

Holme Valley Parish Council

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 15 APRIL 2024

Those present:

Chair: Cllr A Wilson

Vice Chair: Cllr G Kirkby

Councillors: Cllr M Blacka, Cllr D Brook, Cllr P Colling, Cllr C Greaves, Cllr J Holmes, Cllr J Liles, Cllr J Rylah

Officer: Mr R McGill (RFO/Deputy Clerk)

Welcome

The new Chair welcomed Members to this meeting of the Holme Valley Parish Council Finance and Management Standing Committee.

Public Question Time

No members of the public were in attendance, and no Councillor chose to speak as a member of the public.

Cllr Wilson hoped that the Committee could rationalise its work over the year ahead, and encouraged Members to be concise in their deliberations particularly when grant awards are debated. He said that it is a natural thing for there to be differences of opinion but hoped that this would never become disrespectful. Cllr Wilson said it was fortunate that the RFO/Deputy Clerk was able to advise the Committee and the Parish Council on financial matters.

2425 19 Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 amended by Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

The RFO/Deputy Clerk recorded the meeting for upload to the Parish Council's YouTube channel.

No-one else wished to record the meeting.

2425 20 To accept apologies for absence

NOTED: It was noted that Cllrs Barnett, Baylin, Rostron and Whitelaw were absent from the meeting.

Cllr Greaves had notified that he would be late.

The Committee received apologies for absence given in advance of the meeting from the above-named Councillors.

RESOLVED: The reasons given for absence by Cllrs Barnett, Baylin, Rostron and Whitelaw were approved by the Committee.

Signed: _____

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2425 21 To receive Members' and Officers' personal and disclosable pecuniary interests in items on the agenda

None were declared.

2425 22 To consider written requests for new DPI dispensations

Members acknowledged that new DPIs for all Councillors had been received or were pending.

2425 23 To consider whether items on the agenda should be discussed in private session

RESOLVED: Members resolved at this time that no item should be heard in private session.

2425 24 To confirm the Minutes of the previous Committee meeting

NOTED: Members noted the Minutes of the Finance & Management Committee Meeting held on 15 April 2024, numbered 2425 01 to 2425 18 inclusive, already approved by Council. As presented, the minutes now include the initialled schedule of payments, and the double-signed bank reconciliations.

2425 25 To elect a Vice Chair of the Finance and Management Standing Committee

Cllr Glenn Kirkby was elected the Vice Chair of the Committee.

2425 26 Grants

- i. The Chair gave a briefing on his hopes and expectations of the committee with regard to the grants process. He thanked the working group for streamlining the process.

ii. Grant Evaluation Reports

NOTED: The Committee noted that the following Grant Evaluation Reports 2023-24 had been added to the Parish Council website:

- Holmfirth Film Festival
- Honley CCTV
- Wooldale Community Group
- Honley Village Community Trust Brushcutter/Trimmer training
- Choppards Community Association
- Cartworth Moor Cricket Club
- Sharing Memories
- Brockholes Village Trust
- Square Peg
- Holmfirth Festival of Folk

Signed: _____

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The Officer reported that one report had not been on the standard Grant Evaluation Report format.

The Committee considered whether any further action regarding Grant Evaluation Reports was needed.

RESOLVED: While the report from the organisation which was submitted not using the official template would be allowed this time, in future this organisation would have to submit on the Holme Valley Parish Council proforma.

Cllr Holmes said she thought that the information and photos included in the Grant Evaluation Reports were valuable and interesting for demonstrating the wide range of community work that the Parish Council supports.

iii. Councillor visits to community groups that have received awards

Members considered arrangements for Councillors to visit community organisations that had been awarded money by the Parish Council as community grants. Such visits are useful to publicise the work of the Council and of its Councillors, and that of the organisation in question. It was thought especially significant that Parish Councillors would connect with groups in their wards.

