



**Minutes of the Meeting of Corfe Mullen Town Council**  
**held on Thursday 4 January 2024 on the rising of the Finance and Administration Committee**  
**Meeting in the small hall of the Village Hall**

**Present:**                   **Councillors**  
D Sowry-House (Chair)  
A Craven  
D Everett  
S Florek  
A Holland  
P Holland  
B Honeyman  
S Jefferies  
J Lortie  
D Mattocks  
P Neil  
P Purvis  
J Stennett

**In Attendance:**       Catherine Horsley (Town Clerk & RFO)  
Rachel Virrill (Deputy Town Clerk – minute taker)

**Public Participation**

There were no members of the public present.

**TC 23/216    To Receive and Accept apologies for absence** (LGA 1972 s85 (1))

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Hardy, who was unable to attend due to a prior commitment. Members sought clarification on the prior commitment in order to accept apologies. The Clerk agreed to follow up with Cllr Hardy.

**TC 23/217    To Record any declarations of interest** Members to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Town Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any prior requests from members for Dispensations that accord with Localism Act 2011 s33(b-e) (NB this does not preclude any later declarations)

Cllr Florek declared a non-pecuniary interest as the Chair of Friends of Corfe Mullen Library.

Cllr Craven declared a non-pecuniary interest relating to the proposed capital expenditure budget for bus shelters, due to a family members request for a new bus shelter at Windgreen on Wareham Road.

**TC 23/218    Paper A – To Approve minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 19 December 2023** – LGA 1972, sch 12, para 41

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2023, subject to an amendment to minute no. TC 23/202 – To Review and Approve Allotment Tenancy Agreement and Rents Effective from 1 April 2025 to read as follows:

*'It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** for plot holders to be responsible for maintaining paths adjacent to their plots and plot edging. Vertical paths must be grass with remaining paths either grass or woodchip. Weed matting should not be used as it may cause a trip hazard'.*

**TC 23/219 Paper B - To Consider recommendations from the Finance & Administration Committee on draft Budget and Precept for the 2024/25 financial year** – Report submitted to the Finance & Administration Committee is included as paper B to this meeting, with the verbal recommendation of the F&A committee being made to Council immediately following the committee's meeting.

The Chair noted all members had been listening to the discussions which had taken place at the previous Finance and Administration Committee relating to the recommendations for setting the Corfe Mullen Town Council 2024/25 budget and precept request.

The recommendation of the Finance and Administration Committee was to set the Corfe Mullen Town Council annual budget for 2024/25 financial year at £611,125.00.

Those members who were not members of the Finance & Administration Committee commented on the discussions at the previous meeting in terms of the proposed exceptional and capital expenditure, the visual impact and material benefits to the community.

The following capital and expenditure items should be noted:

- Line 68: Youth Trust grant to cover salaries and rental of the Hub at Lockyer's School agreement year 2 of 3.
- Line 111: Tree survey remedial works over 2 years, 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years.
- Line 139: Installation of bus shelters on a phased programme over 2 years, 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years.
- Line 142: Dropped kerb phased programme over 5 years, 2024/25, 2025/26, 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29 financial years.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendation of the Finance & Administration Committee and set the Corfe Mullen Town Council annual budget for 2024/25 financial year at £611,125.00.

Members then discussed the level of precept required from Dorset Council to cover the 2024/25 budget and the effect of any increase on those who pay Council Tax, with members acknowledging the cost-of-living crisis, alongside the Town Council's responsibility to provide services for the benefit of the community.

Cllr Lortie proposed accepting the recommendation of the Finance and Administration Committee to set the precept at £537,395.50, an increase of 7%, which would see a Band D property increasing from £126.34 to £135.18 per annum with £73,729.50 of general reserves used to reduce the deficit. This was seconded by Cllr Honeyman.

Cllr Craven proposed a second motion to approve option 2, an increase of 9.73%, which would see a Band D property increasing from £126.34 to £138.64 per annum with £60,000 of general reserves used to reduce the deficit. This was seconded by Cllr Florek.

Cllr Lortie requested a recorded vote. Of the 13 members present, Cllrs Mattocks, Lortie, Stennett, Honeyman and A & P Holland voted in favour of a 7% increase with Cllrs Sowry-House, Everett, Florek, Neil, Jefferies, Craven and Purvis voting in favour of a 9.73% increase.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** setting the precept at £551,125.00, an increase of 9.73%, which would see a Band D property increasing from £126.34 to £138.64 per annum with £60,000 reserves to be used to reduce the deficit.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendation of the Finance & Administration Committee to transfer £35,000 of general reserves to the pavilion refurbishment/rebuild earmarked reserves.

**TC 23/220 Verbal – Matters for Forthcoming Agendas** No decisions can be taken<sup>1</sup>

The Chair asked members to consider nominations for a Civic Award to be presented at the Annual Celebration of Service to be scheduled during April 2024. Nominations should be put forward for those members within the community who have gone above and beyond for the benefit of the community with no personal gain. Nominations should be forwarded to the Clerk for collating.

Cllr Craven requested the Council's Street Furniture Policy be revisited to investigate more robust bench options following the vandalism of a memorial bench at the New Cemetery.

Members noted their disappointment and upset that the memorial bench fundraised and installed by friends and family in memory of four local teenagers who had died in a car crash in 1996 had been vandalised on New Years Eve, beyond repair.

The Chair suspended Standing Order 9a to request permission of the Town Council to investigate alternative bench options to be discussed at the next Full Council meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** investigating alternative bench options ahead of the next Full Council meeting scheduled on 23 January 2024.

**TC 23/221 To Agree a date and time for the next meeting – Tuesday 23 January 2024 at 19:00** in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen.

**TC 23/222 Close of meeting at 20:25.**

Signed as a correct record of the meeting.....Date .....

<sup>1</sup> Councils cannot lawfully decide items of business which are not specified in the summons/agenda (LGA1972 sch 12, paras 10(2)(b) and Longfield Parish Council v Wright (1918) 88 LJ Ch 119)