

KIDLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Exeter Hall, Oxford Road, Kidlington, OX5 1AB

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Minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee held at Exeter Hall on Thursday 3 November 2022 at 6.30pm

Present: Cllr David Betts (Chairman), Cllr Neil Prestidge, Cllr David Robey, Cllr David Thurling, Cllr Doug Williamson (for Cllr Street), Cllr Lesley Mclean (for Cllr Graham)

In attendance: Rachel Faulkner – Parish Clerk, Alyson Bateman – Responsible Finance Officer

Present: 1 member of the public

Apologies: Cllr Alison Street, Cllr Ian Middleton, Cllr Alan Graham.

Did not attend: Cllr Katharine Tyson

22/PF046 **Public Participation**

A member of the public spoke to the item regarding grants and suggested that were the Committee to support a grant to the Friends of Stratfield Brake it would be in opposition to the Parish Council's stated position of neutrality.

22/PF047 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 18 August 2022 were approved by the committee and will be signed by Cllr Betts.

Cllr Betts raised two points:

- A reminder that a schedule of Policies and Statutory documents needs to be finalised.
- That the Council's support for Cherwell Collective should be reviewed regularly. It was suggested that this should happen annually or earlier if significant changes occur.

22/PF048 **Finance Reports**

a) **Budget Monitoring report** – Members received the monitoring report for the first 6 months of the year to 30 September and were informed that the position showed a variation of £20k underspend, a similar position to that reported this time last year. Members were informed that the national pay award has now been agreed.

b) **Draft Revenue Budget 2023/24** – The RFO presented a draft budget with an overall increase over the current year of 4.5%. The budget had been reviewed by the Community Committee with no recommended increases or savings.

Cllr Robey said that although he agreed with the Community Committee that the event budget remain the same, he felt it was important that the public knew all areas of the budget had been considered seriously. The committee agreed that the value of the events programme justified the expenditure.

Cllr Prestige asked whether it was appropriate for councillors who are unable to attend meetings to receive the member's allowance. It was confirmed that providing

a member attends a meeting within a 6-month period they are eligible to receive the allowance.

In order to increase the precept by a minimum the committee RECOMMENDS giving the Council an option to keep £8000 from the dividends received from the council's long-term investment to support the revenue budget.

ACTION: RFO to prepare two options showing the options of 4.5% and 3.5% increase to the budget.

c) Capital and Reserves summary

The Community Committee recommended creating an earmarked reserve of £3k for commemorating the King's Coronation in May 2023.

The Community Committee also requested that consideration be given to funding the acquisition of an electric vehicle. Cllr Robey recommended that the existing Environmental and Climate change earmarked Reserve be increased to £40,000 to enable the purchase of a vehicle or similar items of expenditure. Members agreed.

In view of the By-Election which takes place in December this year, the Clerk recommended the Elections reserve be increased by £8,000 to £15,000. Members agreed.

Cllr Betts suggested the creation of an Earmarked Reserve as an inflation contingency, though RFO noted that any overspend which was a result of inflation above that provided for in the Revenue budget would be supported by the General Reserve fund.

**ACTION: Amend Earmarked Reserves:
Create EMR for Coronation £3,000
Increase existing EMR for Environmental and Climate Emergency by £15,000 to £40,000
Increase existing EMR Elections by £8,000 to £15,000**

d) S137 Grant Applications

- a. **Aspire Oxford £400** – Grant approved
- b. **Kidlington Recreation Trust £2,100 Salary grant** – Grant Approved
- c. **33rd Kidlington Scouts supporting attendance at Jamboree** – The Committee felt unable to support this application as it only benefitted two individuals' trip to the Jamboree in Korea. Councillors instead recommended that the offer of in-kind support to the Kidlington Scouts group via free hire of hall for fund raising events.
- d. **Friends of Stratfield Brake** - The Committee felt unable to support this grant on account of the Council's position of neutrality with regard to the future of Stratfield Brake until such time as firm, clear and dependable proposals are presented by OUFC.

22/PF049

Stratfield Brake

Cllr Robey suggested that, in the absence of any further information from the club, the Council should consider distributing a leaflet to Kidlington residents to advise residents of the Council's position regarding the site. Cllr Betts raised concerns regarding the terms of the lease of the land as he understood the proposed capacity of the Stadium may be increased from 18,000 to 30,000 and that there may be an option to sell the freehold although these points require confirmation.

22/PF050

Virtual attendance at meetings.

The committee RECOMMENDS that full meetings of the Council be live-streamed enabling members of the public to watch virtually.

In respect of virtual attendance, it is recommended that

- Members of the public could view but not participate
- Invited speakers could speak to inform meetings
- Councillors may, for medical reasons or in other exceptional circumstances, apply to attend and speak at a Council meeting on line. However, this does not count as formal attendance at the meeting and councillors attending virtually will not be able to vote.

22/PF051

Exeter Close Re-development

Oxfordshire County Council no longer wish to relocate the Library to the site and will not therefore participate in any future development. Previous plans included provision for the library so a revision is required. A local developer has offered to map out an alternative plan to provide for the medical practice, Cherwell Collective and the Parish Council. The Clerk requested up to £1,000 to fund this alternative outline suggestion. It was agreed that this should be brought to the next Council meeting for consideration.

The medical practice is keen to redevelop their premises. It was agreed that in order to take this forward the doctors should be provided with the full Options Appraisal including estimates of the cost of buying out their lease.

22/PF052

Councillor Robey will propose to Council that a work group be set up to review the Cherwell Draft Local Plan 2040. It was also suggested and agreed that Cllr Robey write to Oxford City Council in response to their Local Plan to say that KPC strongly objects to their proposed review of the Green Belt and to any further encroachments on the Green Belt around Kidlington

22/PF053

The meeting closed at 8:20pm. Date of next meeting 15 December 2022.