

WATERINGBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting Tuesday

15th November 2022 7.30pm

Wateringbury Village Hall

Present:

Cllr P Gregson (Chairman)
Cllr M Wells (Vice Chairman)
Cllr F Fielding
Cllr G Owen

In attendance:

Mrs S J Cockburn – Clerk to the Council
Mrs C Byron – Rostrum Correspondent
Mr D Merry – Speedwatch Co-ordinator
0 members of the public

1 Apologies for absence – Cllr Tripp Cllr Simons

2 Declarations of Interest/Dispensations – none

3 National Salary Award 2022-2023

Agreement had been reached on the rates of pay applicable from 1st April 2022. After discussion a 10% increase was agreed on the Clerk's salary backdated to 1 April 2022. The increase was proposed by Cllr Owen and seconded by Cllr Wells All Councillors agreed

4 Draft Budget 2023/2024

Administration

Salaries – Village Warden's salary adjusted to account for increase in minimum wage to £10.50 per hour from April 2023

A request for additional funds for the Guides & Scouts to support local children attending Wateringbury uniformed groups. After discussion it was agreed £300 available in the donations budget be added to the £500, making a total of £800, to be donated in 2023. The £300 would be a one off payment.

Donations: budget – £2000

Scouts & Guides – £800
Wateringbury WI – £300
Crossroads Care – £300
Royal British Legion – £200
Citizens Advice North & West Kent – £100
Heart of Kent Hospice – £100
Kent & Surrey Air Ambulance – £100
Marie Curie Nurses – £100

General Purposes

Ground maintenance on-the-whole remains same as last year. However, Terry Smith would not be cutting the village hall grass from 2023. James Woolley had been asked if he would add this to his contract – awaiting confirmation.

Allotments – Council discussed increasing the rental for the allotments which had remained at £20 for many years. Allotments are different in size and it was agreed they should be classed as Small £30, Medium £35 & Large £40. Cllr Owen proposed the new charges and this was seconded by Cllr Fielding. Council will instruct the Clerk to contact all allotment holders by March of 2023.

There was a short discussion on recent problems experienced by the tenant at Drayhorse Meadow. One issue was since the gates to the car park had been left unlocked some people had climbed over the inner fence causing damage and gaining access to the horses. Some items, like electric fencing, had been moved. It was stated the Council did not want to lose the rental income of £6252 per year. The CCTV camera would be used to monitor the car park.

Cemetery

Ground Maintenance and church grass charges remain the same as last year. It would be three years in January 2023 since the cemetery fees had been increased. After discussion it was agreed as from 1st January 2023 the fee to erect a headstone would remain at £350 but a new fee for headstone and edging/surround would be £450. All councillors agreed

Street Lighting/Highways

David Merry had produced a spreadsheet of costs involved in Auto Speedwatch equipment and accessories. After discussion it was agreed if the Council went for this scheme costs would come out of the traffic calming budget. Councillors thanked Mr Merry and for the work carried out by him and the Speedwatch team.

5 Clerk Vacancy

The Chairman stated there had been a number of applications since the advertisement was placed on the KALC website. Together with Cllr Fielding & Cllr Owen interviews took place. It was felt one candidate, Steve Hill, would fulfil the role. The Chairman put to councillors a salary of £17.58 per hour plus £40 per month working from home allowance should be offered.

After a six month trial an increase in the hourly rate could be considered. Cllr Fielding proposed acceptance and this was seconded by Cllr Owen. It was agreed the Chairman ask the applicant for two references before a contract is drawn up.

6 Any other business of finance

Cllr Wells would be attending the KALC AGM on the 19th November and asked about the £5 charge for lunch. It was confirmed an invoice had been received and the Council would settle it.

Cheque for £830 payable to Rocks Road Brickwork & Building Contractors for repairs to village hall wall was presented and signed.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at approximately 8.30pm