

Scopwick and Kirkby Green Parish Council

<http://parishes.lincolnshire.gov.uk/ScopwickandKirkbyGreen/>

The minutes of the extraordinary Council meeting of Scopwick and Kirkby Green Parish Council, held on **Wednesday 15th January 2025**, at **7.15pm**. The meeting was held in Scopwick Village Hall. These are notes of the meeting until approved by the Council as a true record.

Present:

Cllrs M Williams (Chair), J Flett (Vice-Chair), P Baumber, P Frost, C Kerrigan and D Nelson; and Parish Clerk - J Sargent.

There were no of the public in attendance.

98. Chairman's Welcome

Cllr Williams opened the meeting welcoming everyone, thanked Councillors for their attendance, reminded Councillors to turn phone off or on silent and of emergency exits.

99. Apologies.

It was **resolved unanimously** to accept apologies from Cllr O Davies.

100. Declaration of Interest.

None received.

101. To receive a budget review for the 3rd quarter of the financial year.

The Clerk provided a Budget Review for the first quarter of the financial year to keep Councillors up to date with the financial status of the Council, for information purposes only.

The Clerk mentioned receiving a contribution towards the verge maintenance from Lincolnshire County Council of £2,151.51.

In expenditure, the Clerk highlighted £900.00 for land registration for a parcel of land on the Beck, which was arranged by the previous Clerk and only recently completed and invoiced by Sills & Betteridge.

Cllr Nelson queried the cost of the Christmas tree and Cllr Flett asked when the VAT would be reclaimed. The Clerk advised towards the end of the financial year.

102. To consider the precept and budget (current and reserve accounts) for 2025-26.

The Clerk advised keeping an operational contingency reserve of £9,500.00 and an earmarked election reserve of £3,000.00, to comply with Standing Orders and Financial Reserves. Other earmarked reserves could be amended.

The Clerk noted that £3,000.00 was listed in the earmarked reserves for speedwatch equipment and had also been forecast in expenditure for the end of the current financial year. Cllr Frost suggested removing the £3,000.00 in earmarked reserves for speedwatch

and £500.00 allocated to the village meadow, which would lower the earmarked reserves to £18,000.00. Cllr Frost also mentioned that the Council are actively working on verge reinforcement and suggested it remain in the earmarked reserve.

Cllr Baumber advised that holding large reserves is not the best use of the money and suggested an increase the precept in would not be well received by parishioners when having a large reserve.

Cllr Baumber recommended that the £500.00 allocated to village meadow is removed from the earmarked reserves and allocated in the budget.

Cllr Baumber suggested the village improvement earmarked reserves could go towards new signs; Cllr Nelson suggested the allocation could go towards verge improvements or noticeboards. Cllr Baumber advised there had been a request for a new noticeboard in Kirkby Green.

Cllr Frost suggested the allocations in the reserve account totalling £18,000.00 remain.

The Clerk explained that the precept is the Parish Council's only guaranteed income, however, there will be approximately £5,000.00 carried over from the current financial year as well as another possible contribution from the County Council towards the grass cutting of verges in the parish, based on the current year's contribution would be around £2,000.00. This would mean there would be a possible opening balance for the next financial year of at least £5,000.00, possibly up to £7,000.00.

An opening balance of £7,000.00, with a precept request of £17,651.58 (an annual increase of £1.78 - 2.5%) would provide parity in the expenditure on the draft budget. This includes expenditure increases in the donation to the Cemetery to £1,820.00, General Maintenance to £750.00, insurance to £600.00 and to staff costs to £8,100.00.

Councillors expressed concern over the expenditure predicted for the grounds maintenance contract, and the correct tender process. The Clerk initially predicted an expenditure of £12,000.00, based on a previous quote, however, had since received further quotes to help provide a lower predicted expenditure of approximately £8,000.00. Based on this estimate, the total expenditure is forecast to be £24,785.00, which would provide parity in the current account.

Cllr Frost queried the staff costs. The Clerk advised that this figure was based on the recent pay award and when the Clerk completes the CiLCA qualification which is expected in the next financial year, a contractually obligated increase.

It was proposed by Cllr C Kerrigan and seconded by Cllr D Nelson to submit to NKDC a precept request of £17,651.58, an increase of 2.5% and an annual increase of £1.78 to £72.93 for a band D property, on a tax base of 243 and accept the amendments to the budget and earmarked reserves which was **resolved unanimously**.

Cllr Williams closed the meeting at 8:05pm.

Signed:

Chair of the Council - Cllr Marc Williams

Signed:

Parish Clerk - Jack Sargent

Tuesday 28th January 2025