



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE ON TUESDAY 16TH JANUARY 2024 IN THE PARISH OFFICE MEETING ROOM, MARDEN MEMORIAL HALL, GOUDHURST ROAD, MARDEN COMMENCING AT 7.30PM

025/24 PRESENT:

Cllrs Adam (in the Chair), Boswell and Tippen.

026/24 APOLOGIES:

Cllrs Gibson, Stevens and Turner gave their apologies.

027/24 APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

The minutes of the meeting held on 31st October 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record.

028/24 CLLR INFORMATION

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Granting of Dispensation

There were no requests for dispensation.

029/24 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no members of the public in attendance.

030/24 UPDATE FROM HR SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting held on 12th December 2023. Notes had been circulated to Cllrs and an update was provided at the meeting.

031/24 FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/2024

Quarter 3 report

The Clerk had circulated Quarter 3 income and expenditure to Cllrs prior to meeting. Cllrs considered and agreed Quarter 3 accounts.

032/24 ADDITIONAL INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR 2023/2024

Donation Budget

Cllrs discussed the remainder of the 2023/2024 donation budget and agreed to review at the March Full Council meeting any further requests for this financial year's budget.

Paddock Wood Advisory Centre had requested a donation but Cllrs agreed to carry this over to the 2024/2025 financial year as a donation had already been given in April 2023.

Footpath Link: Windsor Meadow and The Parsonage

Three quotes had been received and Cllrs discussed the content of all three. It was agreed that the quote from Arnolds Tarmac would be accepted. A grant had been received previously for £4,000 and the remainder would be from the capital budget.

Replacement play equipment

Following vandalism of the play table at Napoleon Drive quotes had been received for replacement. Cllrs agreed to accept the quote from Komplan. The insurance claim would pay a percentage and Cllrs proposed that the remainder would come from play scheme budget underspend.

033/24 ADDITIONAL PROPOSALS FOR DRAFT BUDGET 2024/2025**Internal Auditor**

Following the notification from MPC's current Internal Auditor that he was retiring at the end of 2023/24 financial year the Clerk had contacted several companies but had yet to receive a reply. For budgeting purposes the previous invoices from the current IA would be considered.

Additional Christmas Lights

The Clerk had contacted the company who provides the Christmas lights for quotes for additional lighting/commando sockets but no response had been received. Cllrs agreed to base the budget for additional lighting on the quote received in 2022 plus inflation.

Highway Improvement Plan/Infrastructure Spend Plan

Cllrs to consider if additional funds need to be made available for any projects in the above plans. Cllrs agreed for the next financial year no additional funds would be raised unless grants were available for any projects.

034/24 FORECAST FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR TO 31ST MARCH 2024

The draft forecast had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting. Cllrs considered and agreed the document drafted by the Clerk.

035/24 FOUR-YEAR FINANCIAL BUSINESS PLAN

It was agreed to hold a Finance Committee meeting on 30th January to continue the discussion on items to be ringfenced for future years in capital expenditure on the four-year plan and whether additional funds were required for future projects. The Clerk was asked to update the document as much as possible prior to the meeting.

036/24 TAX BASE 2024/2025

The tax base for 2024/2025 had been received from MBC and this was 2,206.3 (compared to 2187.0 in 2023/2024).

037/24 BUDGET PROPOSALS 2024/2025

Cllrs received the Clerk's budget proposals for 2024/2025 and updated the spreadsheet per meeting discussions.

The Finance Committee agreed to put this before Full Council at the EFCM on 23rd January 2024 for ratification.

038/24 PRECEPT 2024/2025

The Finance Committee proposed that the precept recommendation for 2024/2025 would be £182,294.04 (this equated to £82.62 per annum / £6.885 per month for a Band D property – and increase of £2.34 per annum) and this would be put before the Full Council at the EFCM on 23rd January 2024 for ratification.

039/24 OTHER FINANCIAL ISSUES**Capital Account**

Information received from CCLA for capital money held. Cllrs agreed to discuss this at a future Finance meeting when more time was available.

Quality Gold Level

Cllrs to consider one of the criteria for the above level as follows:

- Prepare a business plan covering a financial forecast for at least three years linked to revenue and capital plans for the council and its community – The Clerk had transferred the 4-year financial plan to become the 4-year Financial Business Plan and this would be reviewed at the meeting on 30th January.
- Prepare a statement which ensures that the council delivers value for money – the Clerk had drafted a Value for Money policy which required reducing to become the one-page statement required. Cllr Tippen agreed to review this.

040/24 INVOICES

The following invoices were due for payment:

The Hop Press – Christmas signage - £240.00

The Hop Press – Newsletter printing - £1,265.00

The Play Inspection Company – Annual play inspections - £396.00

Online Playgrounds – replacement net for climbing frame - £1,130.40

Purchase Power – Postage - £484.80

Alison Hooker- Canva Subscription - £107.88

Total: £3,624.08

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

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.20pm.

Date:

Signed:

Cllr Richard Adam

Chairman, Finance Committee

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