

GREAT SANKEY PARISH COUNCIL

Finance Committee

Minutes of meeting: Tuesday 2nd July 2024
Whittle Hall Community Centre

Chair: Cllr Williams
Present: Cllr Watson
Cllr Simpson
Cllr Pennington
Cllr Cotter

In Attendance: K. Carter (Clerk)

1. To receive and approve any apologies for unavoidable absence.

None.

2. To approve the minutes of previous meeting 4/6/2024.

The draft minutes were moved and accepted as a true record of the meeting and signed as such.

FINANCE/2024/55, RESOLVED:

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4th June 2024 as a true record.

3. To receive the Annual Internal Auditors report and determine any actions to be taken

The report had been circulated and was noted. Four minor issues were raised, and recommendations given to address these which will be implemented as soon as possible. The Report and action plan will be published on the council's website as per usual practice. The actions to be taken are:

- Consider establishing an Investment Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy
- Amend bank reconciliation and balance sheet to move a reconciling item to the creditors list.
- Review year-end process to mitigate for staff illness/absence
- Ensure details of contracts over £5k and information about land and buildings is published on the council's website

FINANCE/2024/56, RECOMMENDED:

To note the Internal Auditors Report, including recommendations on issues raised. To implement recommendations as soon as possible.

4. To review the council's Financial Regulations.

The Parish Council's Financial Regulations are based on model regulations from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC). This framework includes statutory requirements that councils must follow as well as best practice to manage finances effectively. Over time the model documents have gradually altered in style, and it was proposed that GSPC regulations are redrafted to match to make comparing the documents easier in the future. As well as including any additions within the model regulations, it was proposed that changes were made to

- renumber and reorganise sections and paragraphs
- change wording to bring in line with the model regulations – wording has been simplified in newer versions of the model document which is easier to understand.

The document was discussed in detail and required changes agreed. The agreed changes will be included in a draft to be considered at the full council meeting.

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FINANCE/2024/57, RECOMMENDED:

To amend the Parish Council's Financial Regulations to include any statutory updates, and renumber and reorganise to better match the model regulations.

5. To review the scrutiny process for financial records.

Payments in and out of the council's bank account are now mainly through BACS transfers. Some cheques are received for hall hire, but the council no longer accepts cash payments as it is difficult for staff to pay cash into the bank account because of changes to the banking system. The process for ensuring financial transactions have been carried out correctly, invoices verified, and payments authorised was discussed. Two councillors will carry out the necessary checks on a sample of transactions each month, either prior to the Finance Committee meeting or at the meeting itself. The bank reconciliation will be verified on a quarterly basis.

FINANCE/2024/57, RESOLVED:

To approve the proposed checks on financial records. Checks on transactions to be carried out each month; the bank reconciliation to be verified quarterly.

6. To scrutinise financial expenditure arising since the last meeting, including payments by Direct Debit.

A list of payments to be made had been circulated prior to the meeting. The following payments were considered and approved.

Presented By	Description	Amount, £
St Marys PCC	Donation towards extension	200.00
Nuko Planning Ltd	50% planning consultant fees for PPF drainage project	825.00
Wild Tribe	Face Painting – Fun Day	140.00
Equals card	Additional amount for freezer – TP café	400.00
Impact Graphix	Wildflower ID board for Lingley Green	102.00
Taylor Rose MW	Solicitor's fees for Sankey Station, including searches	2908.00
Superstars Holiday Club	Summer Playscheme 2024	3900.00
Friends of TP park	Donation of £60 for advertising banners	60.00
A Doyle	Circus skills workshop – Fun Day 2024	280.00
N Cubbins	Fairground – Fun Day 2024	12,947.00
Little L's Teapot	Refreshments for Marshalls – Fun Day 2024	117.70
Woodend Nursery	Compost bags	20.00
Trade UK	Cable ties/wall plugs/gloves – general maintenance	23.32
B&B Hygiene Ltd	Cleaning supplies – all centres	643.25
T&O Harrison	Greenwaste	150.00
Trade UK	Centre repairs – WH	85.47
Trade UK	Centre repairs – WH	35.86
WBC	Service Charge Hood Manor Centre	382.89
Les Halman Nurseries	Bedding Plants	118.94
Trade UK	F-Clamps – Centre Maintenance	10.99
Agrovista	TD5 Bulk Bag – Grounds Maintenance	398.40

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WBC	Delivery & Collection Bins Fun Day 24	20.00
WBC	Trade refuse hire Fun Day 24	83.20
DCS	Radio Comms hire Fun Day 24	144.00
T&O Harrison	Greenwaste Ticket	30.00
Les Halman	Bedding Plants	579.98
JDH Business Services	2023/24 internal audit	937.20
Cheshire Turf Machinery	Mower	1474.80
Canda Copying	Office Copier – Copies	92.47
Canda Copying	Office Copier – Rental	94.80
Travis Perkins	Rotovator – Petrol – Hire	86.28
Peter Watson	Paper Cups for PC Meeting	15.95
Equals Business Card	Top-up for staff cards	1186.09
	Total	28,493.59

FINANCE/2024/58, RESOLVED:

To authorise all payments listed (under LGA 1976 s19 or LGA 1972 s15(5), s101, 111, 112, 133, 142 or 137).

