

A meeting of the Finance Working Party was held in the Village Hall, Station Road, Countesthorpe, on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025

Present: Cllrs M Smith, M Gillespie, P Mount, K Pearce, W Read and S Turner.

Parish Council Manager: Miss J Leech

Assistant Parish Council Manager: Miss E Frost

1. Apologies for absence, if any

There were no apologies for absence.

2. To receive disclosures of interest

Cllr M Smith declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 13, the Countesthorpe Herald.

3. To verify accounts for payment

It was recommended to approve the accounts for payment for the Parish Council and the Village Hall.

4. Review budget and expenditure 2024/2025

The budget as at 31<sup>st</sup> January was received and all was in order.

It was noted that investigations regarding the resurfacing of the pathway in the closed churchyard were ongoing and any recommendations put forward by the Estates Working Party would be referred to the Finance Working Party.

It had been reported that an emergency light had failed the recent inspection undertaken by Secom and that a quote for its repair would be chased as a priority. Additionally, for the CCTV system to be serviced earlier than scheduled due to a potential issue with the equipment.

It was noted that a section of flooring in the main hall had become damaged and a quote for its repair had been obtained. This would be referred to the Village Hall Management Committee at its next meeting.

Recommended for approval

*To support the recommendation of the Estates Working Party in deferring the installation of a pergola in the cemetery to allow for necessary remedial works to be undertaken on the chapel as the quotes for replacement bricks and guttering were higher than anticipated. An alternative quotation for the cemetery chapel guttering would also be obtained.*

*To not currently proceed with utilising a designated line to support the card machine in the bar until the new supply had been established and reviewed after a few months.*

*To recommend the purchase temporary flooring to be used for events, groundworks activities etc at a cost of £599.79.*

5. Countesthorpe Village Hall Charity

It was noted that the Countesthorpe Village Hall Charity had transferred monies amounting to £3186.73 to Countesthorpe Parish Council as a grant to be used for works required on the Village Hall. The total sums received had been allocated to an earmarked reserve on the finance software.

6. Review Financial Regulations

Recommended for approval

*To adopt the revised Financial Regulations following their review.*

7. Local Pay Agreement – NJC Consultation

It was noted that an employer's consultation was being carried out ahead of the local pay agreement negotiations. It was further noted that an initial claim from unions for the 2025/26 pay agreement has been received with no update anticipated imminently.

8. To sign the online bank statements and file with bank reconciliations

It was noted that the relevant checks on the online bank statements had been completed by Cllrs M Gillespie and C Ibbotson.

9. To review bank reconciliations and bank statements

It was noted that the bank statements and bank reconciliations for the third quarter, to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025, had been reviewed by Cllr K McGovern.

10. Quotation for Internal Audit Year End 2024/2025

*Recommended for approval*

*To accept the quotation of £745 from Ireland & Company for the internal audit to be completed and to subsequently sign and return the letter of engagement.*

11. To review the Financial Risk Assessment

*Recommended for approval*

*To adopt the revised Financial Risk Assessment following its review.*

*To purchase a personal alarm for the Parish Council Manager to use when taking monies to the bank.*

12. Electrical Grounds Equipment

Additional information regarding the use of electrical equipment had been received from other Parishes as well as warranty information from Kress. It was resolved to further compare costings, servicing requirements and warranty cover of both Stihl and Kress electrical grounds equipment at the next meeting of the Finance Working Party. Also, for the Head Groundsman to contact Mountsorrel Parish Council regarding their use of Stihl electrical equipment.

13. Grant Aid

It was noted that correspondence had been received from The Countesthorpe Herald thanking the Parish Council for the grant of £500 and confirming that it would reapply for a further £500 at a later date.

It was noted also that Methodist Church's Luncheon Club had returned £60.35 from the grant awarded in December 2024 for a Christmas day meal as it had not been used.

14. S106 payment

There was nothing to report.

15. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

16. Matters arising for information purposes

There were no matters arising.

17. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2025.