**GRAVENEY WITH GOODNESTONE PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Finance Working Group meeting, held remotely 8th January 2023 at 3.15pm**

**Present:** Cllr Alan Stewart, Cllr Catherine Wilkinson and Lisa Stiffell (Clerk)

Cllr Alan Stewart opened the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss a draft budget for the financial year commencing 1st April 2023 for presentation to the full Council at the meeting scheduled for 9th January 2023.

1. **Apologies for absence**
2. **Draft budget**

A draft budget schedule had been prepared prior to the meeting by the Clerk and discussion took place around this, discussing each item in turn.

1. Clerk’s salary

It was proposed that this should be budgeted to allow for an expected 5% uplift as proposed by KALC from £3192.16 to £4125.

1. Office rental

It was proposed that this should remain the same as the current financial year with a balance of £300.

1. Office expenses

It was proposed that this would decrease from £200 to £100 as office expenses have reduced in previous years.

1. Travel expenses

It was agreed to reduce the budget to £75 from £100 due to previous years expenditure.

1. Lighting energy

To remain at £700 for the year as current costing patterns are below that figure.

1. Lighting maintenance contract

Proposed to increase to £600 from £500 for the year due to current cost patterns.

1. Lighting maintenance repairs

This was discussed and it was felt that as underspent in the current financial year, the figure should be reduced to £1,000. Lamps 4 & 5 and 3 & 7 need replacing. Parish Clerk to discuss with Streetlights further.

1. Newsletter

The Newsletter has been redundant for some time, however, plans to re issue in 2024 are taken place. Due to costs of printing and circulation a budget of £1,000 was suggested.

1. Subscriptions

The increase in the KALC subscription figure was discussed. It was proposed that this, and the other subscriptions are all of value and should therefore be continued with a figure of £350.

1. Training

It was suggested that the training budget remain at £350 for the year as the Parish Council has a new Councillor and training is of utmost important.

1. Audit

The audit figure has increased annually, so it was proposed that this should show a slight uplift of £50 to a budget figure of £375 to take this into account.

1. Insurance

The insurance figure was in the process of being fixed for the next three years. A budget figure of £735 to offer a 5% increase was proposed to allow for an increase of costs in line with inflation.

1. Website

It was proposed that the budget for the Website be increased from £225 to £400 to offer extra support for the website as the website will be worked on in 2023 to improve.

1. Village Hall Hire

The budget for the Village Hall Hire is currently set at £300 for 2022/2023 however, it was proposed that this figure is increased to £360 to prepare for increased costs and extra meetings.

1. S137

It was felt that the donations under S137 to Citizens Advice Bureau, Red Cross and Kent Air Ambulance should continue with an equal donation of £40 to each. Therefore, it is proposed that figure remain at £120 for the year.

1. Chair’s Allowance

Although not claimed in previous and current years, it was proposed to retain this as a nominal amount of £100.

1. Repairs and renewals

This was discussed and it was felt that it would be unlikely that there would be a need for major expenditure. Therefore, it was proposed that this figure remains the same as the current year at £500 to allow for the purchase of noticeboards and Bus shelter.

1. Miscellaneous

An increase of £650 was proposed to give a total figure of £750 to allow for the Coronation Celebrations.

1. Election expenses

Clerk to contact Swale Borough Council to obtain expense charge information. Proposed an increase to £700.

1. Highway Improvement Plan

A budget of £2,000 was set in 2022/2023. Believed to be appropriate to reduce to £1,000 as funds have not been spent as of yet.

It was agreed to present this budget for discussion and approval at the parish council meeting of 9th January 2023.

1. **Precept**

The proposed figures for the 23/24 budget give a total of £13,640, generally in line with budgets for previous years. This would give a precept of £13,300. On an assumed Tax Base of 71.478 for a Band D property.

1. **Close of Meeting**

There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 5.15pm.

Signed…………………………………………………….

Date……………………………………………………….