

PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 28 JANUARY 2021

PRESENT: Cllr Mrs J Tomblin (Chairman), Cllr Mrs S Cameron, Cllr Mrs P Chester-Master, Cllr Mrs R Freyne, Cllr N Price and Cllr A Stone.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr Mike Every and Mrs C Braidwood (Clerk)

1. Apologies and Reasons for Absence – Cllr Shaun Parsons

2. Declarations of Interest & Code of Conduct

2.1 To Receive Member's Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda - None

2.2 To Receive Updates to Members' Register of Interests - None

3. Minutes from Previous Meetings

3.1 Acceptance and signing of the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 14 January 2021

RESOLUTION 5/21

The Minutes were unanimously agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chairman

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes - None

5. Feedback from the Meeting with Representatives of the Village Hall Committee

The Chairman reported that she, Cllr Price, Mrs C Sutton and Mr I Jones had attended the meeting to address the Council's request to the Village Hall Committee for assistance with repaying the PWL. Mr Jones and Mrs Sutton wanted to know how the Council had arrived in its current financial position, queried the Clerk's salary, contribution to work on the Church lime trees and annual donation to the Churchyard grasscutting. They were also concerned that if the Committee made a contribution then they would need to explain to the Village why they could not fulfil their own plans. The Chairman and Cllr Price assured Mr Jones and Mrs Sutton that it was not the Council's intention to compromise the Committee's ability to proceed with improvement plans to the Hall. Cllr Price suggested that the Committee might consider a regular annual contribution but it was not taken up.

It was noted that if a contribution were to be made it would have to come from their reserves as recent grant funding had restricted use.

Following this meeting Mrs Sutton and Mr Jones consulted the Village Hall Committee and reported to the Chairman that despite a very difficult discussion they were offering a contribution of £1,500 this year together with the cost of broadband. However, they were concerned about the broadband usage level and would be reviewing it.

RESOLUTION 6/21

It was unanimously agreed to accept the offer of £1,500 plus the cost of broadband from 1 April 2021.

Cllr Every reported that the Village Hall Committee is entitled to apply for further grants; £1,300 in November 2020 and £4,000 in January 2021. The Clerk was requested to advise Mr Jones of the dates.

6. Draft Budget for 2021 – 2022 and Set the Precept

RESOLUTION 7/21

The draft budget (as attached) was unanimously adopted.

The Clerk had offered to reduce her salary by £500 but it was unanimously agreed not to accept the offer and to retain the Clerk's salary at its present rate.

In view of the current financial climate nationally with so many people experiencing a reduction in their household income due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was unanimously agreed to retain the Precept at its current level of £103.49 per Band D with the Tax Base

at 114.1 giving a total of £11,808 pa. In real terms this is a reduction of £44 on the Council's income from last year.

7. Any Other Business

Cllr Stone advised that he has been consulted by the Village Hall Committee on improvements to the Hall's heating system. In the circumstances, Cllr Stone was invited and agreed to take the second place reserved for the Council on the Village Hall Committee.

It was noted that the deadline for contributions to the Village Newsletter is 22 February and the Clerk was requested to make people aware of the Council Tax support grant in her article together with information about the Citizens Advice Bureau that can signpost people to this and other assistance.

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 4 March 2021

In accordance with Standing Order 11 and the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public were excluded from the following item

There being no further Business the Meeting was closed at 9.30 pm