SHORNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 24th October 2024 at Shorne Village Hall

PRESENT Mr R Lane (Chairman)
Mr R Theobald (Vice-Chair)
Mrs S Lindley
Ms P Clifton
Mr J Bugg
Mrs L Williams
Mrs D Salmon (Parish Clerk)

APOLOGIES Mr R Hardy
Mr C Rea

NOT IN ATTENDANCE Mr T Rochard-Pullen

1. To receive any declarations of interest for any items on the agenda:

Cllr Theobald declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 5.3. He advised that he will not enter into the discussions or decision but will be able to answer questions if required.

2. To approve the revised Grants & Donations Policy

A proposed amended policy was circulated to Members on 22nd September to reflect changes in interpretation of legislation. The amended policy was approved and adopted.

3. To review the External Audit Report and any actions arising

The Clerk circulated the external auditor's report on 27th September 2024. It was noted that there were no matters raised that require attention. The Chairman reminded the Council that it is still necessary to aim to reduce our general reserves to meet the JPAG Practitioners' Guide recommendation of a maximum of 12 months net revenue expenditure.

4. Review of 2024/2025 half-yearly expenditure and current balances

The Clerk presented a report on expenditure for the first half of the year. All figures are exclusive of VAT. It was noted that the total precept expenditure for the first six months of the year to 30th September 2024 was £19,940.83. This includes £3,098 for bus shelter lighting, £1,300 on the war memorial, and £2,245 at Crabbles Bottom. The forecast total receipts for this year, excluding VAT reclaims, amount to £48,975.16. This means that the Council has approximately £29,000 of its budget remaining for the second half of the year.

The general working balances as at 30th September, prior to any transfers to long term investments, amounted to £134,325.64.

5. Review of anticipated expenditure and full year estimate for 2024/2025

5.1 General expenditure

It was noted that the annual Local Government pay negotiations have just been settled, and will be backdated to 1st April. The increase and backpay will be paid in November and an estimate of the cost is included in the forecast.

5.2 Approval of provisions for asset renewals and transfer to long term investment

As agreed at the Parish Council meeting 11th April 2024, the balance of £27,354.65 has now been transferred from the Lloyds Crabbles Bottom bank account into the Crabbles Bottom CCLA investment fund.

At the meeting on 11th April 2024 it was also agreed in principle to set up a similar long term investment fund to hold the money set aside for future asset renewals. The Chairman circulated a note on 22nd April 2024 recommending that the sum to be invested in the investment fund should be £16,552.81, subjected to rounding. £4,000.00 of this should be allocated to General Assets Renewals, and £12,552.81 should be allocated to Play Area Assets Renewals. A long-term CCLA investment fund is now in process of being finalised, and it was proposed that this transfer should now be formally approved. This was agreed.

It was also agreed that a further sum of £3,000 is invested each year, with £1,500 allocated to play equipment renewals, £1,000 to car park resurfacing, and £500 to SID renewal. The Clerk will action the investment for 2024/25, and annually thereafter in the first half of the year commencing April 2025.

5.3 Consideration and approval of any grant applications and donations

It is proposed to donate £150 to the church as a contribution towards refreshments at the Civic Service and Remembrance Service. This was agreed. Members discussed donations to Shorne Scouts and Shorne Pop-Up café. A donation of £100 to each organisation was agreed.

A grant application has been received from St Peter & St Paul's Church for £7,820 towards the cost of repair and restoration of the entrance gate piers and hinge pintles. It was noted that Robin Theobald is fabricating the new gates at his own expense. Whist the Parish Council does not normally contribute towards the general maintenance of the church, and this is a higher amount than would normally be considered, this project was considered to be beneficial to the parish and to its inhabitants in general, irrespective of their religious beliefs. Members discussed the application and the breakdown of costs provided. The application was approved by a show of hands. Mr Theobald did not enter into discussions or vote as per item 1 above.

