Minutes of the meeting of the
FINANCE COMMITTEE
held on Monday 29th July 2024 at 7:05pm
at the Rochford Day Centre, 33a Back Lane, Rochford

Councillors present: Mrs L Dalby, R Gardner, A MacPherson, Mrs L Massey, S May & Mrs M Weir.

Also present: Cllr T Hargrave (from 7:25pm), District Cllr I Wilson (from 7:14pm), Essex County Councillor (ECC) Mrs L Shaw (from 7:22pm) and two members of the public.

F 24/1 To elect a Chair for the civic year 2024-25:
Cllr A MacPherson nominated Cllr S May as Chair which was seconded by Cllr L Massey. Cllr Mrs L Dalby nominated Cllr R Gardner which was seconded by Cllr Mrs M Weir. Following a secret ballot, the vote was tied. Cllr S May used his casting vote as existing Chair and was elected Chair for the civic year 2024-25.

F 24/2 To elect a Vice Chair for the civic year 2024-25:
Cllr Mrs M Weir nominated Cllr R Gardner as Vice-Chair which was seconded by Cllr Mrs L Massey. Cllr R Gardner declined the nomination. Cllr R Gardner nominated Cllr Mrs M Weir which was seconded by Cllr Mrs L Dalby.
There were no further nominations and Cllr Mrs M Weir was elected Vice-Chair for the civic year 2024-25.

F 24/3 Receive apologies for absence:
All Members were present.

F 24/4 Declarations of any:
a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interest;
b) Other Registrable Interest:
on any matter on the agenda for 29th July 2024:
Cllrs Mrs M Weir and S May declared a pecuniary interest in relation to Agenda item 11 (Minute F 24/11).

F 24/5 Public Forum:
Two members of the public were present.

F 24/6 Approve Minutes of the meeting held on the 11th March 2024 and to approve the destruction of the notes in respect of that meeting:
It was **resolved** that the minutes from the meeting held on 11th March 2024 were approved as a correct record and Members agreed to the destruction of the notes in respect of that meeting.

F 24/7 Action Update List (July 2024):
24/7.1 There had been no action to add new signatories to the Robert Sudbury Trust banking mandate.
24/7.2 The grant had been paid to the Hockley & Hawkwell Day Centre. Members agreed to close the item.
24/7.3 The Earmarked Reserves (EMR) movements and levels had been agreed and recommended to Full Council. Members agreed to close the item.

24/7.4 Members were referred to Agenda item 11. (Minute F 24/11).
It was **resolved** that Members accepted the Action List update and agreed to the removal of closed items.

F 24/8 **Financial Report – July 2024:**
The Clerk reported that at month four month the budget was 37% spent. Finance and Parks were both 37% spent and General Purposes was underspent at 19%.
There were no questions, and it was **resolved** that Members accepted the Financial Report.

F 24/9 **Adoption of revised Financial Regulations:**
a) Recommended new Financial Regulations for HPC:
Members noted the Clerk's recommendations. The Clerk explained the recommendations had been made in line with the current Financial Regulations and considered how the office operated. Particular attention was drawn to item 6.9 iv; the Clerk explained that the £50k transfer limit between Council's banking arrangements was practical given the size of the precept tranches received.
District Cllr I Wilson entered the Chambers at 7:14pm.
Further attention was drawn to item 4.8; Members noted that the regulation had been reintroduced after many years. It was further noted that under the new regulations, there was a requirement to check payee's banking details and this would involve two Members; any change in a payee's banking details could possibly therefore see a delay in payment.
The Clerk asked if there were any questions; there were none.
Members **approved** the new Financial Regulations as per the Clerk's report for recommendation for approval to Full Council.
b) NALC new Model Financial Regulations:
Members noted the report.

F 24/10 **Eco-Audit recommendation P8: include climate and ecological criteria into grant programmes; suggested revision to grant form attached:**
Members noted the Clerk's recommendations and six bullet points added to include context for the applicant(s) in relation to biodiversity improvements, quality of life etc.
It was **resolved** Members accept the updated Grants form.

F 24/11 **Consider donation to Rochford Day Centre in recognition for the use of the facility for Council meetings during 2023-24:**
Cllr Mrs M Weir left the Chambers at 7:21pm due to her pecuniary interest. Cllr S May withdrew from the decision given his declared interest.
The Chair reminded Members that Council had continued to use the Day Centre for their meetings, without charge. It was noted that during the winter months the facility was heated to accommodate the Council meetings and that utility costs had increased significantly.
It was **resolved** that a donation of £750 be made to the Rochford Day Centre.
ECC Cllr Mrs L Shaw entered the Chambers at 7:22pm
Cllr Mrs M Weir returned to the Chambers at 7:23pm
The Chair informed Cllr Mrs M Weir of Council's decision and she relayed her gratitude.

F 24/12 **Grant request from Ashingdon Football Club:**
It was **resolved** that a £1k grant be awarded to the Ashingdon Football Club to assist with costs towards a rotary mower for pitch maintenance.

F 24/13 **Notification that the precept for 2024-25 had been received in full and a deposit of £40k has been made into the CCLA PSDF:**

Members noted the information.

Cllr T Hargrave entered the Chambers at 7:25pm.

F 24/14 **Notification of completion of Q1 petty cash checks by Cllrs R Gardner and S May – no issues arising:**

Members noted the information.

F 23/15 **Summary of Decisions:**

- Cllr S May elected Chair for 2024-25.
- Cllr Mrs M Weir elected Vice-Chair for 2024-25.
- New Financial Regulations approved as per the Clerk's report; for recommendation for approval to Full Council.
- Grant form updated to add consideration to bio-diversity as per the recommendations made in the Eco-Audit.
- Donation of £750 made to Rochford Day Centre for the use of facility for Council meetings.
- Grant of £1k awarded to Ashingdon Football Club to assist with costs towards a rotary mower for pitch maintenance.

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 7:26pm

Chair