

MINUTES of the Finance Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council held on Monday 4th March 2019 at 1 Swift Way Bowerhill Industrial Estate, Melksham, SN12 6GX at 7.45 p.m.

Present: Cllrs. Richard Wood (Council Chair), John Glover (Council Vice-Chair & Committee Chair), Alan Baines (Committee Vice Chair), Paul Taylor, Paul Carter.

Officers: Teresa Strange (Clerk) & Marianne Rossi (Assistant Parish Officer)

Apologies: There were no apologies

Not Present: Cllr. Nick Holder (*apologies for illness received the following day*)

Housekeeping: The Committee Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and explained the evacuation procedures in the event of a fire.

457/18 **Declarations of Interest:** Cllr Wood declared an interest as Chairman of BASRAG (Berryfield & Semington Road Action Group) and Berryfield Village Hall, Cllr Glover declared an interest as a member of MRDG (Melksham Railway Development Group) and as the parish council rep for the Melksham Area Community Safety Group, Cllr Carter declared an interest as a Parish Council representative for the MRDG (Melksham Railway Development Group). The members took no part in the voting on the grants to be awarded for those organisations that they had declared an interest in.

The Clerk declared an interest in the West Wiltshire Multi Faith Forum as she attends a regular lunch with the group that are learning English as a second language and will be attending the International Women's Day event that the grant application is seeking funding for, Broughton Gifford & Holt Scouts as her son was an Explorer, as a Trustee of Young Melksham and as a cheque signatory for Melksham Gardeners' Society.

458/18 **Dispensation Requests:** None

459/18 **Public Participation:** There were no members of the public present.

460/18 **Grant Aid Policy:** The Committee noted the current Grant Aid Policy.

461/18 **Grant Aid 2019/20 Budget provision:** The members of the Committee noted the 2019/20 Budget provision for Grant Aid. It was noted that the Parish Council have committed £5,000 in the budget to TransWilts for the Melksham Community Hub and £2,500 for the next 3 years to Young Melksham.

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| Section 137 Grants | £ 8,500 |
| Section 137 Grants Committed spend to Young Melksham and TransWilts | £ 7,500 |
| Section 133 Village Hall grants | £ 8,250 |
| Section 144 Tourism grants | £ 650 |
| TOTAL | <u>£24,900</u> |

462/18 **Grant Aid awarded 2019/20:** The Committee Chairman, Cllr Glover reported that the Council had received 46 applications for Grant Aid with requests totalling £29,773.00 and gave an overview of how the Council had prioritised the grant funding previously. Priority for grant aid had been for groups and organisations that directly support residents in the parish such as Village Halls and Action Groups.

The Clerk had sought guidance from WALC on two of the applications, but was yet to hear back from them. This was in relation to the grants for the Messy Church (44) and the West Wiltshire Multi Faith Group (30). The Clerk understood that current legislation still prevented grant funding to be provided for church buildings but not for faith organisations. When the two grants were reviewed the members sought information in the application that the requests were items/activities that were not promoting faith and acknowledged that these grants were part of a Recommendation to the Full Council on 11th March, and that any legal guidance would have been received by then. Cllr Richard Wood wished his voted against awarding funding to Messy Church to be recorded.

The Council have £650 in the budget for Section 144 (Tourism) grants but the Council had only received 1 application for £500.

Recommendation 1: *The Council vire £150 from Section 144 grants to the Section 137 grant budget heading.*

Recommendation 2: *The Council award grants to the following organisations:*

| Application Number | Organisation | Awarding in 2019/20 |
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| SECTION 133 GRANTS (HALLS) | | |
| 1 | Bowerhill Village Hall Trust | £2,800 |
| 2 | Shaw Hill Playing Field and Village Hall | £4,000 |
| 3 | Berryfield Village Hall | £500 |
| 4 | Whitley Reading Rooms | £700 |
| 5 | The Rachel Fowler Centre | £250 |
| SECTION 133 GRANTS (HALLS) total | | £8,250 |
| SECTION 137 GRANTS | | |
| Action Groups | | |
| 6 | Bowerhill Residents Action Group (BRAG) | £400 |
| 7 | Berryfield & Semington Rd Action Group (BASRAG) | £500 |

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| 8 | Community Action Whitley Shaw (CAWS) | £450 |
| 9 | Community Emergency Group (CAWS) | £175 |
| 10 | Melksham Community Partnership for Melksham Neighbourhood Watch Group | £150 |
| 11 | Melksham Community Area Partnership for Melksham Community Safety Partnership | £150 |
| Action Groups Total | | £1,825 |
| Youth | | |
| 12 | Shaw & Whitley Beavers & Cubs (part of Bowerhill scout group) | £300 |
| 13 | 1st Broughton Gifford & Holt Scout Grp (RESERVED PENDING RECEIPT OF MORE DETAILED ACCOUNTS) | £300 |
| 14 | Young Melksham (£2,500 committed spend) | £2,500 |
| 15 | 2385 (Melksham) Squadron ATC | £250 |
| 16 | In2Sport Coaching and In2Play Therapy | £0 |
| 17 | Shaw & Whitley Toddler Group | £200 |
| Youth Total | | £3,550 |
| Support Groups | | |
| 18 | Happy Circle Day Centre | £150 |
| 19 | Group Five | £300 |
| 20 | Melksham PHAB Club | £250 |
| 21 | Relate Mid Wiltshire | £350 |
| 22 | Wiltshire Mind | £350 |
| 23 | Wiltshire Sight | £150 |
| 24 | Wiltshire Air Ambulance | £250 |
| 25 | HELP Counselling Services | £120 |
| Support Groups Total | | £1,920 |
| Community Groups | | |
| 26 | Melksham & District 55+ Forum | £150 |

