



**Minutes of the Meeting of Finance & Administration Committee held at 19:30
on Tuesday 21 May 2024 in the small hall of the Village Hall**

Present: **Councillors**
J Lortie (Chair)
A Craven
S Florek
D Sowry-House
V Papilio

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

Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

FA 24/01 To Elect a Chair for the Municipal Year 2024/25

Cllr Sowry-House proposed Cllr Lortie as Chair of the Committee for the municipal year 2024/25. This was seconded by Cllr Papilio, with all members voting in favour.

Cllr Lortie accepted the position.

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Lortie be elected as Chair of the Finance & Administration Committee for the municipal year 2024/25.

FA 24/02 To Elect a Vice-Chair for the Municipal Year 2024/25

Cllr Lortie proposed Cllr Sowry-House as Vice-Chair of the Committee for the municipal year 2024/25. This was seconded by Cllr Papilio, with all members voting in favour.

Cllr Sowry-House accepted the position.

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Sowry-House be elected as Vice-Chair of the Finance & Administration Committee for the municipal year 2024/25.

FA 24/03 To Receive and Accept apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85 (1))

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Hardy due to work commitments.

FA 24/04 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)

There were no declarations of interest.

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FA 24/05 Paper A - To Approve minutes of meeting held on 4 January 2024 LGA 1972, sch 12, para 41

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the minutes of the meeting held on 4 January 2024, subject to updating the attendees to include Cllr Stennett.

FA 24/06 Paper B – To Approve Bank Reconciliation for April 2024

The bank reconciliation for April 2024 was **APPROVED**.

FA 24/07 Paper C – To Receive and Note the Quarter 4 Budget Monitoring Report and Year End Position for financial year ended 31 March 2024

Cllr Craven raised the following queries:

- Line 75 – Allotments water: Why was there an overspend. The Clerk confirmed at the time of budget setting it was anticipated that the Allotment Association would take over self-management of the allotment site. Therefore, water costs would be payable by the Allotment Association. The overspend had been offset by the allotment rent income received by the Council.
- Line 106 – Allotments sheds: Would sheds be purchased by the Council on behalf of the plot holders as in previous years. The Clerk confirmed it was anticipated sheds would be offered to plot holders later in the year.
- Line 109 – Exceptional & Capital cricket fence nets: Why did the actual spend show -£1200.00 with a variance of £3,200. The Clerk confirmed the £1200 was an adjustment from the 2022/23 financial year which was not progressed due to availability of steel posts. However, 3-4 posts would be replaced in the 2024/25 financial year.
- Line 111 – Exceptional and Capital tree survey: The spend of £3350 was unbudgeted. The Clerk confirmed the tree survey was budgeted in the 2022/23 financial year.
- Line 113 – Exceptional and Capital office porch: What progress had been made bearing in the mind the planning permission granted for commencing building works. The Deputy Clerk informed members that East Dorset Planning had confirmed the accessible car parking space and drop-off area at the front of the Village Hall needed to be completed prior to any building works commencing. Quotations from Contractors were imminent, with works needed to have commenced by the end of August 2024. It was confirmed that once works had commenced a Certificate of Lawful Use application would need to be submitted to Dorset Council as formal confirmation that the development had commenced within the three-year timeframe.
- Line 129 – Exceptional and Capital replacement vehicle: Why was there an overspend. The Clerk confirmed the actual spend on the utility gator was £12,950, showing an overspend of £950.
- Line 131 – Exceptional and Capital website redesign: When would work to redesign the website commence. The Clerk confirmed once the office IT had been upgraded in June 2024, work would commence on the website.
- Line 44 – General Admin election costs: Was there any progress with DAPTC relating to the high costs of the by-election in November 2023. The Clerk confirmed DAPTC were highlighting the high elections costs nationally to NALC and the concerns that people were not putting themselves forward for election due to the costs involved and impact on Councils budgets and effects on local democracy.
- Grant Funding: Was there any progress with the grant applications for the outdoor gym equipment at the Recreation Ground. The Clerk confirmed no response had been received to the application submitted to Suez to date. However, further grant applications were in progress.

The Clerk advised members that further CIL monies had been received taking the total CIL receipts monies to £15,271.11 which would need to be spent in the 2024/25 financial year.

Discussion took place relating to the earmarked reserves for refurbishment/rebuild of the sports pavilion. The Clerk reiterated to members that public consultation would need to commence during the 2024/25 financial year in order to appoint a project manager and architect. It was noted the importance of public consultation particularly when the Council were seeking approval of a Public Works Loan.

Members **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the Quarter 4 Budget Monitoring Report and Year End Position for financial year ended 31 March 2024.

FA 24/08 Paper D – To Review and Approve Bank Mandate and Signatories

The Clerk presented the report, noting the need for additional bank signatories as a result of recent resignations and retirements and a newly elected Council.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend **APPROVAL** to Full Council to update the bank mandate and signatories for the newly elected Council for a 5-year term, to be reviewed annually as follows:

REMOVE Paul Harrison, Dave Everett and David Mattocks and REPLACE with Cllr Adrian Craven, Cllr Jocelyn Lortie and Cllr Vanessa Papilio.

The Clerk advised that the necessary forms would be completed for signing following the Full Council meeting scheduled on 28 May 2024.

FA 24/09 Paper E – To Review and Approve General and Earmarked Reserves Policy

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend **APPROVAL** to Full Council of the General and Earmarked Reserves Policy.

FA 24/10 Paper F – To Review and Approve Investment Strategy Policy

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend **APPROVAL** to Full Council of the Investment Strategy Policy.

FA 24/11 Paper G – To Review and Approve the Councils Regular Payment Methods

The Clerk presented the report, noting appendix 1 provided a list of direct debits, already in place for the Councils operating account held with the Co-operative Bank.

Cllr Craven queried why there were two monthly direct debits set up for Water Plus for the sports pavilion. The Clerk confirmed the sports pavilion lounge/kitchen and changing rooms were on separate water meters and therefore billed separately.

Cllr Lortie asked what Central Computer Management Ltd related to. The Clerk confirmed this related to the monthly payroll processing fee trading as Livepay.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend **APPROVAL** to Full Council of the following:

- Use of variable direct debits shown in Appendix 1.
- Use of BACS by the Councils payroll provider.
- Use of CHAPs for fund transfers between the Councils banking arrangements.

FA 24/12 Paper H – To Review and Approve Fund Transfers

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend **APPROVAL** to Full Council the following fund transfers:

- 1 May 2024 - £260,000 transfer from the co-operative bank to the Public Sector Deposit Fund (PSDF) on receipt of the first tranche of the Precept to ensure the co-operative bank account remained below the FSCS limit of £85,000. Mandate authorised by Cllrs Anne & Paul Holland and countersigned by the Clerk.

FA 24/13 Matters for forthcoming agendas No decisions can be taken¹

Cllr Sowry-House suggested for the Council to consider developing a Men's Shed provision in the Tower's Way green space as part of the 2025/26 budget-setting process.

FA 24/14 To Agree a date and time for the next meeting – Tuesday 9 July 2024 at 19:00 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen.

FA 24/15 Close of Meeting at 20:29.

Signed as a correct record of the meeting..... *F. Lotrie* Date..... *9/7/24*

¹ 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)