

Proper Officer/RFO: Mrs Pauline Collins

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Minutes of Finance and Administration Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 6th February 2024

Present: Councillors – Ms I Horsley (Chair), Miss C Sharpe, Mr D Greenup, Ms L Cooke, Mr G Smith and Mr R Fellows- Turnbull
Proper Officer/RFO - Mrs P Collins
Members of the Public- 2

24014 Apologies for absence (including resolutions to accept reason for absence by Councillors)
All Councillors were present.

24015 Code of Conduct and Disclosure of Interests
None

24016 Public questions in respect of items on the agenda
Standing orders were suspended for questions to be asked from the Public

Questions asked were in respect of the 2024/25 budget. This item was not on the agenda and was therefore not answered. The resident was referred to the Parish Council website for current information of the future budget.

24017 Minutes of meeting held on 2nd January 2024
The minutes having been distributed prior to the meeting and made available to the Public.
It was noted that not all Councillors attended this meeting. A minor change was made to item 2005(a) Initial wording - “and councillors received login letter”. The Chair added “signatory” prior to councillors in ink.
Resolved to approve and were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

24018 Matters arising from the minutes not otherwise on the agenda
a) Unity Trust bank account – A deposit of £20,000 has been transferred (as approved at the Full Parish Council meeting on 23rd January 2024)

24019 To discuss and review the current year’s budget
The current budget figures had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Proper Officer reported on the budget, expenditure and income to date.

24020 To discuss and consider the allocation of earmarked reserves
The current EMR were reviewed and no changes were required. It was noted that EMR balance had decreased during 2023/24. The balances will need to be reviewed and perhaps increases to these reserves be made in 2024/25 and 2025/26. The issues of the possibility of precept capping and the devolution of some of the ESCC and RDC funded services to Parish Councils had been raised by a District Councillor at the last Parish Council meeting for future consideration when planning reserves required.

24021 Policies and Procedures
(a) To review the co-option policy
This policy has been referred back to this Committee from the full Parish Council for further discussions. The changes to this policy were discussed.
Resolved to accept the new policy and recommend to the next Parish Council meeting to adopt this policy. A draft copy to be sent to the current co-option applications for information.

24022 Future agenda items
Budget 2024/25 and precept
Standing Orders document

Action Plan
Emergency Plan
CCTV

24023 Confidential Items

(a) To resolve that pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the following matters.

Resolved to accept this item and proceed to discuss the confidential items excluding public and press.

(b) To discuss and consider a response the following acceptable objections received by the external auditor to 2022/23 AGAR

Objection 2: “You object to the management of funds and investments including NS&I and NatWest accounts.”

Objection 4: “You object to expenditure during the year on staff costs compared to the prior year and the Council’s failure to carry out a benchmarking exercise in respect of this cost.”

A draft of the proposed response had been circulated to Councillors prior to this meeting. Councillors discussed items which had been changed on the draft response relating to these objections.

Resolved to accept the current changes. However further amendments are required.

(c) To delegate the compilation of these responses and a report for the Full Parish Council to Cllrs Horsley, Sharpe and the Proper Officer

Resolved for Cllrs Horsley, Sharpe and the Proper Officer to compile an amended report for discussion and approval at a future Parish Council meeting.

Resolved to hold an extraordinary meeting on Monday 19th February at 4.30pm to discuss, consider and recommend to Full Council the final draft of the response.

24024 Close of meeting

Meeting closed at 9.05pm

24025 Date of next meeting

Next meeting to be held on 5th March 2024 (subject to review)

Signed _____
(Chair)

Dated _____

Draft until agreed and signed at the next meeting