RESOLVED: The Officer would circulate lists of grants awarded and ask Members to make contact with community groups.

iv. Rolling Grants

The Committee considered approval of the Rolling Grant Agreement (supplied with the Grant Evaluation Report) for Holme Valley Patient Transport. The Committee felt that the application was not comprehensive and there was a lack of explanation on the numbers of service users and how they were supported, and its geographical range. Councillors considered that it would be helpful if the service covered the whole parish area.

RESOLVED: It was resolved that Cllr Liles would visit the trustees of the charity, to find out more detail on the service offer and other considerations.

The Committee considered approval of the Rolling Grant Agreement (supplied with the Grant Evaluation Report) for Holmfirth Festival of Folk.

RESOLVED: The Rolling Grant Agreement was approved for the term of this Council (provisional on annual reviews of documentation). The Committee wanted to comment to the group that holding significant amounts of reserves might mean that the award is reviewed.

v. Grants Working Group

Cllr Colling reported on the work of the group. The final report would be prepared for the august meeting of this Committee.

NOTED: Cllr Colling's report was noted.

Signed: _____

vi. **Request for a grant award change of use**

Budget Line 4315 Community Assets Grant

At the Finance and Management Committee meeting of 26th February 2024, Upperthong Cricket Club was awarded £2,050 towards replacing the clubhouse carpets. The club has managed to get the carpets replaced cheaper than anticipated and wants to use the £800 underspend towards replacing furniture. The Committee considered this request for a grant change of use.

RESOLVED: The Committee resolve that the underspend should be returned to the Parish Council. The cricket club would be encouraged to apply for furniture in the next grants cycle in September.

2425 27

Chair's Expenses

- i. **NOTED:** The Committee noted that the Chair's Expenses budget for 2024-25 is £1,000. No expenditure from the current budget had been made this year.
- ii. **NOTED:** The Committee noted that the Chair's Expenses budget for 2023-24 had been £1,000. £78 had been spent on the Chair's behalf on the lead-up to the end of the Council year. As per the Parish Council's Chair's Expenses Policy, the Chair had elected to donate the remaining £922 to local charities with £461 being paid to Full Life Church Foodbank and £461 to the Holme Valley Food Bank.

2425 28

The possibility of reclaiming VAT on payments pertaining to buildings the Parish Council owns

The RFO and Cllr Liles reported on advice given by Cllr Liles' accountant, Paul Bowden, of Paul Howley and Co, on the potential for the Parish Council to reclaim VAT on direct payments it makes to works on The Civic. Mr Bowden had reviewed the Parish Council's position in terms of business- and non-business- activities (Local Authorities and Similar Bodies VAT Notice 749) and had read ACRE Information sheet 18 "Village halls and VAT on building work and other purchases." Mr Bowden's considered opinion was that the Parish Council could reclaim VAT on payments it makes in respect of works to The Civic as long as 1) any such payment is approved by Holmfirth Civic Hall Community Trust and 2) that the Parish Council is the only payee of that particular project. Mr Bowden's perspective is that Holme Valley Parish Council is not a business and does not undertake business-activities, - that is, activities to generate a surplus, - in respect of The Civic.

RESOLVED: The Finance and Management Committee would recommend to Council to consider making payments direct to suppliers in respect of works on The Civic, in order to legally reclaim VAT on these payments.

Signed: _____

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2425 29 Schedule of Payments

- i. **NOTED:** The Committee noted the finalised schedule of payments for April 2024. This was initialled by the Chair.
- ii. **NOTED:** The Committee noted the finalised schedule of payments for May 2024. This was initialled by the Chair.
- iii. The Committee considered the month-to-date schedule of payments for June 2024. **RESOLVED:** The Committee approved the month-to-date schedule of payments for June 2024. This was initialled by the Chair.

