



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE ON TUESDAY 29TH
NOVEMBER 2022 IN THE PARISH OFFICE MEETING ROOM, MARDEN
MEMORIAL HALL, GOUDHURST ROAD, MARDEN COMMENCING AT 7.30PM**

020/22 PRESENT:

Cllrs Adam (in the Chair), Boswell, Burton, Gibson, Tippen and Turner were present. Cllr Robertson and the Clerk were also in attendance.

021/22 APOLOGIES:

There were no apologies.

022/22 APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

The minutes of the meeting held on 30th August 2022 were agreed and signed as a true record.

023/22 CLLR INFORMATION

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest

Granting of Dispensation

There were no requests for dispensation on any item on this agenda

024/22 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no members of the public in attendance

025/22 UPDATE FROM HR SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

HR Sub-Committee meeting was held on 21st November 2022. A report was given at the meeting of any issues that were raised and relevant to Finance Committee. It was noted that the caretaker would be returning from long term sickness absence on 1st December and Cllr Tippen reported issues raised in the office staff appraisals including IT/document storage which would be discussed further in the meeting.

026/22 2022/23 FINANCIAL YEAR

Financial reports from first six months together with October had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting which also incorporated the forecast for income and expenditure to 31st March 2022. The Clerk went through the significant differences in the budget to what has been, or would be, spent and received and these were noted to discuss further when setting the budget.

027/22 ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURE FOR 2022/23

The following were discussed for additional expenditure in 2022/23 financial year:

Office IT

The Clerk, with Cllr Newton's assistance, had provided a report on the current computer situation within the office. The desktops used by the Clerk and Deputy Clerk were over five years old and issues were being experienced, especially on the Deputy Clerk's, whereby documents are easily shared, computers switching off unexpectedly along with the tower fans becoming noisy.

Details of proposed purchase of two new laptops were provided and discussed. Cllrs agreed that HP laptops would be purchased as soon as possible together with 3 laptop bags (an additional one for the Admin Assistant's laptop). It was agreed that the additional guarantee would not be purchased for accidental damage as this was already covered under the Parish Council's insurance.

The Clerk further reported that additional Microsoft 365 licences would be required. However, Cllrs agreed to defer to item 032/22.

Library Path

Cllrs requested that costings be obtained to finish the pathway at the side of the library following works undertaken earlier in the year. This would then be discussed at the next Finance Committee meeting for consideration if there is a budget underspend. If not, provision will be made in next year's budget.

028/22 FORECAST FOR THE REMAINDER OF FINANCIAL YEAR (TO 31ST MARCH 2023)

Clerk had circulated draft forecast to Cllrs prior to the meeting which had been discussed alongside item 026/22.

029/22 REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Cllrs to review, discuss and make a proposal for all requests for financial support for this financial year and subsequent years. Only one request had been received for this year so far with the same charity applying for a further donation in 2023/24.

030/22 FEES & DONATIONS TO BE CONSIDERED FOR 2023/24

Cemetery Fees from 1st April 2023

The Cemetery Sub-Group had met and recommended new fees with an increase of 10%. This was agreed by Finance Committee.

Play Scheme Fees for 2023

The Clerk had provided a report for 2023/24 play scheme and Cllrs agreed that this would be deferred to a meeting of the Play Scheme Sub-Group to discuss in more detail before reporting back to the Full Council meeting in January.

Open Space Fees from 1st April 2023

Fees for Open Space (Southons Field and Playing Field) were proposed at the Amenities Committee meeting in October. Finance Committee agreed this.

Donations for 2023/24

This would be discussed when setting the budget.

031/22 SALARIES 2023/24

A report had been circulated in regard to salaries for 2023/24 which were discussed by Cllrs. The Clerk was asked to provide full costings for all employees and report to the next Finance Committee meeting when finalising the budget.

