



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE ON TUESDAY 31ST OCTOBER 2023 IN THE PARISH OFFICE MEETING ROOM, MARDEN MEMORIAL HALL, GOUDHURST ROAD, MARDEN COMMENCING AT 7.30PM

013/23 PRESENT:

Cllrs Adam (in the Chair), Gibson, Tippen and Turner were in attendance. The Clerk was also present.

014/23 APOLOGIES:

Cllrs Boswell and Stevens gave their apologies.

015/23 APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

The minutes of the meeting held on 29th August 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record.

016/23 CLLR INFORMATION

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Granting of Dispensation

There were no requests for dispensation.

017/23 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no members of the public in attendance.

018/23 UPDATE FROM HR SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting held on 12th October 2023. Notes had been circulated to Cllrs and an update provided at the meeting by Cllr Tuppen.

019/23 FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/2024

Quarter 2 report

The Clerk had circulated Quarter 2 income and expenditure to Cllrs prior to meeting. Following discussion the Cllrs considered, and agreed, Quarter 2 accounts.

Internal Auditor visit 26th October

The report had been received back from the Internal Auditor and had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting. No issues had been raised. However, the Clerk reported that Auditing Solutions, MPC's Internal Auditors, would not be continuing after the end of 2023/24 financial year. The Clerk was asked to obtain costings from other companies prior to the next Finance Committee meeting.

020/23 FOUR-YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN

Cllrs discussed the funding ringfenced for future years in capital expenditure on the four-year plan. The Clerk was asked to draft the capital expenditure section and report to the next meeting. It was agreed that the document would be renamed "Business Plan for 2023/24 to 2026/27".

021/23 2024/25 INCOME & EXPENDITURE

Fees

Cllrs accepted the proposals set by relevant Committees in regard to Open Space hire, Play Scheme fees, Cemetery fees and other ad hoc income.

Recommendations made by Committees were agreed by Finance Cllrs.

Other Income and Expenditure

Cllrs considered additional income and expenditure for the next financial year including:

- Salaries – proposal put forward by HR Sub-Committee. The Clerk would report to HR/Finance once the 2023/24 pay increase had been published.
- MPC emails for Cllrs: Finance Committee proposed to proceed with email for Cllrs and was agreed to take to Full Council for decision as to when to begin using them (ie now or May 2024 after elections).
- Sharepoint/upgrade of website for sharing documents with Cllrs – Finance Committee proposed to purchase Microsoft 365 for Cllrs and to continue with bronze fee structure with Hugofox.
- Additional Christmas lighting: Proposed for 2 additional columns for 2024/25. Costings would be put before the next Finance Committee meeting.
- Tree / Cemetery woodland maintenance: Agreed to just increase the tree budget in line with inflation.
- Additional play scheme expenditure including possible hire cost increase. The Clerk was asked to obtain information prior to the next Finance Committee meeting.
- Newsletter production. Finance Committee agreed the proposal from the Communications Sub-Group to continue with the current provider for the newsletter printing for the next three years.
- Increase in subscriptions and other revenue expenditure. The Clerk had only been informed of one increase in regard to the public convenience cleaning for 2024/25.
- CIL/S106 expenditure. The Clerk was asked to contact MBC regarding CIL payments.
- Additional training costs
- Other proposals submitted by Committees. No other proposals had been received from Committees.

022/23 DRAFT BUDGET

The Clerk was asked to start to draft the figures for 2024/25 and incorporate these into the budget for discussion at the January meeting. It was proposed to assume 4% inflation as the basis for calculations.

023/23 OTHER FINANCIAL ISSUES

Capital Account

Cllrs considered other banks/building society transfer of capital money held with Santander. Cllrs agreed for the Clerk to investigate CCLA for the Public Sector Deposit Fund to replace Santander. To be taken to Full Council once details had been obtained.

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 MPC financial four-year plan would be renamed and adapted, if necessary, to the MPC Business Plan 2023/24 to 2026/27.

Prepare a statement which ensures that the council delivers value for money. MPC's HIP/ISP documents were devised from feedback from the community and are continuously updated and included in the Financial Business Plan. MPC continually look at interest rates and refer to the Financial Regulations regarding quotes/tenders. MPC is also governed by Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Committee Structure Terms of Reference along with policies and procedures. The Clerk was asked to draft and circulate for agreement via email to be submitted to Full Council for ratifications.

024/23 INVOICES

The following invoices were due for payment and were presented to the meeting:

P&F Cleaning – Public Conv. Cleaning - £695.00

Auditing Solutions – Interim Internal Audit - £450.00

Alison Hooker – Christmas/Misc. supplies - £14.98

Total: £1,159.98

The payments from the Amenities Committee meeting last week had only been authorised by one Cllr. It was agreed that Cllr Turner would authorise the four payments previous agreed and the three from tonight's meeting along with Cllr Tippen.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.58pm.

Date: 16th January 2024

Signed:

Cllr Richard Adam

Chairman, Finance Committee

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