

8.12.20

Summonses to a virtual meeting of the Finance Committee of Sampford Peverell Parish Council to be held on Tuesday 8 December 2020 starting at 7.00 pm, were distributed with the agenda by e-mail to all Members on 1 December 2020. Supporting papers followed by e-mail to all Members on 2 December 2020.

Agenda: as distributed.

2020/21/046

The Chairman, Cllr David Cutts, opened the meeting at 7.05 pm and welcomed Members of the Parish Council present. He thanked Cllr Culpin for setting up the meeting on 'Zoom'.

2020/21/047

Open Forum: not held, there being no members of the public present.

2020/21/048

Apologies: Cllr B Perks

Parish Councillors present:

Chairman: Cllr D Cutts

Cllrs L Taylor, H Culpin, A Mackenzie (who arrived later), T Burt, B O'Connell, H Jackson and S Taylor.

2020/21/049

Dispensations: the Clerk explained to Members that the dispensation agreed by the Parish Council at its meeting on 4 December 2012 permitted them to speak and to vote on matters concerning the setting of the budget and the determination of the precept for the coming financial year, so enabling them to fulfil their legal obligations in these matters.

2020/21/050

Current (2020/21) year-end balance: the Clerk presented his estimate of the balance of funds at current year-end (that is, 31 March 2021) as detailed in supporting paper no. 1 circulated as part of the agenda. Members agreed the figure of £855.04 as the estimated end-of-year balance to carry forward, noting that predicted income included a refund of VAT payments made to date.

2020/21/051

Budget for 2021/22: the Clerk's estimate of expenditure for insurance, room hire, etc, as detailed in supporting paper no. 2 circulated as part of the agenda, a total of £1,305.00 was accepted by the meeting.

Other (discretionary) items for 2021/22 were then agreed unanimously as follows:

- Parish churchyard maintenance: correspondence from the Treasurer of the PCC, Mrs Claire Clarke, and a statement of account for the Higher Town Churchyard 2020, were examined by Members who noted the request that the grant be restored to the original £350.00. Members unanimously agreed to budget for £350.00 for 2021/22.

- Methodist churchyard maintenance: Members noted the letter from the Methodist Church Treasurer, Margaret Dinnage, which acknowledged with thanks the grant of £70.00 towards the upkeep of the churchyard in 2020. It stated that the grass cutting costs in that year had been, for the second year running, £84. Members unanimously agreed to increase the grant for 2021/22 to £85.00 as a contribution to maintenance costs.

- Village Hall & Recreation Ground Charity: no specific request for a grant had been received, although it is known that the Charity had received a generous grant from the
continued.....

2020/21/051 continued.....

government. Covid-19 has greatly affected the use of the Hall, and thus its income, also roof repairs in 2021 may require additional funds. Members unanimously agreed that £1,000.00 should be allocated for 2021/22 in case needed.

- Clerk's salary: the meeting unanimously agreed an increase of £50.00 pa. to £3,900.00.

- Charitable donations: Members agreed to increase the annual grant to the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal to £75.00, and in addition, to budget for two grants each of £50.00 to other organisations requesting grant-aid: thus £175.00 in total.

The Clerk has received an appeal for a donation from Citizen's Advice.

Citizen's Advice and Mid Devon Mobility regularly receive annual donations from SPPC in recognition of the help afforded to local residents.

- Twinning Association: the Covid-19 pandemic caused the cancellation of the visit to Sampford Peverell in 2020. Members thus agreed to make no further provision towards the anticipated costs of the welcome reception and dinner for the Association's French guests (which is expected to take place in the summer of 2021) in view of the adequate allocation now held.

- Computer equipment: Members agreed to make a further provision of £100.00 towards the purchase of equipment for a new Clerk, should the need arise. It was noted and agreed that the present Clerk uses his own computer which he maintains at his own expense.

- Website maintenance: upon the advice of Cllr Culpin, Members agreed to allow £50.00 under this heading.

- Tree works: Members noted the balance held under this heading and agreed that no additional provision is necessary.

- Tree wardens' expenses: Members noted that £65.00 remains in reserve, but unanimously agreed an additional £100.00 to assist with the purchase of new trees.

- Amenity car park support: the Clerk asked for an allocation of £1,000.00, being the annual £500.00 per year set aside for future maintenance costs plus the £500.00 that was not allocated for 2020/21. The Meeting unanimously agreed to allocate only £500.00.

- Grass cutting: an allocation of £1,500.00 for 2021/22 was unanimously agreed.

- Public toilets maintenance: agreed a further provision of £500.00 as the annual allocation to the fund towards maintenance costs.

- Defibrillator maintenance: Members agreed a further provision of £50.00 to add to a rolling fund to meet future maintenance costs for the two units presently in the village.

- The following three allocations were made as in 2020/21: it remains unclear when the liability will transfer to SPPC. Members agreed to make provisions for 2021/22 as follows:

- Public toilets locking: an allocation of £1,500.00 for payment for the daily locking and unlocking of the toilets.

- Public toilets cleaning: an allocation of £2,400.00.

- Public toilets utilities: an allocation of £3,500.00.

continued.....

2020/21/051 continued.....

- Sports field fencing: nil. Members agreed that reserves currently held (eg Jubilee and village improvement) could be used if required.