2425 30 Financial Statements

NOTED: The Committee noted the accounting summaries as presented:

- i. For April 2024:
 - (1) Cash Books All Accounts Receipts and Payments (to end 30 April 2024)
 - (2) Trial Balance (to end 30 April 2024)
 - (3) Income and Expenditure by Budget Heading (to end 30 April 2024)
 - (4) Balance Sheet (to end 30 April 2024)
 - (5) Cash and Investment Reconciliation (to end 30 April 2024)
 - (6) Earmarked Reserves (1 April 2024)
 - (7) Earmarked Reserves (to end 30 April 2024)
 - (8) VAT Return – year-to-date for the quarter APR-JUN 2024 not for submission.
 - (9) Journal reports for April – this is how movements of reserves are managed.
- ii. For May 2024:
 - (1) Cash Books All Accounts Receipts and Payments (to end 31 May 2024)
 - (2) Trial Balance (to end 31 May 2024)
 - (3) Balance Sheet (to end 31 May 2024)
 - (4) Cash and Investment Reconciliation (to end 31 May 2024)
 - (5) VAT Return –for the quarter APR-JUN 2024 not for submission.
 - (6) Journal reports for May – this is how movements of reserves are managed.
- iii. The Committee considered that, as per the recommendation in the internal audit report, the Committee must approve the bank reconciliations cross-referenced with bank statements.

RESOLVED: The Committee approved the bank reconciliations for April 2024 for:

- HSBC Current Account
- HSBC Business Money Manager Bank Account
- CCLA PSDF Account.

The Chair and a second signatory on the bank mandates signed and dated the bank reconciliations on behalf of the Parish Council.

Signed: _____

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- iv. Councillors reviewed the Income and Expenditure report for May 2024.
The RFO reported that:

In respect of the Parish Council's year-to-date income -

- 1076 Precept The Parish Council 1st May 2024 received ½ of its annual precept from Kirklees Council. The next payment would be in November.
- 1078 Special Expenses Grant The Parish Council 1st May 2024 received ½ of the Special Expenses Grant from Kirklees Council. The next payment would be in November.
- 1090 Bank Interest Two months into the year, the Parish Council was on-target regarding bank interest.
- 1200 Allotment Rents All rents had been received, and all had been banked.
- 1250 Gartside Building Some progress had been made with finding a new tenant for the Gartside shop unit.
- 1300 Garage Rents All rents had been received, and all had been banked.
- With regard to 1095 Other income and 1265 Memorial Bench Donations, the £2 cheque and £50 cash donation had been deposited 7th June to reconcile last year's debtors.

On the expenditure side, the RFO reported that:

- 4000 Salaries were a little over budget after two months. Part of this was due to having to pay an additional payment regarding pensions. An earmarked reserve has been created to fund any subsequent pay uplifts.
- 4060 Staff Training was a little over-budget two months into the year.
- 4235 Insurance was, again, significantly over-budget by £3,101 or by 34%. As Members will be aware, when the insurance budget was set, this was before the revaluation of The Civic to over £9,000,000, and the new £11,851 insurance premium reflects this. However, it should be noted that the Parish Council will be reimbursed much of this increase by Holmfirth Civic Hall Community Trust under the terms of the lease.
- 4300 Honley Library It is perhaps worth noting that whilst the Parish Council is contractually committed to pay the Friends of Honley Library £15,000 towards its running costs, there are often other payments, such as this last month for legal fees. It is likely to be worthwhile to budget a little over the £15,000 in future years.

The Committee any further actions on income and expenditure against budget.

RESOLVED: No further action.

- v. Earmarked Reserves

The Chair reported on the levels of earmarked reserves held by the Parish Council. He advised that all earmarked reserves needed to have a specific purpose and be intended to fulfil a future project. Earmarked reserves should not be contingency funds.