5.4 Other expenditure proposals for 2024/25 for approval

In the 2024/25 budget, the Council set aside £14,500 for unspecified capital expenditure. To date, £3,098 has been spent on bus shelter lighting and £1,300 on war memorial restoration, a total of £4,398. It has been agreed to replace the vandalised noticeboard at a cost of £670. Discussions have taken place with KCC regarding a further HGV ANPR survey and enhanced signage in Green Farm Lane, and KCC has offered to carry out a 7-day ANPR survey if the Parish Council meets half the £4,570 cost, ie £2,285. This was agreed.

Cllr Rea has had preliminary discussions with a Gravesham Borough Council officer regarding a possible contribution from Shorne Parish Council towards the cost of installing refurbished adult gym equipment in Michael Gardens. The amount and timing have not been ascertained, but it was agreed to include £5,000 in this year's forecast and £5,000 in next year's budget towards this proposal.

Members carried out a line-by-line review of other expenditure that is likely to be incurred before the end of this financial year. See attached schedule.

5.5 Forecast end of year balances

Excluding the one-off transfers to long term investments, but including the £3,000 annual provision for future asset renewals and £5,000 towards the cost of adult gym equipment, it is forecast that the total expenditure for this year will be approximately £51,901.77 excluding VAT. Excluding VAT reclaims, total receipts of around £48,975.16 are expected this year, leaving a forecast potential deficit of £2,926.61 to be funded from reserves.

Taking into account the above, plus the one-off transfers of £27,354.65 into the Crabbles Bottom long-term investment fund and £16,552.81 into the Asset Renewals long-term investment fund, the end of year working balances are forecast to be approximately **£58,457.24**.

6. Consideration of long-term expenditure:

Members discussed possible long-term projects or expenditure to be considered for the future.

7. Consideration of one-off major expenditure items for 2025/2026

£5,000 has been included in this year's forecast towards the cost of adult gym equipment with a further £5,000 to be included in the 2025/26 budget. If there is no expenditure on the adult gym equipment during this year, the provision will be carried over into 2025/26. It was also agreed to budget £4,000 towards the estimated cost of accessibility ramps in Manor Field and a further £3,000 towards other Parish maintenance expenditure.

8. Setting of budget for 2025/2026:

Taking into account known expenditure, including Crabbles Bottom, estimated inflationary increases, the £3,000 annual investment for future assets renewals, and planned capital expenditure, it was agreed to set a budget of **£50,187.00** for 2025/26. See attached schedule.

9. Setting of annual precept for 2025/2026:

Receipts from Crabbles Bottom CCLA distributions during 2025/26 are expected to be approximately £5,000. The budgeted expenditure for 2025/26 is £50,187.00

Taking account of the expected CCLA distributions and budgeted expenditure, it was agreed to recommend a precept requirement of **£46,000** for 2025/26. This represents an increase of 3% on the 2024/25 precept of £44,660, which was a reduction on the previous year.

10. Approval of Internal Auditor:

After a clean Internal and External Audit this year, it was agreed to proceed with Martin Fielder-White again in April 2025. Clerk to contact Mr Fielder-White.

11. To approve and adopt the Lorry Watch policy

This was circulated on 6th October for review and on 15th October for approval. The policy was approved and adopted.

12. To approve Meetings programme for 2025:

The Clerk circulated the Meetings programme for 2025 on 19th October. Members discussed the dates and these were approved with a minor correction, The Clerk to re-circulate with finalised dates. Ms Clifton will arrange for the programme to be posted on the noticeboards after the last meeting of 2024 in November, and the Clerk will publish the programme on the website. The Clerk will contact the village hall to confirm bookings.

13. Any matters arising from Committees and Members:

Members discussed the new formula for calculating hourly rates as adopted by NALC, and how this affects the salary of part-time employees. It was agreed to bring forward the Clerk's annual incremental review date by 2 months to help offset this.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:56pm.

Signed Mr Lane:…….. Dated:……..

