

Shincliffe Parish Council

Chair of the Committee:

Cllr Stephen Ashfield
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Acting Clerk:

Richard Ormerod
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Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance Committee of Shincliffe Parish Council held on Tuesday 7 September 2021 at 6pm in St Mary's Church Hall, Shincliffe Village

1	Record of attendance: <i>Councillor Stephen Ashfield (in the Chair), Councillor Michael Banks, Councillor Lizzie Pexton & Councillor Christine Warburton.</i> Also present: Richard Ormerod (Interim Clerk).
2	Apologies for absence: None
3	Declarations of interest and dispensation requests: <i>The Clerk declared an interest in Item 10. Cllr M Banks declared an interest in Item 8 as Lay Vice-Chair of the Parochial Church Council.</i>
4	AAP grant applications: A discussion took place. <i>It was agreed to refer the matter to full council.</i>
5	Review of financial regulations: A discussion took place about changes that will be needed in the near future.
6	Moving to online banking and payment card: <i>It was agreed to recommend to Council that the council obtain a £250 "payment card" so that members are not put in the position of having to purchase items with their own funds and then claim back the money.</i> <i>It was agreed that to recommend to Council that online banking be used with HSBC in order to cut the expense involved in posting cheques.</i> <i>It was agreed that Cllrs Banks, Pexton and the Clerk arrange a meeting with HSBC to discuss how best to arrange finances for the convenience of the council.</i>
7	Accounting software: Members examined products designed for parish and town council from three providers. <i>It was agreed to recommend to council that Scribe be the provider of accounting software to the parish council.</i>
8	Update on budget and financial position: Members were presented with the current budget figures. There was a feeling that they showed a healthy financial position at the mid-point of the financial

	year. A discussion took place on the horticulture budget. <i>It was agreed to recommend to council a virement of the footpaths and garden budgets into the horticulture budget, as all are essentially treated as one now.</i> A discussion took place on the use of the “Other” category in the budget which is used for miscellaneous items. Members were concerned that large amounts of spending are going into this category. <i>It was agreed that the Chairman of the committee and the Clerk meet to go through the items included with a view to introducing more specific budget categories for next year.</i> A discussion took place on whether there was a need for the sensory garden budget heading. A discussion took place on whether there was a tree survey due this year. It was agreed that the Clerk investigate this. A discussion took place on what to pay Durham County Council for the service level agreement for maintenance of the play park. A discussion took place on an appropriate annual fee to pay St Mary’s Church for a service level agreement that would allow the parish council unlimited use of the church hall when not in use for other purposes. <i>It was agreed that £320 would be the appropriate figure to offer.</i>
9	VAT returns: <i>It was agreed that the Clerk and Chairman organise reclaiming of VAT for 2020-21 as a priority, with assistance from the former Clerk if needed.</i>
10	New Clerk: The Interim Clerk declared an interest and left the meeting. It was agreed in principle that the council should provide a pension contribution to the permanent Clerk when appointed, and also assess whether the Clerk should be employed for more than the current 12 hours per week. It may be necessary to amend the council’s financial regulations to take account of changes. It was agreed to pay overtime to the Interim Clerk if their hours worked continue to go above 12 per week.
11	Financial implications of the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee: A discussion took place.
12	Other business (please notify the Chair beforehand): There was none.
13	Date and time of next meeting: 9 November 2021 at 6pm.