



## FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held in the Cowie Room, Public Hall on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

**676 PRESENT:** Cllr Biggs (Chairman), Cllr Anderton, Cllr Beswarick, Cllr Goode, Cllr Monks, Cllr Turner and Cllr Woods; also Christine Bright (Town Clerk).

**677 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Body, Cllr Dawkins and Cllr Gunning.

**678 MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22<sup>ND</sup> AUGUST 2023**

The minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 22nd August 2023 having been circulated were confirmed a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**679 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & DISPENSATION**

No declarations of interest were received.

The Town Clerk confirmed a dispensation had been granted to Cllrs Anderton, Beswarick, Biggs, Corbett, Goode, Monks, Turner and Woods to partake in any discussions that directly or indirectly had a bearing on the parish precept.

**680 PAYMENTS & RECIEPTS**

Members were tabled with the details of the payments made for the month of October 2023 including cheque numbers 105844 to 105858 including cheque number 100047 from CB3 account, direct debits and bank payments totalling £28,587.59 together with receipts received in the sum of £131,926.75 a copy of which are attached. Members **RESOLVED** adoption and payment as presented.

**681 BUDGET MONITORING 2023/2024**

Members had previously been circulated with a copy of the budget to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023. The Town Clerk advised the budget covered the first six months of the financial year, currently there were no significant issues to report, a copy of which is attached.

**682 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**(a) BDO – Notification of conclusion of audit.**

The Town Clerk advised the external auditor's report and certificate for the financial year 2022/2023 had been received with no matters giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met. Members **NOTED** one matter had been drawn to the attention of the authority with regard to Objective L not covered by the internal auditor.

**683 BUDGET REVIEW**

Members had previously been circulated with the Town Clerk's budget review report to be considered alongside the budget previously circulated.

The Chairman took members through the report and referred in particular to:

- Indicative costs associated with the provision of a public toilet in the Memorial Playing Field in the region of £80-90,000 making the project financially unviable unless external funding could be found, he therefore proposed to vire the £20,000 set aside within the current years budget to the cemetery extension project, a more urgent need for which funds in excess of £15,000 would be required to prepare the ground for future interments. Seconded by Cllr Monks and **RESOLVED. AGREED** to refer the public toilet project to Town Amenities for further consideration and exploration of external funding opportunities.
- Town Council elections were due to take place in May 2024 for which the Town would have to meet a percentage of elections costs. The Chairman felt the Council should reach out for wider community involvement with a view to encourage candidates to come forward and proposed leaflet drops and public engagement events early in 2024 to promote the elections and the Beaminster Neighbourhood Plan. Seconded by Cllr Monks and **AGREED**.

#### **684 BUDGET FRAMEWORK 2024/2025**

- Resurfacing and controlled access to the Memorial Playing Field car park, various options had been explored and costed, to be referred to Town Amenities Committee for further consideration with a view to a budget inclusion in 2024/2025
- Public Hall refurbishment, the Chairman firmly believed that prior to any refurbishment/enhancement projects the Council had to determine the use of the building as a whole. Cllr Monks advised that he was in the process of obtaining quotations for a number of issues identified within the Low Carbon Dorset report for which external funding would be available. Following discussion members felt the building would continue to be used for multiple purposes therefore it was **AGREED** to decorate the main hall including a stain block on the existing ceiling and update soft furnishings.
- With regard to asset management it was **AGREED** to the introduction of a cyclic maintenance schedule for the Councils assets.

#### **685 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

#### **686 PUBLIC BODIES (Admission to meeting) ACT 1960**

Members **RESOLVED** that public and press be now excluded from the meeting whilst discussion took place on the following items on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of business to be transacted in respect of consideration of sub lease terms and a staffing issue.

**(a) Beaminster Yarn Barton Community Centre**

The Town Clerk advised members of correspondence received from the Chairman of the Trustees seeking a renewal of the existing Sub-lease for the premises with the option for a long term agreement. The Chairman proposed acceptance of the request with the option to mirror the Town Council's lease. Seconded by Cllr Turner.

**(b) Staffing Sub Committee**

Members had previously been circulated with the Town Clerk's confidential report following a Staffing sub- committee meeting held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> October.

Members were saddened to note the resignation of Postholder 103. Cllr Woods proposed acceptance of the recommendation for the new post outlined within the report, seconded by Cllr Turner and **RESOLVED.**

**687 MEETING**

The meeting which started at 7.00pm closed at 9.00pm

Chairman  
9<sup>th</sup> January 2024