RECEIPTS	2024/25 Budget	30/09/24 YTD	Oct-Mar Forecast	Full Year Forecast		2025/26 Budget
Precept		£44,660.00	£0.00	£44,660.00		£46,000.00
CCLA distributions		£2,014.11	£2,300.00	£4,314.11		£5,000.00
Grants received		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00
Peppercorn rents		£0.00	£1.05	£1.05		£1.05
Other income		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		
Total receipts excluding VAT reclaims		**£46,674.11**	**£2,301.05**	**£48,975.16**		**£51,001.05**
EXPENDITURE	**Budgeted**	**At 30/09/24**	**Oct-Mar Est**	**Total Est**		**Budget 25/26**
Clerk's Salary Gross (incl Er NI & Pension)	£13,500.00	£5,967.00	£6,559.80	£12,526.80		£14,000.00
Clerk Allowances	£312.00	£156.00	£156.00	£312.00		£312.00
Contribution to Clerk's IT equipment	£300.00	£150.00	£150.00	£300.00		£300.00
Courses for Clerk & Conf. Fees	£500.00	£450.00	£0.00	£450.00		£150.00
Cllrs Expenses and Cllrs/Clerks Travel	£100.00	£0.00	£50.00	£50.00		£100.00
Payroll Costs	£250.00	£131.22	£131.22	£262.44		£290.00
Scribe	£408.00	£0.00	£408.00	£408.00		£410.00
External Audit Mazars	£325.00	£0.00	£325.00	£325.00		£350.00
Civic Expenses & Flowers	£100.00	£0.00	£150.00	£150.00		£150.00
Data Protection ICO	£35.00	£35.00	£0.00	£35.00		£35.00
Hire of Hall and Room	£350.00	£157.00	£402.00	£559.00		£650.00
Insurance	£650.00	£636.67	£0.00	£636.67		£700.00
Internal Audit (Martin Fielder White)	£90.00	£90.00	£0.00	£90.00		£100.00
Legal Fees	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00
Office, Stationery & Postage	£80.00	£56.02	£23.98	£80.00		£100.00
one.com e-mail domain	£250.00	£239.35	£0.00	£239.35		£250.00
Printing Parish Report	£1,100.00	£974.00	£0.00	£974.00		£1,050.00
Publications (Council Books)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00

Initals

Refreshments Parish Assembly/Christmas	£200.00	£254.48	£150.00	£404.48		£400.00
Subscriptions Open Space, SLCC, KALC, CPRE	£1,200.00	£968.39	£195.00	£1,163.39		£1,200.00
Tel/Broadband	£120.00	£59.94	£59.94	£119.88		£180.00
Website	£250.00	£0.00	£250.00	£250.00		£250.00
Grants/Donations	£1,500.00	£100.00	£8,020.00	£8,120.00		£2,500.00
Church Clock	£250.00	£185.00	£0.00	£185.00		£200.00
Lower Thames Crossing	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00
British Legion - Wreath	£40.00	£0.00	£40.00	£40.00		£40.00
Election fees	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00
Subtotal General Expenditure	**£21,910.00**	**£10,610.07**	**£17,070.94**	**£27,681.01**		**£23,717.00**
Planning & Highways	**£2,500.00**					
Public Consultation	0	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		
Signage on Roads	0	£43.69	£150.00	£193.69		
Traffic Monitoring Green Farm Lane	0	£0.00	£2,285.00	£2,285.00		
Other	0	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		
Subtotal Planning & Highways	**£2,500.00**	**£43.69**	**£2,435.00**	**£2,478.69**		**£2,500.00**
Footpaths, Land & Properties						
Village Car Park	£180.00	£90.00	£150.00	£240.00		£250.00
Defibrillators	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		£75.00
SIDs (speed indicator devices)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00
CCTV	£0.00	£0.00	£500.00	£500.00		£0.00
Noticeboards	£0.00	£0.00	£670.00	£670.00		£500.00
Verges	£575.00	£575.00	£0.00	£575.00		£600.00
Footpaths	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00
Children's Play Equipment	£0.00	£92.84	£0.00	£92.84		£200.00