Signed: _____

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The RFO/Deputy Clerk reported on the different earmarked reserves established and latterly disestablished by the Parish Council:

- i. 322 EMR CCTV was closed as this was likely to become a rolling grant. See below.
- ii. 323 EMR 323 Other Community Assets in the Holme Valley consisted of £2,017 for 10th Holme Valley (New Mill) Scouts (towards a new scout hut) and an extra £1,000 had been added at year end to fund the defibrillator grant application from Honley Business Association. This expenditure had been approved at this meeting.
- iii. 325 EMR Election Fund held £7,000 allocated directly from the precept. This would be added to every year until the next full-Council cycle of elections when the reserve should hold around £30,000.
- iv. 326 EMR Defibrillator Special Reserve held £1,796.05. This reserve is solely for maintenance of defibrillators the Parish Council is directly responsible for.
- v. 329 EMR Holmfirth Civic Hall held £30,000.
- vi. 331 EMR Gartside Building held £5,000. This is separate to the newly created 351 EMR Holmfirth Toilets Refurb.
- vii. 332 EMR Honley Library held £15,000.
- viii. 336 EMR Royal Events held £1,000 in respect of operation Menai Bridge.
- ix. 337 EMR COVID Memorial held £6,000.
- x. 338 EMR Children's Playgrounds was closed after Annual Council 2024 and £15,000 returned to general reserves.
- xi. 341 EMR Climate Action Projects held £13,946.68 with some expenditure on a planning application for the solar panels paid from it. Further expenditure on the solar panels project is anticipated soon.
- xii. 343 EMR Road Safety held £12,526. Considerable expenditure is expected from this reserve in respect of two mobile speed indicator devices, and a second order of school parking bollards.
- xiii. 344 Staff Pay £5,000 was added to this earmarked reserve after annual Council to safeguard staff pay in the event of a national pay award.
- xiv. 345 Rolling Grants held £6,060 for anticipated rolling grant awards that have been agreed by this committee pending submission and approval of documentation. (£1,500 Holmfirth Arts Festival, £1,500 Festival of Folk, £1,500 Holme Valley Patient Transport, £1,560 CCTV Honley).
- xv. 346 EMR Public Transport held £5,000.
- xvi. 347 EMR Tourism held £5,000.
- xvii. 348 EMR Dog Waste and Litter held £3,800.
- xviii. 349 EMR Community Engagement held £3,609.87.
- xix. 350 EMR The Civic Roof Repairs held £22,490, the expenditure of which is being considered this meeting.
- xx. 351 EMR Holmfirth Toilets Refurb was newly created after Annual Council and held £4,104.

The Committee considered whether any further actions on earmarked reserves was needed.

RESOLVED: Committees would be expected to have a project plan for each earmarked reserve, explaining what it is for, and a timetabling of likely expenditure.

Signed: _____

2425 31 Fixed Assets List

The Committee considered approval of the revised Fixed Assets List to end 2023/24. This included the Holme Moss Topograph (recorded at original purchase cost) and the updated valuation of The Civic. The Annual Return Value (B) will be included on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

Members considered the content of the List. Some of the earlier pre-2019 entries seemed to contravene the guidance on the form, - that is, that original costs were would normally be carried over into the Annual Return Value column. Many of these entries had valuations where the Original Valuation (A) was different than the Annual Return Value (V).

RESOLVED: The Committee resolved to approve the Fixed Asset List as presented, with the proviso that the internal auditor should advise on whether there was any facility or, indeed, need to amend the earlier entries.

2425 32 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023-24

NOTED: The Committee noted that the internal auditor is visiting 18th June to undertake the year-end audit and complete the Annual Internal Audit Report section of the AGAR.

The Committee was asked to consider the AGAR and supporting documentation as presented (pending any amendments by the internal auditor) to full Council for consideration 24th June 2024:

- AGAR Annual Return 2023/24 Form 3
 - Section 1 Annual Governance Statement
 - Section 2 Accounting Statements
 - Section 3 Annual External Audit Report (currently blank)
 - Annual Internal Audit Report (currently blank)
- AGAR supporting documents to be sent to the external auditor
 - Making Provision for the Exercise of Public Rights – the notice would be posted Monday 24th June and members of the public could inspect accounts Tuesday 25th June to Monday 5th August 2024.
 - Confirmation of the dates of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Bank Reconciliation with box 8
 - Reconciliation between box 7 and box 8
 - Explanation of variances
 - Contact details
 - Declaration that the accounts are unaudited
 - Letter to Kirklees notifying of the precept.

