**Minutes of the Saddleworth Parish Council Finance Committee held on Thursday 16th May 2024 at 7pm at the Civic Hall, Uppermill.**

**Present**: Councillors: S Al-Hamdani (Chairman)

G Sheldon K Barton

P Walsh R Blackmore

H Bishop

 RFO: J Price; Clerk: K Allott

**628. Apologies for Absence:** Cllr K Dawson, Cllr L Dawson,Cllr K Phillips,

**629. Declarations of Interest:** None declared.

**630. Minutes from the last meeting on Thursday 21st March 2024**

These minutes were proposed by Cllr Al-Hamdani, seconded by Cllr Barton, accepted as correct and signed off at the meeting by the Chairman.

**631. Bank Account progress**

The RFO advised that due to prioritising year end this had taken a back seat but he was aiming to have it all changed over by end July. Cllr Al-Hamdani questioned whether all payments were being made and up to date. The RFO confirmed they were. It was agreed to defer this item to the July meeting.

**632. Report on Councillor Expenses when deputising for Chairman**

To be carried forward into 2024-5

**633. Year end 2023-24 Update**

The RFO shared the financial update for the year and it was discussed. The over spend on repairs was due to reactive works following the Fire Risk Assessment Review plus the unplanned cost of rebuilding the damaged bus shelter at Scouthead & Austerlands. Cllr Al-Hamdani asked why we couldn’t claim on our insurance for this. The Clerk advised that the shelters previously were not covered under the policy, but she had added them to the policy schedule going forward.

 Cllr Blackmore asked why the bank interest was not budgeted. The RFO responded that it has been immaterial in the past but confirmed it was in place for this year’s budget 2024-25.

Cllr Bishop asked whether the ELCONS HR contract included the Payroll. The RFO advised it didn’t; Sefton’s had been selected to take over the payroll at a previous meeting and their performance to date was excellent and cheaper than the previous provider Action Together.

The Committee agreed they to accept the year end figures for 2023-4.

**634. Internal Audit – update**

The RFO explained that our current internal auditor, TPA, had ceased trading so he had been looking at options going forward. He had contacted a number of companies; some did not have the capacity to take on additional business. He had received two quotes:

JDH Business Services - £774, and Internal Audit Yorkshire £960. JDH Business Services, as well as being the cheaper option, had come recommended by the Administrator at LALC. After some discussion, it was agreed to sign up with JDH Business Services.

Cllr Sheldon advised the committee that parts of the lower hall ceiling plaster had been cracking and the Site Manager and Clerk had raised concerns it needed to be inspected. At the last Assets it had been agreed some exploratory work would be carried out. This has now been completed and the structural engineer has recommended providing a detailed capacity check report to determine the floor joists are adequate for the loadings when events are on in the hall. As this report would cost £520, it was above the Clerk’s remit to approve so she was requesting council approval. Cllr Al-Hamdani asked whether the budget would absorb this additional cost. The RFO confirmed there was money set aside for repairs. After some discussion it was agreed.

Cllr Bishop asked about the progress regarding the planned meeting with OMBC to discuss and explain in more detail the precept funding and particularly the grant. The RFO advised he was still chasing them to arrange a date.

**635. Items for the next agenda**

 **Extra meeting Thursday 20th June 7pm.**

AGAR & Internal Audit

**Thursday 18th July 7pm**

Bank Account Progress

Updated Financial Regulations for approval

Report on Councillor Expenses when deputising for Chairman

**Date of next meetings: As recorded above.**