

ALRESFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING - THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Wednesday 16th November 2022 at 11.00am

Present: Cllrs Frank Belgrove (Chairman), Linda Belgrove, Alistair Broom, Ernie Osborne, Rubina Swash and Ann Wiggins

Also Present: Mr M Cooke (Clerk) and Mrs A Baxter (RFO and assistant clerk)

- 22/022 Apologies for absence:** *To note any apologies.*
Cllr Swash sent apologies as she was running late.
- 22/023 Declaration of interests:** *To state any interests in the below agenda items.*
Cllr F Belgrove declared an interest in item 22/027 as he is an allotment holder and reported that he has received a dispensation to participate in the agenda item.
Cllr L Belgrove declared an interest as the chair of TDALC and is associated with EALC.
- 22/024 Minutes of the last Meeting:** *To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of the 19th October 2022.*
It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting of 19th October 2022 are true and accurate.
Proposed: Cllr Osborne, Seconded: Cllr Wiggins, 4 in favour, 1 abstention.
It was suggested that a table of abbreviations would be useful.
- 22/025 To receive an update on actions from the last meeting not covered elsewhere in this agenda.**
Cllr F Belgrove reported that the football club lease payment has been paid in advance for the year.
The council has not yet received 3 quotes for a new cleaner.
The council voted to continue with Essex Highways repairs and will need to check every scheme with Essex Highways.
We have received a report on required playground maintenance.
Cllr Linda Belgrove reported that the EALC fee is high.
Mr Cooke did contact EALC about what their offer is for the fee they charge but got a bland response with no justification. They didn't comment on their advice conflict with SLCC. It was agreed that Cllr F Belgrove would approach EALC with the query.
Cllr L Belgrove added that the blanket fees are a concern and asked why there is no service agreement.
- 22/026 Pavilion Electricity**
To consider recommending to full council a one-off payment from Alresford Colne Rangers Football Club of £600 towards the increased costs of electricity.
Mr Cooke wrote to the club and Cllr F Belgrove has spoken to the club and they have made an offer of a one-off payment of £600. They pay an annual rental of £1,150.
Cllr Swash arrived.
After a discussion on the high costs of electricity and causes of that it was resolved to recommend to the council that it accepts the offer of £600.
Proposed: Cllr Wiggins, Seconded: Cllr L Belgrove, 5 in favour, 1 abstention.
- 22/027 Draft Budget for 2023/24**
To review a draft budget and discuss a precept recommendation for 2023/24. (To be finalised once the tax base figures are known).
The committee reviewed the draft budget.

Signature.....

Date.....

ALRESFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING - THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Wednesday 16th November 2022 at 11.00am

It was resolved to add a Public Realm cost centre with a £5,000 budget. Proposed: Cllr Osborne, all in favour.

It was commented that the water rates were high in 21/22 because we were overcharged, but credit has been applied to the account.

It was resolved to split the £1,000 budget for car park maintenance with £500 to remain as a budget item and £500 to be added as an earmarked reserve. Proposed: Cllr L Belgrove, all in favour.

Mr Cooke advised that we've been having issues with the CCTV, it's not as good as it could be. We could seek grants for an upgrade.

There was a discussion over whether the chairman's allowance should be increased, however given the current financial climate no change was proposed.

It was asked what the Environs "other" cost code is for. There are one-off expenses that don't fall into the specific categories. It was requested that if expenses are over a certain amount that a new cost code is started.

It was agreed to change the devolution description to Highways as the devolution scheme has stopped, and the council is going to continue with Highways' works.

It was resolved to allow a £1,500 budget for Highways. Proposed: Cllr L Belgrove, Seconded: Cllr Swash, all in favour.

The budget will continue for St Peter's Church, works on the outside areas.

The Highways CCTV had to have repairs this year, so it was resolved to add a £500 budget. Proposed: Cllr L Belgrove, Seconded: Cllr Swash, all in favour.

Cllr Swash spoke about extending the area of the hanging baskets and has new ideas but knows maintenance is an issue. It was agreed that the budget would remain the same until discussed at a council meeting. Proposed: Cllr Swash, Seconded: Cllr Osborne, all in favour.

It was agreed for the waste bin budget to be increased to £2,500 as the council is looking to add 4 bins. The emptying costs were therefore also increased to £200.

It was agreed to reduce the budget for signage to £500.

It was agreed to increase the Alresford Advertiser budget to £1,000 as the council has agreed to fund the magazine with £100/issue. Proposed: Cllr F Belgrove, Seconded: Cllr L Belgrove, all in favour.

It was agreed to add a defibrillator cost code with a budget of £500 and give a VAS budget of £200 as it requires batteries and maintenance. Proposed: Cllr F Belgrove, Seconded: Cllr Osborne, all in favour.

The grants budget increased to £6,000 as we're in times of severe hardship. Proposed: Cllr L Belgrove, Seconded: Cllr Osborne, all in favour.

The training budget was set at £2,000 as the clerk will be doing CiLCA (Certificate in Local Council Administration). It was discussed that the EALC bursary limit has not increased in 5 years, EALC are looking into it.

The office equipment budget was increased to £1,350 as the RFO will need a new laptop.

Pavilion maintenance was decreased to £5,000. It needs new chairs and a repaint. An estimate has been received of £1,900 plus material for the painting.

Proposed: Cllr L Belgrove, Seconded: Cllr Osborne, all in favour.

The borehole maintenance budget was kept as it was advised that it can be very expensive.

The staff budgets were approved. Proposed Cllr L Belgrove, Seconded: Cllr Osborne, all in favour.

No changes were made to the Staunton Gate budget.

After changes the total budgeted expenditure was £131,995. This was approved. Proposed: Cllr F Belgrove, Seconded: Cllr Osborne, all in favour.

It was discussed whether the precept should be raised a small amount and take a hit on the reserves, or not put it up at all and take all the excess from reserves.

Signature.....

Date.....

ALRESFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING - THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Wednesday 16th November 2022 at 11.00am

Last year the precept went up by 2% but because of the increased tax base council tax decreased by 4%.

Cllr Osborne left.

A 2% increase was looked at, which would increase the precept from £88,230 last year to £89,994.60. However, as no PCSO fees were paid last year which has increased the reserves, and because times are difficult financially it was resolved to recommend to council that the precept remain the same. Proposed: Cllr L Belgrove, Seconded: Cllr Swash, all in favour.

22/028 **Bank Accounts**

To agree the opening of an additional account to meet the Financial Services Compensation Scheme limit of £85,000 protected funds per financial institution group.

Options were reviewed and it was agreed to open a Cambridge and County account. Proposed: Cllr F Belgrove, Seconded: Cllr Broom, all in favour.

22/029 **Meeting closes**

The meeting closed at 12.43pm.

Minuted by Angela Baxter – RFO & Assistant Clerk Contact rfoapcessex@outlook.com

Table of Abbreviations

TDALC	Tendring District Association of Local Councils
EALC	Essex Association of Local Councils
EH	Essex Highways
SLCC	Society of Local Council Clerks
CiLCA	Certificate in Local Council Administration

Signature.....

Date.....

ALRESFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING - THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Wednesday 16th November 2022 at 11.00am

Actions

Item	Action	Who	Status
22/025	Contact EALC to follow up on what their offer is.	Cllr F Belgrove	
22/026	A recommendation to accept £600 from ACRFC to go on to the PC agenda.	Mr Cooke	
22/028	Open Cambridge and County Account	Mrs Baxter and signatories	This account was no longer available so we are in the process of opening a Cambridge Building Society account.

Signature.....

Date.....