

**Minutes of Shevington Parish Council
Finance Committee Meeting
Held Wednesday 4 September 2024
8:35pm - The Community Centre at Vicarage Lane Fields**

Present: Cllr William McKnight (Chairman), Cllrs Michael Grimes, John Whiteley and Christopher Horridge. Cllr Helen Thompson was present via MS Teams.
One member of the public

Officer in Attendance: Mrs Krystyna Pilkington (Clerk)

1. Apologies

Cllrs Mike Crosby, Janet Brown and Jess Diggle

2. Declaration of Interests

None

3. Minutes of the Last Finance Committee Meeting (5 June 2024)

Resolved: The Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 5 June 2024 were approved as a true and correct record.

4. Quarterly Budget Monitoring

The quarterly budget monitoring report was received and accepted. It was reported that all cost centres were online.

5. Christmas Motifs (Shevington Centre)

2023 was the last year during which the Parish Council were able to hire the very popular lamp post motifs that had been in use in the centre of Shevington during the festive season over a number of years. They would no longer be available in 2024, as they were past their use by date.

Over the Summer LITE, the company from which the Council had hired the motifs, had sent six proposals for new motifs via Wigan Council's Street Lighting team. The new motifs were of a size appropriate for our lamp posts and could be hired from LITE over a period of 3 years. Details of the proposals had been enclosed.

The annual costs of hire, erection, removal, testing, storage and repair were the same for all six designs. The variation in costs lay with the design. Because the Council had been told that the costs would only be held until the end of July, members had been consulted via email and an order had been placed via the Street Lighting team for 11 units (5 and 6 respectively) of two designs selected by the majority.

Resolved: The Committee approved a 3 year lamp post motif hire plan with LITE for the following designs retrospectively:

(1) 6 x Majestic Blossom @ £230. (Total = £1,380)

(2) 5 x Shooting Banner @ £375 (Total = £1,875)

Additional hire charge for storage, fitting, removal, testing, cleaning, refurbishment @ £1,342

TOTAL per annum = £4,597.

The two designs were to be fitted on alternating lamp posts.

6. Christmas Trees

The quotations for the cost of the same sizes of Christmas trees that the Council ordered in 2023 had been received and were considered.

Resolved: The Committee approved the following order for Christmas trees from Joseph Noblett:

3 x 18ft Nordmann display trees @ £285 = **£855** (*as in 2023*) for Crooke Village Green, Shevington Moor and Appley Bridge

1 x 22ft Nordmann display tree for Shevington centre = **£450** (*as in 2023*)

Cost of delivery, installation and removal of the trees = **£1,180** (*£30 more than in 2023*)

TOTAL = £2,485

7. Christmas Tree Fencing

The Parish Council's Christmas trees (apart from the one at Appley Bridge) were every year protected by being surrounded by Heras fencing, which the Parish Council owned. It was erected and taken down by a contractor when it was required and was also needed to protect residents from the trees. Each year residents asked if they could see more attractive fencing in its place, but this would have to be especially constructed and would be very expensive.

This year the Christmas Decorations budget had a small surplus and an opportunity had arisen to purchase several panels of ex-hire decorative barrier fencing stock from one of the suppliers of Christmas decorations. The Council had been advised that the minimum height that the barrier fencing could be was 1.2m. In view of the location and sizes of the trees ordered, fencing of this height could only be used around the tree fitted at Crooke Village Green, as it was not on a street corner, but in the centre of the Green and in a quiet neighbourhood with a small population. There was very little pedestrian thoroughfare in close proximity to the centre of the Green.

The matter was discussed.

Resolved: The Clerk was authorised to purchase 6 decorative barrier fence panels at the discounted rate of £192.60 (normal price = £321) per panel from Blachere Illuminations.

6 x barrier panels (H = 1.2m x W = 2.00m) = **£1,155.60.**

The Clerk was also asked to enquire about the possibility of hiring taller decorative barrier panels and the costs associated with this.

8. Christmas Decorations

The quotations from Wigan Council's Street Lighting team for the cost of installing Christmas lighting in the Parish had been received and were considered.

Resolved: The Committee approved the following costs:

- (i) **£2,508.22** for carrying out the work of installing lights on and removing them from the four Christmas trees (in Shevington centre, Crooke Village, Appley Bridge and Shevington Moor *(the same as in previous years)*);
- (ii) **£1,155** for installing and removing the wraparound garlands associated with lamp posts in Appley Bridge and Shevington Moor.

TOTAL = £3,663.22

The Street Lighting team had confirmed that £1,100 was available from Wigan MBC's budget towards this, so it would mean a net charge of **£2,563.22**.

9. Christmas Shop-Front Award

The Policy & General Purposes Committee had decided that the Christmas Shop-Front Award would go ahead again in 2024.

Resolved: The Committee agreed that the Parish Council would make the following donations to the Charities of the prizewinners' choice: £60 (1st Prize), £40 (2nd Prize) and £30 (3rd Prize).

10. Ongoing Defibrillator Maintenance

Over the Summer the Parish Council funded the replacement of the battery of the defibrillator installed outside the Community Building at Vicarage Lane Fields. The Council were able to do this because they have a cost centre to which funds have been allocated for expenditure on the maintenance of Vicarage Lane Fields.

New defibrillators were fitted at various locations in the Parish over the past few years using Brighter Borough grants from Wigan Council. Unfortunately, whilst Brighter Borough Funds could be used to purchase and fit new defibrillators, no financial provision was made by Wigan Council for their ongoing maintenance.

When this matter was raised during the recent Council meeting members decided to discuss it further and consider whether the Parish Council could in some way support ongoing maintenance of the defibrillators in the Parish. The matter was discussed.

Resolved: It was agreed that, as the Parish Council had not been responsible in any way for the fitting of new defibrillators in the Parish, they would not, as a matter of course, take responsibility for providing funding for their ongoing maintenance. The Clerk was asked to contact the district councillors and ask them to raise the matter of financial support for ongoing maintenance of defibrillators with Wigan Council.

Dist Cllr Chris Ready, Wigan Council's Portfolio holder for Communities & Neighbourhoods, would be copied into the enquiry.

11. Financial Aid Applications

None

12. Dates of Next Meetings

25 September (Council); 30 October (Council)

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:10pm.

Chairman