

WENDOVER PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting

21st November 2023 at 7:30pm

St Anne's Hall Aylesbury Road Wendover HP22 6JG

Present: Councillors Walker, Williams (Chair), Worth

Clerk and Minutes: Andy Smith

Members of Public: 3

1. MEMBERSHIP

F23/41 Councillor O'Donnell had sent apologies in advance for not attending and it was agreed to discuss his membership in absentia. It was **RESOLVED** to welcome Councillor O'Donnell to the committee membership

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

F23/42 Councillors Gallagher and O'Donnell gave apologies, and these were **ACCEPTED**

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

F23/43 None

4. MINUTES

F23/44 The minutes of the meeting of 8th August 2023 were considered. The minutes were **RESOLVED** as a true record to be signed by the Chair

5. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

F23/45 The chair wished Cllr Gallagher all the best in his recovery

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

F23/46 A member of the public highlighted that the Parish Council had invested in the new Canal Tow Path, and it would make sense to have money in the budget to support the ongoing maintenance to protect that investment. This was noted by the Council, it was further noted that the current surface would also be under some sort of warranty for defects.

F23/47 A member of the public pointed to budget code 4570 Professional support which in the narrative states "There is nothing planned but need to keep a reserve". The member of the public expressed concern that last year only £750 was spent and the planned budget was £2000, therefore the Parish Council could be requesting more money than it needs. The Clerk explained that he accepted it was an incorrect use of the word reserve, however that it was a contingency and his advice to Council that it was prudent and entirely correct to have this budget line. The Clerk further confirmed that there was nothing in the budget designed to

create increased reserves for some unpublished major works and that all expenditure or future projects would be clearly publicised in the papers.

- F23/48** A member of the public highlighted that on the website it would be useful to be able to navigate from the projects page to the budgets page. This was noted and will be actioned by the clerk
- F23/49** A member of the public put to the Council that there was a lot of detail in the proposal and that it may help the public to include a single A4 high level summary to make the proposal easier to digest. They were thanked for this comment, and it was accepted that in order to increase transparency by providing all the relevant detail this could sometimes make the information confusing.
- F23/50** A member of the public highlighted the LGPS pension scheme shortfall needed more explanation. It was noted that the LGPS issue was monitored by Finance Committee and was a standing agenda item. When the next statement from LGPS was produced it would be noted on the agenda. For clarity it was explained that the LGPS had a pension fund shortfall that was slowly being repaid through the monthly employer's contributions. We have one active member and should they leave then Wendover Parish Council would be liable for any outstanding deficit. This would be a very significant amount; therefore, the Parish Council has been building an EMR up to £75k to be able to make an initial payment when that happens and allow them to negotiate a further multi year repayment arrangement.
- F23/51** A member of the public highlighted the overspend on streetlight repairs. It was noted that even though our lights are LED units they are now at an age where they are susceptible to failure. The repairs tend to happen on different lights so we are slowly replacing our lighting stock, we have been advised this will be an ongoing pattern.
- F23/52** A member of the public highlighted that it would be useful to note with the budget any fund or grants that are due in such as Community Board Money and this was agreed and noted.

7. CLERKS REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

- F23/53** It was noted all issues had been discussed on the agenda.

8. GENERAL REPORTS

a) To review the I&E report, EMRs and balance sheet for Nov 2023.

- F23/54** The reports were noted, and it was noted that overspends are mitigated by underspends in other budgets

c) To review the over £500 report and VAT claim for Jul-Sep 2023

- F23/55** The reports and VAT claim were noted

d) To review the bank reconciliations and statements for Jul-Sep 2023

- F23/56** The reports were noted

e) To note the end of year projections

- F23/57** It was noted that the LPM had not been performing as well as anticipated which has reduced stall income

f) To receive an update on project costs up to Jul 2023

- F23/58** The costs were noted

g) To review the Flagstone account statements

F23/59 The statement was noted

h) **To receive an update on the LGPS pension fund deficit and cessation value**

F23/60 There will be no update now until we receive the annual statement from LGPS

9. OTHER MATTERS

a) **Annual Return and Audit**

F23/61 The conclusion of the 2022/23 annual return was noted

F23/62 The interim internal audit date was noted

F23/63 A rota of the committee to undertake quarterly internal finance checks was considered and it was **RESOLVED** to implement the rota and checks. The clerk was instructed to set up the rota and communicate with the committee to implement.

b) **Budget 2024/25**

F23/64 The budget proposal was considered and welcomed by the committee. A budget for canal tow path maintenance was considered. An amendment to create a footpath repair and maintenance budget line in the amenities budget, totalling £5000, was discussed. It was **RESOLVED** to accept this amendment. The budget as amended was **RESOLVED** to be approved to full council for consideration at the next meeting. The clerk was thanked for all their hard work in preparing the budget.

c) **Card Payment Machine**

F23/65 It was **RESOLVED** for the office to set up card payments through SumUp.

10. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

F23/66 None were presented

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

F23/67 Tuesday 20th February 2024 7.30pm St Annes Hall

12. CLOSURE OF MEETING

All business was transacted. The meeting was closed at 8:54pm

Signed by *C Gallagher*

Chair to the Finance Committee

Date: 20/02/2024