noted that though the monthly bank reconciliation had been signed the bank statements also needed signing; this will be done in future.
  - c) There are some outstanding policy reviews which will be completed by year-end including the risk register for which he has suggested a slightly different layout.
  - d) Clerk noted the FCSC £85,000 savings protection limit was currently exceeded because of Operation Watershed funds held. It was agreed the risk was small but should we expect a large grant in the future the council should consider opening a savings account with a different bank.
  - e) AC explained the auditor had picked up a discrepancy with the Clerks salary scale point which had dropped to 31/32 from the 37/38 NALC point she was contracted on which has led to her being underpaid. The Clerk left the meeting while the committee discussed regularising the situation. In her absence the committee agreed she should be on NALC scale point 38 with the new hourly rate in effect from the November salary payment.
- 9) **Annual review of documents –**
  - a) Finance Committee Terms of Reference
  - b) Financial regulations

- c) Internet banking policy and procedure
- d) Banking arrangements
- e) Members allowance policy
- f) Expenses policy

Having reviewed the above policies (a-f), they were all approved without change. It was noted the Clerk would provide the chairman with an updated password list and the financial regulations could need amendment if a debit or pre-payment card were approved.

- g) Risk register
- h) Transparency code
- i) Grant award policy and procedure

It was agreed to adjourn the review of these policies (g-i) to next meeting

**10) Discretionary funding – to consider grants for 2023/24 and/or including in 2024/25 budget**  
MG withdrew from the discussion.

- a) Rogate Churchyard (MG withdrew from the discussion)
- b) Terwick Churchyard

After discussion it was agreed to recommend to Full council to award as per the combined budgeted amount of £3,000. AC's proposal of £2,200 for Rogate and £800 for Terwick was seconded by MH with approval from DS.

MG rejoined the discussion.

- c) 4Sight – after discussion and understanding of their support to residents of the village, AC's proposal of recommending a £100 grant to Full Council was seconded by MG and unanimously approved.
- d) There were no other requests to consider but the Clerk noted an expression of interest from Rogate Village Hall for a grant next year towards the refurbishment of the multi-games area – details to be provided.

**11) Review of expenditure against budget 2023/24**

- a) AC went through the expenditure to date and expected to year-end, which had taken into account the regularisation of the Clerk's salary noted above. There was nothing unexpected or of concern and there is likely to be a surplus at year-end which will go into reserves.
- b) He reminded members that our general reserves should be equivalent to a year's precept and our have fallen lower because we didn't increase the precept for years.

**12) Draft budget 2024/25**

AC went through the draft budget and after discussion his proposal of **resolution 'to recommend to full council a 5% precept increase to £41,843'** was seconded by MH and unanimously approved. The final detail of budgeted items to be agreed at the next finance meeting.

**13) To consider council credit/debit card**

AC reported he has been investigating the options and would recommend a Soldo pre-payment card (as used by Bersted PC) and has no cost to the Parish Council. It is limited by the amount of funds loaded to the card which are then spent like a debit card. He will provide more details for a proposal at the next meeting.

**14) The next Finance Committee Meeting** was scheduled to be held at 7.00pm on **Monday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at Rogate Village Hall pavilion.**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.50pm.

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Chairman

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Date