

Carlton Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Carlton Parish Council Finance Committee on 8th October 2024, held at 7.30pm at Carlton Methodist Church

Present: Cllrs Taylor, Clayton, Land, Lowes, and Quinn.

Attending: H. Phillips – clerk.

1. Election of Chair of Finance Committee

Cllr Taylor was proposed and seconded as elected Chair of the Finance Committee for 2024-25.

Resolved: That Cllr Taylor be the Chair of Carlton Parish Council's Finance Committee for 2024- 2025.

2. Apologies for Absence

All Committee members were present at the meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosures of personal and prejudicial interests received from Councillors on matters to be considered at the meeting.

4. Minutes of Finance Committee Meeting

The Committee received the approved minutes from the Finance Committee meeting held on 10th April 2024 for information only.

5. Terms of Reference

The Committee reviewed and agreed the Finance Committee Terms of Reference.

Recommendation to Council: That the Finance Committee's Terms of Reference be considered for approval.

6. Financial Regulations

The Committee reviewed the Financial Regulations. A discussion was held, and it was felt that a section should be included to cover the annual monetary and frequency thresholds which apply to the Community Grant Funding that is offered by the Parish Council.

Resolved: That the clerk to draft the additional section, add it to the Financial Regulations, and issue to the Finance Committee prior to presenting the document to the Parish Council for consideration at the meeting scheduled on 29th October 2024.

Recommendation to Council: That the updated draft of the Financial Regulations be considered for approval.

7. Financial Risk Assessment Policy

The Committee reviewed the Council's Financial Risk Assessment Policy. A discussion was held, and it was agreed that a paragraph should be added to the 'Banks and Banking' section concerning the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS), pin-

pointing the risk, and the actions required should the present £85,000.00 threshold held with one banking facility is exceeded.

Resolved: That the clerk to draft the additional section, add it to the Financial Risk Assessment document, and issue to the Finance Committee prior to presenting the document to the Parish Council for consideration at the meeting scheduled on 29th October 2024.

Recommendation to Council: That the updated draft version of the Financial Risk Assessment be considered for approval.

8. Accounting Records

- i) The Committee received the Income and Expenditure and Budget Monitoring reports, and Bank Statements and Reconciliation for consideration up to the 30th September 2024.

Resolved: That the accounting records, and statements up to 30th September 2024 be approved.

- ii) The Committee received the External Auditors report of conclusion to the 2023-2024 AGAR.

The clerk explained that notification had been received from the External Auditor of the requirement for more clarity on Section 6 (expenditure), and the Explanation of Variance. The clerk responded that she was away from work and would fulfil their request on the return to work, however on the return to work a further email had arrived noting that the AGAR for 2023-2024 was now closed off.

There was no deadline noted on the initial email; thankfully the External Auditor did not apply any penalty, and raised the general invoice for the cost of the audit, which has been settled.

A discussion was held, and it was felt, as with the External Auditor, that the Explanation of Variance relating to Section 6 had been too in-depth, but were content that there had been no penalty incurred.

The clerk expressed a wish to work closely with the Chair of the Finance Committee to improve the process for the next AGAR submission.

Resolved: That

- i) **the clerk's update be noted; and**
- ii) **the External Auditor's Report and closure be approved.**

- iii) A Cllr raised a point of discussion relating to the preparation, implementation, and completion of the new electricity supply in the Golden Garden. An attempt had been made to dig the trench however it was not possible to complete this due to the amount of bricks and debris situated in the vicinity. A request of a cost was made to a known contractor to have a mini digger and worker/s complete the task. It was discussed by the Committee members and agreed that the work was imperative, especially with the Remembrance Service looming, so should be arranged as soon as possible. The cost of £1350.00 exclusive of VAT was agreed, and for retrospective approval to be considered by the Parish Council at the scheduled meeting on 29th October 2024.

Resolved: That the contractor be engaged to prepare, and back-fill the area within the Golden Garden to permit swift installation of the new electricity supply.

Recommendation to Council: That the approval for the costs of the imperative works be retrospectively given at the meeting scheduled for 29th October 2024, at a cost of £1350.00 (exclusive of VAT).

9. Cemetery

The Committee received a verbal update from the clerk regarding the progression for the cemetery walls repairs.

- The contractor had completed the repairs on the two initially agreed walls, with a handful of replacement bricks still requiring installation. They had managed to re-point behind the three previously noted memorial headstone, without the need to have them removed, stored, and replaced; the family member who attended the Parish Council meeting on 24th September 2024 had been notified of this good news.
- An allotment tenant had reported some trampling of a section of their plot, and damage to a compost bin on site, by the contractor/s. The contractor was notified of this and has completed corrective action to amend the situation.
- A welfare unit is now safely in place at the side of Fairfield Avenue.
- The groundworks contractor had reported that an amount of waste mortar was sitting at the base of the walls that had already been repaired; he was concerned that it would flick up and could cause damage to the memorials when he strimmed the grass edges. The building contractor had been contacted regarding this and has completed a clean-up in that area.
- An interment is due to be held at the cemetery on 10th October 2024; the contractor is aware of this and will vacate the cemetery whilst it takes place.

Resolved: That the clerk's verbal update be noted.

10. Funding and Grants

There were no applications received for Community Funding.

11. Date of next meeting: - Wednesday 6th November 2024 at 7.30pm.