

## SWANTON MORLEY PARISH COUNCIL BUDGET MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2022 AT 7.30PM

SWANTON MORLEY VILLAGE HALL

**Councillors Present:** Mr R. Atterwill (Chairman), Mrs B O'Dowd (Vice Chair), Mr J. Rodrigues, Mr J Venworth, Mr J Keen and Mr G. Curran

**Also in attendance:** Mrs K. Pickard (Clerk)

### **Matters Raised Under Time Allocated to the Public**

No members of the public were in attendance

#### *The Meeting Went into Session*

#### **1. To Accept Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Turner and Councillor Cawdron, accepted by the Council.

#### **2. To Receive Declarations of Interest**

None declared

#### **3. To receive a proposal to close the meeting to the press and public for item 4, for the reason that the content of discussion relates to Staff matters (permitted under Section 1 para 2 of the public bodies (Admission to Meeting Act 1960).**

Councillor Atterwill proposed the meeting is closed for item 4 seconded by Councillor Rodrigues and carried.

#### **4. Staff Matters**

Councillor Atterwill reported that the Assistant Clerk has now completed the required probationary period. Councillor Atterwill had circulated the draft contract of employment to councillors ahead of the meeting for approval. The contract had been updated to reflect the SCP pay scale level and increases in coming years subject to satisfactory performance.

*Councillor Lappin entered the room*

Councillor O'Dowd proposed that the contract is agreed and offered to the Assistant Clerk seconded by Councillor Venworth and carried.

#### **5. To Agree the 2021/2022 Parish Council Budget**

The draft budget had been sent to Councillors for consideration prior to the meeting.

This consisted of a breakdown of items that makes up the budget.

Staff costs were agreed to include the increase in National Insurance contributions.

The Training budget was discussed, and the Clerk requested an up to date data protection course.

Communications and Community work were discussed. The Communications budget ensures that the quarterly Parish Council magazine can continue to be produced and hand delivered to each household.

## Financial Year 2021/2022

The Community heading includes an amount consistent with the 2021/2022 budget to assist the school with a travel plan.

The community heading also includes the annual fee for the Link Up article, and a budget for the Jubilee Festival and Climate Action group.

There is also the cost for the Parish Partnership work to complete the 'trod' on Woodgate.

The general expenditure was discussed.

Under the office banner this includes utility costs, stationery and the Parish Council insurance premium. A 5% increase has been agreed for the insurance due to inflation.

### Legal and Contingency

This item includes a sum for s137 unforeseen funds, Contingency for the Parish Council, Legal Fees, PWL and an amount has been included for a s137 hardship fund. This is a discretionary fund for the Parish Council to support residents during difficult times.

The Parish Council detailed and discussed the standard subscriptions. This is for governing bodies including NALC and SLCC. Membership to these organisations ensure the council implement proper practice.

### Donations

The Parish Council considered the donations that they would like to make during the financial year. This amount also includes a small amount for Village organisations following the covid-19 pandemic.

### Democratic

The democratic heading covers expenses for Councillors receiptable expenses and the chairman's allowance. This budget was reduced due to the requirement for a by-election sum which has not previously been used.

Under grounds maintenance and assets, the Parish Council responsibilities were discussed and a sum agreed.

The Parish Council agreed an increase to the grass cutting budget for additional grounds work including verge cutting to be carried out. This is due to the County Council reducing their cuts in the village.

The burial ground and churchyard budget included general maintenance and a full clean of the war memorial and emptying the dog bin that the council has secured agreement with landowner to place on site.

There is also a sum included to install a water supply into the burial ground.

The open spaces budget is for the Village Green, Gooseberry Hill park, Davidson park and the Village Hall youth area.

Sums were agreed for full pressure washing and painting of equipment to improve the facility for the residents, additional bins and new noticeboards on the Village green, Burial ground and Gooseberry hill.

The budget for Allotments has received a small increase to allow an additional water pipe to be installed.

The budget for common lands includes the installation of a new gate on Mill Common and a new noticeboard to highlight the Countryside stewardship. The cost of this will be covered by the income of the Countryside Stewardship grant.

Councillors agreed the maintenance budget for streetlights and included an increase to the electricity budget due to inflation.

The income and expenditure for the remainder of 2021/2022 was then discussed.

This showed bank balances as at 31/12/2021.

Expenditure that was due to be paid out between 01/01/2022 and 31/03/2022 was detailed, as was the expected income figure.

The proposed budget sheet was then shown on the screen. This reflected the discussions and agreements by councillors.

The figures confirmed included the staff costs, grounds and assets, communications and community costs, and legal and contingency.

Councillor Atterwill then talked through the projected income figure.

This included Burial fees, allotment fees football pitch income and the funding for the Higher Level Stewardship.

The Nationwide savings account breakdown was shared on the screen. This showed a breakdown of how the s106 money from a developer is being used. The account is in a good position thanks to grant fuinding for the burial ground and a nominal sum for allotments. This account also generates annual interest. Money from this account will be used to pay for some expenditure items shown in the budget.

Following this discussion, the budget figure that was arrived at was £92,830.68

Councillor Atterwill proposed that the Swanton Morley Parish Council budget is set as £92,830.68 seconded by Councillor Lappin and carried.

#### **6. To Agree the 2022/2023 Parish Council Precept**

The tax base for the village has reduced this year to 727.80.

The proposed precept for 2022/2023 was £78,916.39

Councillor Atterwill proposed that the precept figure for 2022/2023 is agreed as £78,916.00, seconded by Councillor Rodriques and carried. This results in an increase in council tax on a Band D property of £3.93 per annum.

#### **The Meeting Was Suspended for Further Comment from the Public**

No public were present

The meeting closed at 8.40pm

\_\_\_\_\_ (Chairman) \_\_\_\_\_ Date