

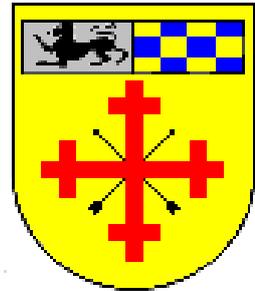
Castle Bromwich Parish Council

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Finance and General Purposes Committee

Chairman: Cllr. S Beechey **Vice-Chairman:** Cllr. A Haywood
Cllr. A Ahmed-Shaikh, Cllr. J MacDonald, Cllr. R Shaikh
Ex-Officio: Cllr. P Allen, Cllr. K Shaw

MINUTES OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ONLINE WEDNESDAY 10TH MARCH 2021

Members Present:	Cllr. S Beechey (Chair), Cllr. A Haywood (Vice-Chair), Cllr. P Allen, Cllr. J MacDonald, Cllr. A Shaikh- Ahmed & Cllr. K Shaw
Guests in Attendance:	SMBC Cllr. Richards
Public in Attendance:	One
Officers in Attendance:	Clerk: Gemma Burgess (minute-taker)

- F21-014 **Chairman's Welcome:** Cllr. S Beechey welcomed all to the meeting.
- F21-015 **Apologies:** None received. Cllr. R Shaikh was not present.
- F21-016 **Declarations of Interest:** Cllr. P Allen declared an Interest in item F21-021c and therefore abstained from the vote.
- F21-017 **Minutes:** The minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 10th February were agreed as a true record.
- F21-018 **Public Question Time:** No questions.
- F21-019 **Borough Councillors:** SMBC Cllr. Richards reported that there would be a 1.99% increase in SMBC precept plus a 1.5% social care levy. When added to the other elements, Castle Bromwich ratepayers will experience a 4% increase in Council Tax.
- F21-020 **Planning & Licencing:** The following comments were agreed

Action

Reference	Address	Proposal	Comment
PL/2021/00223 /PPFL	13 Chestnut Drive Castle Bromwich Solihull B36 9BH	Replace existing rear conservatory and patio with a long brick building split into two rooms. A room to replace the conservatory and an extra room with its own en-suite shower room.	No objections, subject to neighbours' comment.

PL/2021/00128 /PNCOU	329A Chester Road Solihull B36 0JG	Prior notification for a change of use from beauty/holistic to offices.	The comment date for this application had passed but there were no objections. It was noted that it is difficult to comment on the appropriateness of offices when it is known what industry they will be.
PL/2021/00238 /MINFHO	17 Marlborough Road Castle Bromwich Solihull B36 0EH	Single storey rear extension, two storey front extension and alterations to front elevation	No objections, subject to neighbours' comment.
PL/2021/00231 /LBC	The Coach House Castle Bromwich Hall Chester Road Solihull B36 9DE	Listed building consent for change of use of a vacant office building (Use Class B1) to residential (Use Class C3) forming sixteen 1, 2 and 3 bedroom flats with associated works.	No objections, subject to neighbours' comment.
PL/2021/00230 /PPFL		Change of Use of a vacant office building (Use Class B1) to residential (Use Class C3) forming sixteen 1, 2, 3 bedroom flats with associated works	No objections, subject to neighbours' comment.
Not specified on agenda but discussed to inform Clerk how to respond under delegated authority:			
PL/2021/00469 /MINFHO	86 Springfield Road Castle Bromwich Solihull B36 0DX	Rebuild rear single storey extension with internal works.	No objections, subject to neighbours' comment.

F21-021

Finance:

- a) **Bank reconciliations:** The bank reconciliations had been checked and signed by Cllr. A Haywood and approved by all.
- b) **Work from home allowance:** It was noted that employees who have been working from home have opted to claim tax relief instead of being paid an allowance therefore the payments agreed by the Staffing Committee 20-09/13 will not be paid.
- c) **Reimbursement of £50 loaned by the Chair in cash for bar float:** It was noted that the Chair had only been partially reimbursed for the emergency funds lent to the Council in order to operate the bars in November 2019.
RESOLVED: To reimburse the Chair £50 by bank transfer.
- d) **Payment run 12/03/21:** payments authorised as below:

Arden Hall refunds for COVID cancellations				
Invoice no	Name	Event date	Date Paid	Amount
5240		16.05.20	19/06/2019	£230
No invoice		17.07.20	06/02/2020	£50
5104		12.09.20	14/02/2019	£50
No invoice		18.06.21	26/06/2019	£100