Members noted that Fred Harding has requested funding to allow for the removal of trees on the southern boundary of the sports field adjacent to the Parkway Hotel site to permit the erection of a ball-stop fence, 70 metres long and 8 feet high. Mr Harding has also suggested a simple post and rail fence to define the boundary. The trees are, in fact, overgrown leylandii conifers. Members were unanimously against removal of this vegetation, suggesting that it be cut back to 8 feet in height instead. It is believed that the existing 'Devon bank' belongs to the recreation ground: it would thus be appropriate to erect the post and rail fence immediately to the south of the bank. Members suggested that a site meeting with Mr Harding be arranged: it would include the Chairman and Cllr Burt.

- Village 'Showcase' event: nil. Adequate allocated reserves held.

- Play Park support: nil. No longer required.

- Street Furniture: Members agreed that, with no known present requirement, but with the possible availability of grants and the use of various reserves held if required, no provision is again necessary.

Cllr L Taylor reported that several dog bins in the village need attention: she undertook to send details of location to the Clerk who in turn will arrange repairs with MDDC. Cllr L Taylor has also suggested an additional litter/dog bin between Lower Town and the station.

- Litter-picking equipment: Members agreed that, as with the item above, no provision is necessary.

- Additional items of expenditure:

- Christmas tree purchase for December 2021: £50.00 was felt to be adequate.

- Defibrillator for Higher Town: funding towards this has been obtained from the Locality Fund held by Cllr Radford (DCC): the meeting agreed to allocate a further £600.00 towards this project.

- Cllr Burt spoke of the possibility of installing solar panels at the Memorial Hall and of providing charging points for electric vehicles: he recommended the establishment of an environmental improvement fund to assist with future provision. Cllr Culpin proposed an allocation of £500.00 per annum: this was seconded by Cllr Burt and agreed *nem con*.

- Contingency fund for 2021/22: the meeting agreed that this again be nil.

Summary:	Parish Council expenditure	£1,305	
	Discretionary items	16,860	
	Total projected expenditure for 2021/22		18,165
	Contingency fund		nil
	Grand total required for 2021/22		18,165
	Less b/f on 1.4.21 (est)		(855)
	Precept required for 2021/22		17,310

continued.....

2020/21/052

Precept required for 2021/22: agreed unanimously to be £17,310. [This represents an increase of £755 (4.56%) on the previous year. The additional Council Tax for a band D property to be paid is £1.58 in the full year, or 3 pence a week, based on information from MDDC.]

2020/21/053

Outstanding planning matters: none

2020/21/054

2019/20 external audit.

Members noted the conclusion of the external audit of the 2019/20 accounts. No issues were raised. Members unanimously agreed the payment of the fee of £240.00.

[Cllr Mackenzie joined the meeting with apologies for lateness at 8.35 pm]

2020/21/055

Any other matters by leave of the Chairman: none raised.

2020/21/056

Next meeting of the Parish Council confirmed as Tuesday 26 January 2021 at 7.00 pm. This will be a virtual meeting by 'Zoom'.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.45 pm.

The following is an appendix to the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 8 December 2020. It provides a summary of the budgetary decisions made.

Summary of projected expenditure for 2021/22 and calculation of the precept for that year

	£		
Insurance	400		
Meeting room hire	150		
GW Canal Trust	25		
Clerk's expenses	150		
Training/travel	nil		
Election expenses	nil		
Audit costs	300		
DALC membership	280	1305	
Parish church yard maintenance	350		
Methodist church yard mtce	85		
VH & RG Charity	1000		
Clerk's salary	3900		
Charitable donations	175		
Twinning Association	nil		
Computer equipment	100		
Website maintenance	50		
Tree works	nil		
Tree Wardens	100		
Amenity car park support	500		
Grass cutting	1500		
Toilets maintenance support	500		
Defibrillator mtce	50		
Public toilets locking	1500		
Public toilets cleaning	2400		
Public toilets utilities	3500		
Sports field fencing	nil		
Village 'Showcase'	nil		
Play Park support	nil		
Street furniture	nil		
Litter-picking equipment	nil		
Christmas tree 2021	50		
Defibrillator (Higher Town)	600		
Environmental improvements	500		
Total discretionary items		16860	
Total projected expenditure for 2021/22		18165	
Contingency fund		nil	
Grand total required for 2021/22		18165	
Less brought forward on 1.4.21		(855)	
Precept required for 2021/22		17310	

This represents an increase of £755 (or 4.56%) from the 2020/21 figure of £16555.

MDDC has advised that for Sampford Peverell an increase of £1,000 in the precept would add £2.09 per year to the Council Tax for a band D property.

continued.....

The Parish no longer (from and including 2019/20) receives a share in the Council Tax Reduction Grant from MDDC.

According to MDDC, the increase in precept of £755 will result in an increase of 9.15% in the band D charge because of anticipated lower collection levels (98% reduced to 96%) due to Covid-19 and an increase in the number of households claiming rebates through the Council Tax Reduction scheme, both of which result in an increase of Council Tax in order to generate the required precept.

It is understood that a 2% cap will again not be applied to smaller local councils this year.

The Parish precept will require a payment of £36.26 for the year, which is 70 pence a week, for a Band D property.

Precepts levied in recent years

2006/07	6800
2007/08	7125
2008/09	7400
2009/10	7700
2010/11	7900
2011/12	7900
2012/13	7900
2013/14	7900
2014/15	7900
2015/16	8700
2016/17	9700
2017/18	9800
2018/19	9900
2019/20	10500
2020/21	16555