

**WALFORD PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting of Walford Parish Council Finance Committee
on Wednesday 10th November 2010 at 6.30 pm in Bishopswood Village Hall.

Present

Committee members: Cllrs: Cole, Evans, Thomas, Myers.

In attendance – Clerk – Catherine Murray

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Drummond.
2. **Declaration of personal / prejudicial interests – none declared.**
3. **Adoption of minutes of previous meeting – 08/09/10**

RESOLVED: To accept as a true record.

4. **Finance:**

To consider and approve the Finance Statement: Approved with no objections.

A discussion was had about the payment due to HMRC on the Acting Clerk's earnings, Cllr Myers stated that the admin on her end of year was overdue and that the Clerk was sorting this out with the Tax Office.

5. **To discuss and take action on calculating the precept for 2011/12.**

5.1 **To read and discuss the letter received from Herefordshire Council's Treasury Management & Budget Planning department regarding the 2011/12 precept.** Cllr Thomas read out the letter, including the reminder to allow for election expenses and the Clerk said that she had spoken to the Election Expenses office, but that there were no figures available yet. A discussion was had about how much previous elections had cost the Parish.

5.2 **To read and discuss the precept request form.** Date for submission of the Precept request form is Friday 31st December at the very latest. Cllr Thomas read the precept request form from Herefordshire Council and the submission date was noted.

5.3 **To discuss and if appropriate to decide upon the estimated cost for 2011/12 parish election expenses.** Cllr Myers said that due to the current economic climate, pressure might come to reduce the precept, Cllr Cole felt that it should not be reduced. Cllr Myers suggested that as elections were due in 2011, it might be good to leave the precept at its' current level, as projects might come on board, such as the Kerne Bridge canoe launch. In real terms keeping the precept the same would represent an actual decrease, given that an election was due. An appropriate budget figure for elections was estimated at around £3,000, this was agreed upon.

5.4 **To discuss and set a draft budget & recommended precept for 2011/12 for consideration by full council at December meeting.** The precept was discussed, it was asked if it could have been decided for presentation to the full council meeting following this Finance committee meeting, but it was concluded that it was best to have built in time to allow for conclusions to be reached and the precept request put to the full council on December 8th. Documents were discussed relating to the balance of funds in the accounts, what the precept had been set to cover for 2010 / 11, explaining why there was a surplus of funds – due to not continuing to employ the interim clerk at the salary agreed and the new Clerk not taking up post until late May. Cllr Cole asked if any other costs were likely to come down from Herefordshire Council during the next year and Cllr Myers was concerned that the 'big society' concept might have an effect on Parish Councils. Kerne Bridge was mentioned again and Cllr Myers said that he would like WPC to administer the canoe launch site, then Cllr Cole suggested meeting and discussing what needed to be done on site. Cllr Myers and Thomas noted that they were due to compile a list of questions for H.C. <<Action Cllr Myers & Thomas>>. Cllr Thomas concluded that the end of the year A/Cs would show a balance of around £17k of reserves. It had already been agreed to allow £3k for election expenses, leaving £17k for others including at least £10k for the Parish Plan, leaving £7k for

general purposes. If the canoe launch comes on board, WPC will need this level of reserves. Cllr Thomas explained that it was important to have such a level of reserves, in order to carry out any proposed projects. Cllr Evans proposed accepting keeping the precept at its' current level and Cllr Myers seconded. It was RESOLVED to submit an unchanged precept figure of £12,500 to full council for consideration at the December meeting. Cllr Thomas suggested that the Clerk should - for future meetings to consider the yearly budget and to calculate the precept - produce a Finance sheet containing the following categories: Last year & this year's figures and next years' projected figures. The sheet should also have a summary box showing general income and general expenditure, alongside both the Lengthsman's and ROW income and expenditure. <<Action Clerk>>

6. **To authorise the following payments:** Cllr Evans proposed and Cllr Myers seconded the authorisation of payments and it was **RESOLVED** to approve them as follows:
 - 6.1 To pay invoice for the hire of Walford Village Hall.
 - 6.2 To pay invoice for the hire of Bishopswood Village Hall for the 4th quarter.
 - 6.3 To pay balance due to HMRC on previous Clerk's earnings.
 - 6.4 To pay Cllr Vine mileage expenses for attending HALC meeting.
 - 6.5 To pay Clerk - salary for October.
 - 6.6 To pay Clerk - expenses for October.

7. **Proposed change of Bank from Alliance and Leicester to Lloyds TSB.**
 - 7.1 **To discuss and decide upon whether to remain with Santander Bank now that Alliance and Leicester have changed ownership.** The Clerk explained that the only negative aspect of a change to Lloyds TSB at present, was the lack of access to internet banking available to Parish councils. This situation is due to be resolved by Lloyds early in 2011.
 - 7.2 **If appropriate, to discuss the specific action required to move accounts over to Lloyds Bank, in order to generate the necessary mandate forms in time for the December meeting.** It was RESOLVED to stick with current arrangements until internet banking was available. Clerk to keep Finance committee updated. Cllr Myers said that if there is a change of signatories required next May WPC will be glad to have changed banks by that time, given the problems involved with A&L last time there was a change.

8. **To discuss the 6 months notice given and cheque received for hire of the Parish Pound.** The Clerk read out the letter from Carol Whyton, giving notice and showed the committee a copy of the cheque for £25.00 paid into the Parish A/C.

9. **To discuss making a donation to Vitalise Charity for disabled people and carers.** It was decided that this was not the Parish council's remit, as Parish funds should have a local focus, no donation will be made. Cllr Myers suggested creating a page on the website for charitable appeals. <<Action Clerk>>

10. **To make an appraisal of the Clerk, for consideration by full council at the December meeting.** 'Councillors were reminded that the appraisal of the Clerk had become due, the Chairman commented that 'so far so good' was sufficient comment for the public forum and that our unanimous satisfaction with Catherine would be discussed with her in confidential session.

11. **To discuss the schedule of meetings for the Finance committee in 2011.** It was agreed that the Finance committee meetings should take place quarterly, to coincide with the schedule of full council meetings, and be held on a quarterly basis, as in 2010; with the exception of the December meeting, which is required to set the Precept.