The following direct debits on the Council's account during May were also checked:

Presented By	Date	Description	Centre	Amount
Novuna	01/05/2024	Electric Van	Lease	456.20
BT	01/05/2024	WIFI/Telephone	HL	73.28
BT	01/05/2024	WIFI/Telephone	Office	129.24
Lex Autolease	01/05/2024	Council Electric Van	Lease	851.98
Water Plus	01/05/2024	Water charges	HM	51.11
Water Plus	01/05/2024	Water charges	BB	77.88
Water Plus	01/05/2024	Water charges	WH	80.38
BT	02/05/2024	WIFI/Telephone	TP	105.98
BT	02/05/2024	WIFI/Telephone	BB	73.28
SSE Energy	02/05/2024	GAS	HM	317.61
SSE Energy	02/05/2024	GAS	WH	200.12
SSE Energy	02/05/2024	GAS	BB	357.11
SSE Energy	02/05/2024	GAS	HL	128.05
ICO	03/05/2024	Data protection fee	Office	35.00
BT	07/05/2024	WIFI/Telephone	HM	445.47
GCI Network	08/05/2024	Office 365/email	Office	93.99
SSE Energy	13/05/2024	Electric	HM	711.09
Peninsula	17/05/2024	H&S Service	H&S	200.93
Water Plus	22/05/2024	Water charges	HL	111.45
Water Plus	22/05/2024	Water charges	TP	76.35
WBC	30/05/2024	April Business Rates	TP	96.00
WBC	30/05/2024	April Business Rates	HM	61.00
WBC	30/05/2024	April Business Rates	WH	65.00
WBC	30/05/2024	April Business Rates	BB	52.00
BT	31/05/2024	WIFI/Telephone	HL	73.28
BT	31/05/2024	WIFI/Telephone	Office	129.24
Utility Warehouse	31/05/2024	Mobile phones	Office	53.40

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7. To consider any quotes received and authorise or make recommendations to full Council where appropriate.

Several outstanding items were revisited:

i) Automated bollards, TP access road

The Finance Committee considered this in February 2024. There have been problems with unauthorised vehicles driving up to the community centre at inappropriate speeds causing issues for pedestrians, although no-one has yet been injured. Requests for drivers to respect the regulations are increasingly ignored. This has been an issue for many years, but the site is seeing increasing footfall since the grounds have been improved and the council could be liable should an accident happen.

In Feb, the quote was for an arm-style barrier, but concerns were raised about potential damage if it was used to sit/swing on. The committee asked for quotes for automated bollards instead, but this has proven difficult and so far, only one quote has been received (£10,262.96). Further quotes will be sought. In the meantime, it was noted that the signage about access is relatively small and alongside other signs. It was proposed and agreed that a separate, more visible sign is installed.

FINANCE/2024/59, RESOLVED:

To install a separate parking/access sign at Tim Parry Recreation Ground (LG (Misc. Prov.) A 1976 s.19)

ii) Bewsey Barn, stairway enclosure & false ceiling

False ceilings have been installed in other centres which makes a significant difference to heating and acoustics. The proposal to infill the stairwell and include a false ceiling at Bewsey Barn was agreed in May 2024. Again, it has taken some months to obtain quotes and two quotes have now been obtained (£7,260 and £8,315). The company can achieve the work during the summer when the preschool is not in; it was agreed to accept the lower quote for the work.

FINANCE/2024/60, RECOMMENDED:

To engage Moore Construction to enclose the stairway at Bewsey Barn Community Centre at a cost of £7,260 + VAT (LG (Misc. Prov.) A 1976 s.19).

iii) Website upgrades

A quote was accepted in March 2023 for updates to the council's website. This was in 2 phases – the first for necessary updates to the existing site and the second for some additional pages, online booking form and redesign of some pages. Phase 1 was completed and paid in September 23; the second phase was started in February 2024, but is yet to be completed, although some work has been done. Several meetings have been cancelled. It was agreed that a final deadline for completion is given and if not met, the council will look at other options for the work.

FINANCE/2024/61, RESOLVED:

To set a deadline for the remaining work agreed for the council's website. To consider alternative options if this is not met (LGA 1972, s142)

8. To consider requests for financial assistance; to decide if any donations are to be made or if requests should be recommended to full Council.

No requests.

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9. Budget 2024-25 – to scrutinise documentation and when satisfied as to correctness to sign off financial reports and bank reconciliations for May.

The bank reconciliation and budget monitoring pages for May were considered and accepted. Checks on financial transactions will be carried out following the meeting and any discrepancies reported to the next meeting. Future checks will be carried out prior to the meeting.

FINANCE/2024/62, RESOLVED:

To accept the bank reconciliation and budget monitoring pages for May 2024 (Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 reg 4).

10. To authorise payment of wages, tax and ERNIC for June.

The list of wages to be paid was considered and authorised. Total Employment Costs (including salaries, pensions & HMRC) were £21,361.52.

FINANCE/2024/63, RESOLVED:

To authorise payment of wages and HMRC costs (£21,361.52 total) for June 2024 (LGA 1972 s112).