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| 27 | Melksham Music Festival | £250 |
| 28 | Melksham Food & River Festival | £250 |
| 29 | Creating a plaque to celebrate 800 years of Melksham's Royal Charter | £0 |
| 30 | West Wiltshire Multi Faith Forum | £125 |
| 31 | Melksham SixtyPlus Club | £250 |
| 32 | Arts Together | £250 |
| 33 | Melksham Community Meals | £100 |
| Community Total | | £1,375 |
| Community Info | | |
| 34 | Shaw & Whitley Connect | £250 |
| Community Info Total | | £250 |
| Transport | | |
| 35 | Melksham Railway Development Group | £300 |
| 36 | TransWilts CIC (£5,000 Committed spend to Melksham Community Hub) | £5,000 |
| Transport Total | | £5,300 |
| Clubs | | |
| 37 | AFC Melksham (Disabled) | £250 |
| 38 | Melksham Gardeners' Society | £200 |
| 39 | Enigma | £100 |
| 40 | Melksham Amateur Swimming Club | £300 |
| 41 | Shaw & Whitley Friendship Club | £300 |
| 42 | Shaw & Whitley Garden Club | £126 |
| 43 | Melksham Town Short mat bowls club | £200 |
| 44 | Melksham Messy Church | £100 |
| 45 | Whitley Cricket Club | £354 |
| Clubs Total | | £1,930 |
| Section 137 GRANTS Total | | £16,150 |
| SECTION 144 GRANTS (TOURISM) | | |

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| 46 | Melksham Tourist Information Centre (RESERVED PENDING RECEIPT OF MORE DETAILED ACCOUNTS) | £500 |
| Tourism Total | | £500 |
| Grand Total | | £24,900 |

Recommendation 3: *The Council do not award Grants to the following organisations for the following reasons:*

16. In2Sport Coaching and In2Play Therapy: *The Council were unhappy with the lack of supporting evidence in the application of how the residents of the Parish are supported and would like to see more information on what the organisation does in any future application.*

29. Creating a plaque to celebrate 800 years of Melksham's Royal Charter: *Due to the lack of supporting evidence of how this application would benefit the residents of Melksham Without the application does not comply with the Grant Aid Policy (Clause 1).*

463/18 **2018/19 Year End Accounts & Audit:**

- a) **Year End Accounts Preparation for Rialtas Omega Software:** The committee noted the Rialtas year-end data check list and that it had been completed in a timely manner. The visit by Rialtas staff for the year end processes will be 15th May 2019 at a cost of £540 plus 45p per mile travelling expenses, which has been included in the Budget.
- b) **Internal Auditor for 2018/19:** The Clerk reported that the internal auditor from IAC Audit and Consultancy Ltd was due to come in for his first audit visit on the 12th March (to look at process and procedures). The auditor will then schedule another visit when the year end figures have been finalised.

464/18 **VAT:**

- a) The Committee noted the “Making Tax Digital” advice notes from NALC and the SLCC. The Clerk explained that she did not believe the parish council to be eligible for this new statutory procedure as it does not meet the £85k threshold for taxable supplies. However, as part of the year end processes the Council’s Rialtas accounting software system had already been updated so that it is ready for when the new “Making VAT Digital” comes into force on 1st April 2019, although for eligible groups which include the parish council as a local authority, the date is 1st October 2019.
- b) The Members noted the new VAT reclaiming timings that had been put into place following guidance from Rialtas. The Council will now claim VAT on a quarterly basis instead of yearly. For 2018/19, a claim had been made for the first 3 quarters (1/4/18 – 31/12/18) and then another one can be made for the last quarter straight after year end on 31/3/19. It was noted that VAT claims can be made on an irregular pattern if required, so that the parish council could claim for just a month if they had made a large VAT

payment, this could be useful for cashflow for proposed new village halls etc. The Rialtas software was designed so that VAT reclaims could be made easily on irregular patterns.

465/18 **Staff and Councillor Training report:** The Assistant Parish Officer gave a brief overview on the “Finance for Clerks and RFOs” training that she attended with the Parish Officer and noted that most of what was explained was experienced on a day to day basis but it was very useful to have a clear understanding of what the legal requirements were. The Clerk had asked the staff to ask about VAT for the proposed village hall spend and it was noted that VAT expert advice had to be sought before any agreements on purchasing and budgets were made as the sums involved were so large and it was important to understand the VAT implications from the outset. Cllr Carter attended the “Finance for Councillors” training as a Parish Councillor and reported that he too found it very useful.

Meeting closed at 9.40pm

Chairman, 11th March 2019