

CAPEL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 06 JANUARY 2025 IN CAPEL PARISH HALL

Present: Mr Salter, Mr McLachlan, Mr Ball, Mrs Schryver and the Clerk.

In Attendance: Mr Cox, Mrs Watson and Mr Palmer

1. **Apologies:** Mr Ransome
2. **Declarations of Interest:** None
3. **Matters Arising:** None
4. **Questions from Members of the Public:** None
5. **Profit and Loss to 31 December 2024:**

| | | |
|------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| 31 December 2024 | NS&I Reserve Account | £610.89 |
| 31 December 2024 | NatWest Reserve Account | £93,606.39 |
| 31 December 2024 | NatWest Current Account | £905.00 |

Mr Salter addressed the meeting stating that with 3 months left in the current financial year, there is now 15% of the budget remaining. The grounds maintenance budget is slightly over in relation to this time last year, and there could be heavy costs likely to be incurred over the next months. To accommodate any heavy costs, it is justified to have a buffer and any additional cash income from burial costs, easements and hall hire charges will go some way to covering any shortfall. The overall budget is in an acceptable position.

The NatWest Reserve Account continues to yield a high interest. It was agreed that funds should continue to be earmarked for

- Public Works Loan.
- Solar panels
- Solar Activated speed limit signs
- HMRC Employers NIC payments. To cover any underpayments and the increase due in April 2025.
- Trig Street project
- Capel Church Memorial Garden.
- Upgrading Children's playground

The Committee was reminded that the precept for the financial year 2025/26 has been approved and a sum of £127,010.00 has been requested from Mole Valley.

6. **Grant for Merebank Pond, Merebank, Beare Green.**

The Committee was reminded that Mr Killick, Head Bailiff of Beare Green Angling Club has addressed the Planning Committee meeting on 4 November 2024, outlining the condition of Merebank Pond. The pond is wholly owned by Mole Valley District Council and maintenance is their responsibility. Over the past years it has been neglected resulting in the pond being covered in Canadian pondweed and rubbish. Mr Killick applied to the Parish Council for a grant to assist with pond clearing.

The Parish Council had requested further information and was informed that Mole Valley had initially received three tenders to deal with the maintenance.

Option 1 - £3,060 to remove the weed and dispose of it in the woods.

Option 2 - £5,200.

Option 3 - £5,450. Both Option 2 and 3 will remove and dispose of the weed off site.

It was understood that Mole Valley is prepared to finance the maintenance programme to the value of £1,500 with the Angling Club adding a further £1,000. The Parish Council is being asked to grant fund the remaining amount.

The Parish Council needs assurance that whatever option is approved, it should be value for money, will have some guarantee that the weed would not return immediately¹ and that weed removed would be completely taken away, off site and not dumped in nearby woods. Councillors also mentioned that it would be preferred that weed removed is left at the side of the pond for 24 hours before being totally removed to allow any marine wildlife to return to the water.

Mole Valley supplied upgraded quotations –

Option 1 - £4,236 to include removing the weed in up to 2 loads and leaving in the nearby woods.

Option 2 - £5,200.

Option 3 - £5,450. Both Option 2 and 3 will remove and dispose of the weed off site.

It was agreed that Mole Valley be contacted again, asking for agreement to the Parish Council's recommendations. If Mole Valley agrees the recommendations, the Parish Council would need to approve a grant of £1,736.00. This matter will be included as an agenda item on a future agenda.

7. Date and time of next meeting:

Tuesday 06 May 2025 at Capel Parish Hall

¹ It is understood once the work has been undertaken, the Angling Club will be required to provide periodic maintenance to alleviate the return of the weed.