

Elsenham Parish Council
Finance Committee Meeting
held on 29 November 2022
at 1.00pm in The Memorial Hall, Elsenham.

Present:

Mr. P Johnson (Chairman PJ), Mrs. F Lambert (FL), Dr. G Mott (GM),
Mr. B Ogilvie (BO) and Mrs. L Johnson (Parish Clerk LJ).

Members of the public:

None.

Minutes

1. Apologies for absence. None.

2. Declarations of Interest. None.

3. Signing of the minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2022 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

4. Budgets for 2023/2024.

4.1. The budgets were reviewed.

The quote to install a light in Leigh Way had still not been received. A costing was also required from Honours for the price to dig a trench for the electric cables.

LJ to arrange for 2 further electrical quotes and ask Honours for an additional price for the trench. Once the full price required for the path with a light was established, the Finance Committee could look at where the funding could be taken from.

A pay rise for the Parish Clerk had been agreed by NALC National Salary awards. The pay rise is to be back dated from 1 April 2022. A proposal will be put to Full Council that the Financial Committee recommend that this is actioned.

This will increase the predicted amount on the salary budget 4001 to £19,840 plus the budget for 2023/24 will need to be increased to £40,000.

4.2. An EMR of £1,000 for Parish Clerk's Office had been added. An office for the Parish Clerk may be required in the future.

4.3. It was agreed that a budget for a Neighbourhood Plan would not be required.

5. Councillors Expenses and Allowances.

Councillors can only claim expenses for travel and subsistence, not for paper and ink. However, the District Council's Independent Remuneration Panel also sits as a Parish Remuneration Panel (PRP). The Regulations allow town and parish councils to pay their members a Parish Basic Allowance and Travel and Subsistence Allowances. The basic

allowance can be paid to the Chairman of the town or parish council only or to all elected members.

LJ had asked UDC for the copy of the recommended basic parish councillors' allowances for 2022/23. The answer from Ben Ferguson at UDC was very unhelpful, PJ is to phone Ben Ferguson at UDC for more information.

Cllr. Ray Franklin had put in a claim for the reimbursement of an ink cartridge. LJ to inform him that EPC cannot pay this.

It was agreed to put the following proposal at the December's Parish Council meeting. Proposal, do Parish Councillors agree, in principle, that they should be given an allowance?

If the vote is yes, then the following question will be asked.

Proposal, subject to any constraints from the District Council's Independent Remuneration Panel, how much should the allowance for Parish Councillors be.

If an allowance is given, councillors can opt out by writing to the Parish Clerk advising her that they do not wish to take part.

As with any income the allowance should be declared to the Inland Revenue.

The allowance would be paid monthly.

6. Grass Cutting Contract

It was agreed to go for a one-year contract and not the usual three-year.

This would stop the requirement of going through the Contract Finder. Plus, the elections in May 2023 may bring new councillors with new ideas of how they would like to go forward.

The meeting closed at 3.00pm.