Initals

Annual Tree Survey	£295.00	£0.00	£295.00	£295.00		£395.00
Shorne Common - trees	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		£750.00
Shorne Common - other	£0.00	£221.23	£0.00	£221.23		£0.00
Shorne Rec - trees	£600.00	£0.00	£875.00	£875.00		£750.00
Shorne Rec - other	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00
Shorne Common Rough - trees	£0.00	£1,500.00	£750.00	£2,250.00		£1,000.00
Shorne Common Rough - other	£0.00	£165.00	£0.00	£165.00		£0.00
Miscellaneous General Maintenance	£500.00	£0.00	£280.00	£280.00		£500.00
Subtotal	**£2,150.00**	**£2,644.07**	**£3,520.00**	**£6,164.07**		**£5,020.00**
Crabbles Bottom:						
Footpaths, Meadow & Bridleway	£3,000.00	£1,945.00	£905.00	£2,850.00		£2,850.00
Other (branch removals, bramble removal, etc)	£0.00	£300.00	£0.00	£300.00		£1,000.00
Fencing	£1,000.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00
Other (Signage, sundry items)	£500.00		£30.00	£30.00		£100.00
Total Crabbles Bottom	**£4,500.00**	**£2,245.00**	**£935.00**	**£3,180.00**		**£3,950.00**
Subtotal Footpaths, Land & Properties	**£6,650.00**	**£4,889.07**	**£4,455.00**	**£9,344.07**		**£8,970.00**
Capital Renewals Funds (see below)	**£3,000.00**					
Car Park remedial fund provision	£1,000.00	£0.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00		£1,000.00
SID	£500.00	£0.00	£500.00	£500.00		£500.00
Play Area	£1,500.00	£0.00	£1,500.00	£1,500.00		£1,500.00
CCTV Maintenance	£300.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		
Defibrillator AED	£200.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		
Speedwatch	£100.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		
Subtotal Repairs & Renewals Funds	**£3,600.00**	**£0.00**	**£3,000.00**	**£3,000.00**		**£3,000.00**
SUBTOTAL		**£15,542.83**	**£26,960.94**	**£42,503.77**		**£38,187.00**

Initals

Capital Projects						
Unspecified Capital Expenditure	**£14,500.00**					
Bus Shelter Lighting		£3,098.00	£0.00	£3,098.00		
War Memorial Restoration		£1,300.00	£0.00	£1,300.00		
Adult Gym Equipment - Michaels Gardens		£0.00	£5,000.00	£5,000.00		£5,000.00
Lowered Kerbs Manor Field						£4,000.00
Other Parish expenditure						£3,000.00
Subtotal Capital Projects	**£14,500.00**	**£4,398.00**	**£5,000.00**	**£9,398.00**		**£12,000.00**
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		**£19,940.83**	**£31,960.94**	**£51,901.77**		**£50,187.00**
2024/25 Precept Request	**£44,660.00**			**£44,660.00**		**£46,000.00**
Other Receipts (excluding VAT reclaims)				**£4,315.16**		**£5,001.05**
Total Receipts				**£48,975.16**		**£51,001.05**
Surplus/Deficit from reserve balances				**-£2,926.61**		**£814.05**

BANK BALANCES	
Barclays Everyday	£28,124.51
Barclays Precept	£60,438.67
Barclays Reserve	£45,762.46
TOTAL AS AT 30.09.24	**£134,325.64**
Forecast expenditure 01/10/24 to 31/03/25	-£31,960.94
Transfer to CCLA Crabbles Bottom Fund	-£27,354.65
Transfer to CCLA Assets Renewals Fund	-£16,552.81
FORECAST END OF YEAR TOTAL	**£58,457.24**

LONG TERM INVESTMENTS			
	Crabbles Bottom	**Asset Renewals**	**Totals**
TOTALS AS AT 30.09.24	**£75,575.76**	**£0.00**	**£75,575.76**
Annual Provision	£0.00	£3,000.00	£3,000.00
Transfer from bank	£27,354.65	£0.00	£27,354.65
Transfer from bank	£0.00	£16,552.81	£16,552.81
FORECAST END OF YEAR	**£102,930.41**	**£19,552.81**	**£122,483.22**

Please note this spreadsheet does **not show VAT** reclaim or expenditure.

Initals