WARNDON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance Committee on 16th November 2020

Virtual meeting using Microsoft Teams, commenced 7.00 p.m.

Present: Cllrs. D Carney (Chair), A Cross, L Hodgson, and R Norfolk

In attendance: Clerk

1. **Apologies:** none

2. **Declarations of Interest:** none disclosed

3. **The minutes of the previous meeting on 18th May 2020** were approved, proposed by Cllr. Carney, seconded by Cllr. Norfolk and all present agreed.

4. **Internal Audit Arrangements 2020/21**
   The Internal Auditor, DKE Audit Services, had provided a schedule of Internal Control Objectives and related control questions, which would form the basis of his audit work and inform his assessment for the completion of AGAR Part 3. This was received and noted. It was also noted that the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions meant that the Auditor was unable to meet face to face with the Clerk at the present time and would instead examine information on the Parish Council website, ask the Clerk to provide scanned copies of relevant information and meet virtually if necessary. A face to face meeting was scheduled for 3rd February 2021.

5. **Budget 2020/21**
   Parish Councillors reviewed the budget spreadsheet for 2020/21, which had been updated by the Clerk to show actual expenditure and income at 29th October 2020 and the Clerk's and Portfolio holders' predicted out-turn at the end of the year. The following actions and recommendations were agreed:
   - Carry-forward projects, which have not been completed due to COVID-19 restrictions, into 2021/22 - Table Tennis Tables £2,000, Recycle Initiative £2,000 (it may be possible to spend part during 2020/21), Street Signs £2,500
   - Speed reduction / Gates – the work on the new footpath on Plantation Drive is now complete so it should be possible to have the white gates installed by the end of the financial year. The Clerk and Cllr. Norfolk will follow up with relevant parties.
   - Election Expenses – the budget of £1,000 is unspent, accrue at the end of the year and continue with annual accrual of £1,000.
   - Play Areas – the budget of £1,000 is unspent, partly due to COVID-19 restrictions, accrue if unspent at the year-end and continue with annual accrual of £1,000. Cllr. Norfolk has written to the County Council to explore the options for repairing the play area off Hastings Drive and behind Brecon Avenue ('The Astroturf') but they would need to resolve the issue of unadopted land first (owned by Persimmon).

- Village Fete – budget to include Community Engagement activities.

6. Budget 2021/22

Parish Councillors reviewed the budget position for 2021/22, noting that: budget headings include an estimate for inflation and information provided by Portfolio holders, where appropriate; staffing salaries would be subject to the outcome of the Clerk's pay review and Full Council approval.

Budget provision was agreed for the following projects

- Annual contribution of £1,000 towards installation of white speed reduction gates, one set per year until complete
- Benches £1,000
- Street Signs £2,500 (carried-forward)
- Display Boards £2,500
- Table Tennis Tables £2,000 (carried-forward)
- Heritage Trail development, including physical signs along the route £500. It was noted that the Heritage Trail narrative was almost complete and suggested that the website development aspect could be brought forward, using unspent funds in the Website budget 2020/21
- Charity Donations £1,500
- 'Sense of Place' project £1,000
- Recycle Initiative £2,000 (carried-forward)

Allotment charges 2021/22 – Cllr. Carney committed to reviewing Worcester City Council's allotment charges and policies, to inform the level of next year's fees.

The Finance Committee considered there should be no increase to the precept for 2021/22 and noted that balances remain in line with the Parish Council's policy on reserves.

It was agreed to recommend to Full Council for approval on 7th December 2020, a budget for 2021/22 of £20,328 deficit and standstill precept of £109,588.

It was resolved to close the meeting to the public due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted relating to staff salaries.

The Clerk left the meeting at 8.15 p.m.

7. Staffing budget 2021/22

It was noted that the Clerk's pay and working hours were subject to review and the staffing budget 2021/22 may need to be updated as a result. It was agreed to recommend that Full Council discuss this in confidential session at their next meeting.

8. Date of next meeting – to be decided

The meeting closed at 8.30 p.m.

Signed …… Date ……

Chairman