

NORTH CLAINES PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Finance committee of the Parish Council of North Claines, held on Thursday 18th November 2024 at 11am in The Old Library Centre, Droitwich.

Present

Meg Farmer

Jean Robb via facetime

Sean Challoner

Peter Morgan

Clare Shinner

- 1. To receive apologies for absence and to approve reasons for absence.**
Jean was unwell so attended over facetime
- 2. Declarations of Interest**
 - a) Register of interests; Councillors are reminded of the need to update their register of interests.
 - b) To declare any other Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature.
 - c) To declare any Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda and their nature.
 - d) Written requests for the council to grant a dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) are to be with the clerk at least four clear days prior to a meeting. Councillors who have declared an interest must leave the room for the relevant items as per the code of conduct and the North Claines Parish Council standing orders. Failure to register or declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest may be a criminal offence.
Cllr JR noted that she used Top Cut Mowing and therefore had an interest in items regarding them.
- 3 Minutes from the last meeting of the Finance Committee of North Claines Parish Council.**
 - 3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July, 2024. These were confirmed and signed as a correct record.
- 4 Review of accounts and expenditure to date**

A random selection of invoices was examined, and the reconciliation was checked against bank statements and signed by Cllr PM as correct.
- 5 External Audit**

It was noted that the external audit had been completed and was advertised accordingly on the website.
There had been an error on the form where the Trust Fund status was not ticked. The Parish Council are the sole trustee for North Claines Community Charity and the external auditor had asked the Clerk to clarify this.
It was also noted that the Council had approved that Gill Lunghey would act as their internal auditor for 2024-25 and the Clerk had arranged a meeting in January to this effect.
- 6 Budget**

The budget was examined, and the finance committee expressed their wish to keep the precept request the same as 2024-5. The approved budget is attached and is to be submitted at the next Parish Council meeting for approval. This budget allows for

the Council to contract the services of a handyman 1 day a month. It is hoped that this will reduce some of the "other" items of maintenance expenditure. It was noted that the Council will need to examine their finances regularly to ensure that budget allocations are not exceeded.

7 Play area

It was noted that the play area needed repair, and a quote had been received by P D Hughes to update individual items on the Playground.

It was noted that the Council has asked for this company to quote as they are used by Wychavon for playground maintenance.

The Council examined each item and agreed that all the repairs were necessary except for the servicing of the cone bottom bearing and the replacement of the cradle swings. The cost would come out of the budget allocation of £10,000 for new playground items from 2024-25 and it was anticipated the work would be done promptly.

8 Restricted funds

It was agreed that restricted funds should be set up as follows.

2024-25

£10,000 towards play equipment replacement

£5000 towards tree maintenance

£5,000 towards lighting repairs (PAT testing)

And money remaining in the planning budget allocation at the end of March 2024 to be restricted for planning use.

9 Risks

Cllr JR is updating the risk register and notes there have been no reported playground accidents this year.

10 Website

It was noted that the website could do with an overhaul or replacement. All Councillors are to send a wish list of items they think need improving and Clerk will contact AI Media to see if they can update the current website to this standard.

11 To agree the date of the next Committee meeting.

The next finance committee meeting will be held after the third quarter of the financial year in January 2024.

The meeting was closed at 13.00 hours.