An error on the “Confirmation of the dates of the period for the exercise of public rights” was identified.

Signed: _____

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RESOLVED: With the correction of the error as identified, and any further amendments required by the internal auditor, the Committee voted to recommend the AGAR and supporting documents to full Council 24th June 2024.

2425 33 Tenancies

- i. **NOTED:** All payments regarding garage and allotment tenancies had been received and banked.
- ii. **NOTED:** The Clerk had co-signed all tenancy agreements, except one outstanding, and these would be returned with receipts 16th June 2024.

2425 34 New model Financial Regulations from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC)

The RFO reported that NALC had updated its model Financial Regulations for the first time in five years. Whilst some aspects of the Financial Regulations are bound by legal constraints (**in bold in the model Financial Regulations**), with all other aspects of the Regulations, Councils could adapt the provisions of the document to suit the Council's size, structure and the way it wished to work. The RFO/Deputy Clerk suggested that a working group might undertake this work.

RESOLVED: Cllr Colling and Cllr Wilson with the RFO/Deputy Clerk would form the working group to adapt the new, model Financial Regulations to the needs, priorities, operation and functionality of the Council.

2425 35 Internal Control Checks

- i. Regulation 1.5 of the Parish Council's Financial Regulations says that: "At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices."

RESOLVED: The Finance and Management Committee approved the Parish Council's system of internal controls. This resolution was made with the understanding that internal controls systems are likely to need amendments after the move to Unity Trust bank, and after the review of the Financial Regulations as above.

- ii. **NOTED:** The final internal control check for the Council year 2023-24 had been undertaken by Cllr Liles. There were no significant problems identified. The amount on one payment authorisation form was corrected.
- iii. The Committee considered arrangements for a Member to undertake the Internal Control Checks of this financial year 2024-25.

RESOLVED: Cllr Liles was approved again for this role.

Signed: _____

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2425 36 Banking

i. HSBC

NOTED: Members noted that, since all Members included on the HSBC mandate 2023-24 were, again, elected 2024-25, no amendment was needed to the HSBC bank mandate. Cllr Colling, Cllr Dixon, Cllr Baylin, Cllr Blacka, Cllr Whitelaw and Cllr Wilson could still sign to order payments from the HSBC accounts (2 signatures needed to order a payment).

ii. Unity Trust

RESOLVED: The Committee approved six Councillors to be added to the bank mandates of the pending Unity Trust accounts. These would be the Chair of Council, the Vice Chair of Council, and Committee Chairs:

- Cllr Patricia Colling – Chair of Holme Valley Parish Council – known as “Pat”
- Cllr Thomas William Dixon – Vice Chair of Holme Valley Parish Council and Chair of Staffing – known as “Tom”
- Cllr Lawrence Michael Baylin – Chair of the Service Provision Committee – known as “Lawrence”
- Cllr Doris Mary Blacka – Chair of the Planning Committee – known as “Mary”
- Cllr Melvin Andrew Wilson – Chair of the Finance and Management Committee – known as “Andy”
- Cllr Sarah Ann Whitelaw – Chair of the Climate Action, Communications and Engagement Committee – known as “Sarah”

RESOLVED: The Committee approved the updated letter concerning the business of the Parish Council with the names and roles of those Councillors to be included on the bank mandate, the letter to be signed by mandated Councillors.

2425 37 Financial Records for the website

NOTED: The Committee noted that the financial records for April 2024 and May 2024 had been added to the website.

2425 38 Publicising the work of Holme Valley Parish Council

The Committee considered recent events or news that it wished to publicise via the press, Parish Council website or social media.

RESOLVED: The next grants applications cycle, - September with a closing date of 31 August, - would be advertised on social media.

The meeting closed at 9pm.

Signed: _____