

**Minutes of the meeting of the
FINANCE COMMITTEE
held on Monday 5th December 2022 at 7:08pm
in the Committee Room, Freight House, Rochford**

Councillors present: Chairman S May, Mrs L Dalby, R Gardner, Mrs L Massey, R Patient, M Vallance & Mrs M Weir.

F 22/15 Receive apologies for absence:

No apologies were received.

F 22/16 Declarations of any:

- a) **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest;**
- b) **Other Pecuniary Interest; or**
- c) **Non-Pecuniary Interest**

on any matter on the agenda for 5th December 2022:

No declarations were made.

F 22/17 Public Forum:

No members of the public were present.

F 22/18 Approve Minutes of the meeting held on the 10th October 2022 and to approve the destruction of the notes in respect of that meeting:

It was **resolved** that the minutes from the meeting held on 10th October 2022 were approved as a correct record and Members agreed to the destruction of the notes in respect of that meeting.

F 22/19 Action Update List (November 2022):

22/19.1 Members were referred to agenda item 11 (Minute F 22/25).

22/19.2 Members were referred to agenda item 12 (Minute F 22/26).

22/19.3 Two new bank signatories had completed their individual ID registration with Metro Bank.

22/19.4 Members were referred to agenda item 7a & 7b (Minute F 22/21a & b).

22/19.5 Grants had been issued and a thank you letter had been received from the Ashingdon and East Hawkwell Memorial Hall (AEHMH).

It was **resolved** that Members accepted the Action List update and agreed to the removal of closed items.

F 22/20 Financial Report – November 2022

The Clerk reported that at month eight the budget was on track with 66.2% spent against an expected 66.6%. Finance expenditure was on target; Parks was overspent, and General Purposes was underspent. The overspend in Parks was due to the capital equipment purchased; if required, funds would be sourced from the General Reserves. There were no questions, and it was **resolved** that Members accepted the Financial Report.

F 22/21 Completion of Internal Audit (Interim) 2022-23:

- a. **Confirmation that a petty cash reconciliation has been undertaken by two Members:** Members noted the information.

b. Confirmation that Q2 financial checks have been undertaken by two Members:

Members noted the information and thanked Cllrs Mrs J Strubel and M Strubel for assisting with the checks.

Sincere thanks were given to the office who continued to keep Council's accounts in exemplary order. Members discussed the possibility of including information in a future newsletter about how well the finances were managed to offer assurances to parishioners about the management of public money.

F 22/22 Consider and agree Finance budget for 2023-24:

Members noted the Clerk's proposal. A Member enquired why the Cllr travel budget for 2022-23 was set at zero and now was at £200 for 2023-24. The Clerk explained there had been no budget due to Covid; all training had been held online and travel had therefore not been necessary.

It was **resolved** that the Finance budget for 2023-24 of £103,750 be approved for recommendation to Full Council.

F 22/23 Consider Parks, General Purposes and Youth budgets for 2023-24:

It was **resolved** the following budgets for 2023-24 be approved for recommendation to Full Council: the Parks budget of £60,875; the General Purposes budget of £21,400 and Youth budget of £3k.

F 22/24 Set the precept for 2023-24 for recommendation to Full Council:

It was agreed that given the current financial climate it would be prudent not to raise the precept for residents and therefore the Clerk advised the band D figure should remain at £39.54. This would result in a minimal shortfall in income over planned expenditure which could be vired from the General Reserves, if required.

It was **resolved** that the Finance Committee recommend to Full Council a precept of £188,748.14 for 2023-24. It was further noted that the tax base figures provided by Rochford District Council (RDC) were in draft form and therefore there was a possibility they may change. If such change were to occur, the Clerk would prepare an updated paper for Members accordingly.

F 22/25 Bank Mandate – report on meeting with Metro Bank:

A representative from Metro Bank had visited the office who had been extremely helpful. It was noted specific wording and detail was required by Metro Bank for Council's banking mandate. Additionally, it was noted the representative had showed the office how to carry out online payments and this would allow Council to set the wheels in motion for carrying out future online payments; the Clerk explained the procedure would still require the same level of authorisation and checks by Members as cheque approval and signing.

It was **agreed** that Dual Authority for Business Online Plus be approved, for the following individuals:

Diane Scrivener – Admin Access

Anna Bain – Admin Access

Stephen May – Admin Access.

There would be Specific Mandate Instructions for everything else:

'Diane Scrivener plus a minimum of one other Authorised Signatory required'.

The Authorised Signatories would be as follows:

Diane Scrivener (Authorised Official) – Debit Card allowed

Anna Bain (Authorised Official) – No Debit Card allowed

Stephen May (Authorised Official) – No Debit Card allowed

Roger Gardner (Authorised Official) – No Debit Card allowed

Roy Patient (Authorised Official) – No Debit Card allowed
Myra Weir (Authorised Official) – No Debit Card allowed
Lynda Massey (Authorised Official) – No Debit Card allowed
Mark Vallance (Authorised Official) – No Debit Card allowed

- F 22/26 Hawkwell Village Hall (HVH) rent – email from HVH re office rent for 2023-24:**
The Clerk gave a summary of the history of the HVH and of the office rent situation for the benefit of new Members. The email from the HVH was noted.
Members discussed the issues with the walkway up to the office and the problems with the office door; as the issues were external issues it was agreed the Clerk approach the HVH to see if there were plans for improvements and repairs.
- F 22/27 Subscriptions: Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) £236:**
Members **approved** the subscription to SLCC for £236.
- F 22/28 Donation request: Poppy Appeal 2022:**
Members **agreed** to donate £100 plus the cost of the wreath (£20) to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal (£120).
- F 22/29 Approve staff Christmas lunch:**
The staff Christmas lunch was approved by Members. It was agreed that the regular contractor join the staff for their Christmas lunch given his commitment and dedication to Council, with costs to be met by Council.
- F 21/30 Summary of Decisions:**
- Finance Committee budget for 2023-24 of £103,750 approved for recommendation to Full Council.
 - Parks Committee budget for 2023-24 of £60,875 approved for recommendation to Full Council.
 - General Purposes budget for 2023-24 of £21,400 approved for recommendation to Full Council
 - Youth budget for 2023-24 of £3,000 approved for recommendation to Full Council.
 - A precept of £188,748.14 for 2023-24 approved for recommendation to Full Council for 2023-24 subject to the figures provided by RDC staying the same. Any changes then the Clerk will update the paper and pass by Members accordingly.
 - Banking mandate agreed; wording to be sent to Metro Bank.
 - Subscription to SLCC for £236 agreed for 2023.
 - Donation of £120 to RBL Poppy Appeal agreed.
 - Staff Christmas lunch approved; contractor to join staff and costs be met by Council.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7:38pm

Chairman