032/22 OTHER INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR 2023/24

Cllrs to consider the following:

New Parish Council Website

The Clerk reported that the current website was sufficient but was missing a search facility. This could be provided but would be a Google search option and not just for the website pages. Additional packages could be purchased but it was felt that this would not provide many more benefits to which is already in place. Cllrs agreed to continue with the current provider.

Provision of MPC Cllr Emails

Cllrs had been provided with information from Information Commissioner's Office on personal emails along with quotes on .gov.uk email addresses for individual Cllrs.

Document Sharing & Storage

The Clerk had had a Teams meeting with Cloudy IT (company who work with Parish Councils on office IT) on Monday 28th November and reported that the company could provide Microsoft 365 licences for office staff and Cllrs along with individual emails. Cllrs requested that the two items on Cllr emails and document sharing be placed on the December agenda for discussion and agreement.

Southons Field gates refurbishment or replacement

The Deputy Clerk had provided costings for metal and wooden replacement gates for the entrance to Southons Field. The total cost would be incorporated in to the capital budget for next financial year and Amenities Committee would discuss in more detail the design and installation.

Changing Room refurbishment/rebuild project

Cllrs agreed that a further meeting would be required to discuss the way forward for the building and for public consultation to be undertaken early next year. S106 money was available to spend on the project so it was proposed that no additional funds would be allocated at the current time.

Additional playing field costs

The Deputy Clerk had provided costings for a new piece of equipment in the playing field play area. This would come from capital expenditure and would be taken to Amenities to agree installation.

It was reported that a piece of equipment in the Napoleon Drive play area had been damaged through anti-social behaviour. The Clerk reported that a crime number had been received and an insurance claim would be submitted.

Other proposals for consideration

Cllrs to considered the following:

Southons Field driveway

Costs to be obtained to report to the next Finance Committee meeting.

The King's Coronation

The Village Events Sub-Group had recommended an event for the King's Coronation in May 2023 and it was proposed that the same figure be budgeted for that which was allocated for the Jubilee event in 2022 (£2,000).

033/22 UTILITY COSTS

The Clerk had provided some figures for electricity supplies when MPC's contract expires in June 2023. Cllrs requested that future costings be provided based on the current usage.

034/22 CAPITAL/FOUR YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN

Cllrs to consider capital income and expenditure

2022/23

Any additional Capital income and expenditure forecast

2023/24

(a) Any additional Capital income and expenditure

Future Years

Review Financial Plan of future capital income and expenditure

Consider purchase of tablets for Cllrs

Cllrs deferred these items to a future meeting to discuss in more detail and to update the four year financial plan.

035/22 BUDGET 2023/24

Cllrs drafted the proposed budget for 2023/24 prior to receiving the tax base from Maidstone Borough Council and this would be reviewed again in January 2023 before having to send the precept request to MBC.

036/22 OTHER FINANCIAL ISSUES

Future Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money received

Cllrs reviewed the CIL money received and this had been allocated within the budget to future CIL/S106 projects.

Cllrs to consider future bank accounts for investments

To be discussed at a future meeting.

Internal Auditor Report (Interim Report – 2022/23)

The report had previously been circulated and agreed at Full Council. However, there were a couple of recommendations which would be put into place by the Clerk.

037/22 INVOICES

The following invoices were submitted for payment:

P&P Signs: Christmas sign boards - £170.40

Pitney Bowes: Postage and admin fees - £208.00

Stall holder: Christmas fair refund - £10.00

Paul Waring: mowing of Southons Field and Playing Field - £343.56

RJP Cleaning: public convenience cleaning - £665.00

Castle Water: Cemetery water supply - £67.50

Howland Electrical: PAT Testing Christmas lights - £78.00

Alison Hooker: Christmas supplies and other Miscellaneous - £523.43

Marden Memorial Hall: Office rent, cleaning and refuse - £343.35

Total: £2,409.24

Cllrs agreed payments and Cllrs Tippen and Turner would authorise on Unity.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.05pm

Date:

Signed:

Cllr Richard Adam

Chairman, Finance Committee

Marden Parish Council. Parish Office, Goudhurst Road, Marden

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