

HARBERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee of Harberton Parish Council at 7.30pm on Tuesday 1st October 2024 at Harbertonford Village Hall Committee Room

Present: Cllrs Beamish, Camp, Davies, Morris, Williams

Apologies: Cllr Paine

Clerk: Ms Radford

Agenda

1. **Apologies** were received as above and sanctioned.
2. **Minutes** of the meeting of 2nd July 2024 were approved as an accurate record.
3. **Receive and review end of quarter 1 reports**
 - 3.1. 2024/25 end of quarter 2 financial year budget report* Cllrs reviewed the end of quarter budget report and had the opportunity to ask questions and check figures. The Committee raised a query about the grant funded income recorded. It was clarified that this was the Devon Emergency Resilience Fund income for equipment to help parish residents experiencing flooding, now spent in full. It was noted that the second half of the 2024/25 precept had been received. Being halfway through the financial year, most expenditure was currently within budget. The Clerk expected an overspend in the salary overtime budget line and on the budget for Harbertonford Playground Lease, as the Diocese back dated the new lease to include the previous financial year.

On reviewing the earmarked reserves, it had been noted that there had been an admin error in making the grant payment to Harberton Parish Hall. Despite all checks in place, an overpayment of £50 had been made. **It was AGREED** to issue a debit note to Harberton Parish Hall and request this be used in lieu of hall hire costs until expended.
 - 3.2. 2024/25 end of quarter 2 bank reconciliation* Cllrs reviewed the end of quarter 2 bank reconciliation, checking figures that figures on the bank statement and the budget report agreed. All figures were initialled. **It was RESOLVED** to sign the reconciliation and bank statements (signed by Cllr Morris).
4. **Community Benefit Fund Guidelines** *To review the application criteria*
Following discussion it was agreed to remove reference to either a maximum or minimum grant amount but refer to an 'average grant'. This was in order to discourage applicants from applying for the 'maximum amount', but still provide an indication of the levels of grant likely to be awarded through the scheme. It was agreed to encourage applicants to consider match funding, and to use the Community Benefit Fund grants available as match funding for larger funded projects, rather than the sole source of investment.

It was AGREED to recommend the following revision to wording of the Community Benefit Fund guidelines to the Parish Council for adoption:

The Parish Council will be looking to make grants of an average of £500. To exceed this, applications will need to show longevity of the benefits to the community, and where possible, some degree of match funding. The Community Benefit Fund can be used to match fund a larger project. The Community Benefit Fund may choose to pay all, part or none of the amount applied for. Payment of the grants will normally be by bank transfer.

As the fund is finite and now diminishing, applicants should make sure that they've researched the subject of their application thoroughly and have sourced suppliers quotes that offer value for money.

When reviewing applications, The Parish Council will be paying close attention to how projects meet the purpose of the fund, as noted above.

It was AGREED to recommend to the Parish Council that new criteria would come into effect on the next round of applications – i.e. grants applied for on or before 31st December 2024 for consideration in January 2025.

5. Review applications to the Community Benefit Fund and consider grant recommendations (if any)

- 5.1. Totnes Rural Area Youth Engagement (TRAYE) Project: Harberton/Harbertonford Youth Club An application had been made for a grant of £1000 towards a £7000 project to provide an open access youth club for young people aged 8 – 16 years old in the Parish. Match funding has already been provided by TRAYE's core budget, Harberton Parish Council's core budget and community fundraising. The grant requested would support the annual salaries for three professionally trained Youth Workers delivering sessions in the Parish, and to cover the cost of refreshments and other resources provided for free to young people attending sessions. **It was AGREED** to recommend that a grant of £1000 be awarded.
- 5.2. Harbertonford Community Post Office and Store capital improvements An application had been made for a grant of £555 to support a project with an estimated cost of £600+ towards the costs of a new CCTV system, the repair or replacement of a food warmer, and materials required for the creation of new signage. The balance of funding required for the improvements will come from donations and the Post Office and Store's existing limited reserves. **It was AGREED** to recommend that a grant of £555 be awarded.
- 5.3. Any other applications received at deadline
- 5.3.1. St Peter's Church PCC: Repairs to Vestry An application had been made for a grant of £592 to cover the costs of opening up of vestry ceiling for detailed roof inspection to determine the extent of repairs that are needed. A quote has been supplied by a specialist heritage contractor. **It was AGREED** to recommend that a grant of £592 be awarded.

6. Review clerk overtime and holiday tracker 2024/25 Quarter 2 and consider overtime payment requests (if any)

Having run a report on the hours worked in the quarter, the Clerk had completed the quarterly overtime and holiday tracker, showing overtime of 40 hours in quarter 2. Having reviewed a breakdown of the hours and type of work they were associated with, it was noted that the 54.75 hours of the clerk's time in quarter 2 were directly attributable to the Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan. It was noted that this is 42.75 hours greater than the 12 hours per quarter budgeted and similar to the overrun worked in Quarter 1. **It was AGREED** to recommend to the Parish Council to approve the Clerk's overtime request, however the Finance Committee agreed that the amount of time spent by the Clerk on the Neighbourhood Plan was unsustainable.

It was AGREED to recommend to the Parish Council that the overtime of 40 hours, at a cost of £598 be paid to the Clerk in three instalments of £199.33 in October, £199.33 in November and £199.34 in December.

7. Confirmation of next meeting date 7th January 2025