



Maresfield Parish Council

REPRESENTING THE VILLAGES OF MARESFIELD, NUTLEY & FAIRWARP

Minutes of the Finance & Administration Committee meeting held on Tuesday 12th April 2022 at 7.30pm in the Parish Office, Nutley

Present: Cllr Martin Craddock (Chair), Cllr David Watson, Cllr Trevor Lewin and
Mrs Claire Goossens (Clerk)

1. **Public Session.** None.
2. **Apologies for absence.** Cllr Dr Birgit Smith.
3. **Declarations of interest.** Cllr Watson – Member of Nutley Bowls Club.
4. **Adoption of the minutes of the Meeting held on 7th November 2021.** It was unanimously **Agreed** to **Adopt** the minutes as circulated with the meeting papers.
5. **Review of month 8/9/10/11/12 2021/22 Receipts and Payments and Bank Reconciliation.**
The following points were noted:
 - Nothing untoward in the month 12 payments
 - Most notable amounts were Nutley Bowls Club grant and Simon Young emergency tree works at Parklands Play Area.
6. **Review of the expenditure reports for the year 2021/22.** Reviewed and noted.
It was noted the £25,000 bond with Cambridge and Counties will mature on 19th April 2022 and the £25,000 bond with Hodge Bank will mature on 5th May 2022.
Cambridge and Counties is offering 1 Year Fixed Rate Bond paying 1.65% APR and Hodge Bank is offering 1 Year Fixed Rate Bond paying 1.50%.
It was unanimously **Agreed** to recommend to Council that it reinvest the £25,000 into each bank for one year and add a further £10,000 to each bank i.e., £35,000 at Hodge Bank and £35,000 at Cambridge and Counties for 1 year. **ACTION:** Clerk add to Council Agenda.
ACTION: Clerk to ascertain whether it is possible to open an instant access account with Cambridge and Counties with 0.5% interest rate.
ACTION: Clerk to set up a new budget code "Long Term Investment" on RBS under "Projects".
7. **Grants/Donations:**
 - i. **Grant request from Maresfield Woodlands Trust.**
It was noted that the original application for £500 had not arrived at the Parish Office in time for consideration at the October 2021 meeting due to insufficient postage.
The Chairman proposed a grant of £350 be awarded, this was seconded by Cllr Lewin and **Agreed** unanimously. **ACTION:** Clerk to arrange payment in May.
8. **Resignation of Clerk – review staffing requirements and recruitment of replacement.**
The following points were noted:
 - Having consulted Trevor Leggo at ESALC, there are two options open to MPC i.e., the Clerk's position can be advertised (ESALC are able to assist with the recruitment process) and the Assistant Clerk can apply for the position, or the Assistant Clerk can be promoted, and her current role advertised.
 - The Assistant Clerk has reservations regarding taking on the Responsible Financial Officer role, but Trevor Leggo confirmed it is permissible for the RFO element to be outsourced to a third party. This is a service our previous internal auditor, Mulberry and Co (Andy Beams), can offer at a rate of £35 per hour + VAT plus travel expenses.
 - If promoted, the Asst Clerk would not begin at the same level as the current Clerk due to having less responsibility and less experience.
 - It may be that the Asst Clerk's salary needs to be increased with a view to attracting applicants of an appropriate calibre.
 - It was considered that two part time roles of 20 hours each would be sufficient with the RFO element removed from the Clerk's job description.
 - Applicants should be able to use Excel, Word, Adobe and WordPress.



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The Chairman proposed the Committee recommend to Council that Nancy O'Hanlon be promoted to the position of Clerk with the job content modified to remove the element of RFO which will be contracted out. ESALC to be engaged at the cost of £400+VAT to assist in the recruitment of an Assistant Clerk. Staffing levels to continue at two part time roles each of 20 hours per week. **ACTION:** Clerk add to Council Agenda.

9. **GDPR update.** None.
10. **Matters arising from the meeting for public communication.** Chairman's newsletter in Parish Magazines to advertise staffing requirement following Clerk's resignation. Annual Assembly – local groups to do pop up displays. **ACTION:** Asst Clerk.
11. **Correspondence.** Noted letter of thanks from Nutley Bowls Club.
12. **Date of next meeting – Tuesday 7th June 2022.** (If required).

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20.42.