Tn no	Cheque	Gross	Vat	Net	Invoice date	Details
692		£127.00	£0.00	£127.00	26/02/21	Warwickshire and West Midlands Association of Local Councils - Local Council Administration 12th Edition
624		£155.37	£25.90	£129.47	01/03/21	Microshade Business Consultants Ltd - IT Service & Support
670		£1,979.30	£329.88	£1,649.42	01/03/21	Fairways Contracting Ltd - Grounds Maintenance March
703		£12.00	£2.00	£10.00	01/03/21	DVS Voice and Data Ltd - Balance due, tn 700 - Managed Service, CCTV
705		£216.00	£36.00	£180.00	03/03/21	BWP Creative Ltd t/a Parish Council Websites - Website hosting 12.03-11.03.22
694		£11.29	£1.88	£9.41	04/03/21	Flair Plastic Products Ltd - KS EXP: Thumb turn cylinder lock for PC Office
704		£383.94	£63.99	£319.95	04/03/21	City Electrical Factors Limited - GB EXP: 1.5kW 10 Fin Dynamic Intelirad Radiator for PV locker room
693		£50.00	£0.00	£50.00	10/03/21	Mrs P Allen - Balance Reimbursement of Bar float money lent 31.10.19
Total		£2,934.90	£459.65	£2,475.25		

e) **Closing Debtors 19-20:** The Clerk had circulated the list of closing debtors for 19-20 with an explanation of whether each debtor should have been included on the list and the remedial action required. Members expressed disappointment at the extent of the discrepancies and queried how it could have happened. The Clerk expressed her opinion that the issues have been caused by a lack of internal control, poor record-keeping, outsourcing bookkeeping and a lack of sharing information between departments but that fraudulent activity is not suspected. New processes are in place to prevent this from happening again. The Clerk was directed to look into training on financial matters so that Councillors may be better informed. The Clerk suggested that there should be more involvement from Councillors in scrutinising the working practices and efficiency within the Council Office. Cllr. S Beechey thanked the Clerk for bringing these matters to the Council's attention and the work being done to rectify the situation.

f) **Aged Debtors Report as of 09.03.21:** The aged debtors report, showing the Council is owed £4688.92, was considered. Some debts have been carried over for several years. The circumstances of each debt were discussed and it was decided that it did not make economic sense to chase certain debts. Questions were asked as to how debts had been left so long before being brought to the Council's attention. The Aged Debtors' report is to be presented to the Committee on a monthly basis. Future consideration may be necessary to prevent regular hirers from accruing significant debts.

RESOLVED: To write off bad debts on remaining balances of invoices 4504, 5458, 5300 & 5420 totalling £125.

F21-022

Financial Regulations: The process for revising the Financial Regulations in line with practice was considered. It was agreed that the Clerk should draft a copy with marked up changes to be reviewed by a working party (open to all members) and presented to full Council in May.

1.

2.

- F21-023 **Internal Auditor's Draft Report:** The draft report was noted and considered to be fair. Cllr. P Allen clarified that she had not agreed to temporary, self-employed staff being added to the bank mandate, but that the current Clerk has access to all the bank accounts. The draft report is to be circulated to all members and the Clerk was directed to prioritise recommendations and present 3 action points at the next Council meeting.
- F21-024 **Risk:** The risk schedule was considered and updates reflecting working practices were made. To be reviewed at the next meeting.
- F21-025 **Action Log:**
***External Bid Writer:** It was noted that more candidates had been identified and the Clerk suggested the best option would be for the Funding Working Party to meet with each candidate to discuss how they could work together. 3.
***Changing membership numbers of Council:** The Clerk reported that the only way to change the number of Councillors is through a Community Governance Review which is a formal, legal process which would be run by SMBC (and was costly).
- F21-026 **Councillors' reports and items for future agendas:**
 - The Council needs to advertise for new members 4.
 - The Clerk was directed to approach SMBC re: RoSPA remedial work for a quote. 5.
- F21-027 **Future Finance and General Purposes Committee Meetings:**
 Wednesday 14th April 2020 at 6:30pm by Zoom.
 Wednesday 19th May – location dependent on restrictions.

Action Log:

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 1) Finance training for Councillors | Clerk/AH |
| 2) Draft revised financial regulations | Clerk/employees |
| 3) Grant Funding Working Party | PA, SB, KS, MS |
| 4) Advertise for new Councillors | Clerk |
| 5) SMBC RoSPA quote | Clerk/HM |

This meeting ended at 8.34

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 Signed as a true record of the business transacted
 Chairman, Finance and General Purposes Committee

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 Dated

Castle Bromwich Parish Council