

Finance Committee Meeting held on Thursday 19 October 2023, in the Parish Room at 7pm

Present: Councillors Vinny Hall, Graham Lee (Chair), Norton Mahy (Vice Chair). Councillor Chris Button attended on Zoom.

Membership: All parish councillors.

Quorum: Three

Meetings: As required and at least annually in relation to budget setting.

Terms of Reference:

1) Advisory role to full Council on financial matters including review of contracts, quotations, prices, wages and budget setting.

2) Delegated powers may be granted by full Council for a specific purpose(s).

3) Reports to all councillors following meetings.

4) Minutes to full Council for approval and publication.

Information on the financial matters of the Parish Council is published on the website and in the Yearbook.

<https://www.ashwell.gov.uk/parish-council/budgets-and-audits/>

<https://www.ashwell.gov.uk/ashwell-yearbook-204/>

Minutes

- 1 Apologies for absence.** Ian Duffy (away), Martin Hoffman (away), David Sims (unwell).
- 2 To note the minutes of the previous committee meeting. (11 October 2022; minutes were signed at the November 2022 Council meeting).** This was noted.
- 3 Financial report for the Yearbook 2024 edition. To note arrangements.** It was noted that a draft would be prepared by Cllr Norton Mahy.
- 4 Exclusion of Press and Public. To resolve that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, namely financial and HR matters.**

This was proposed, seconded and approved.
- 5 Review of banking arrangements. To consider any proposals to be made to full Council.** It was agreed that research into an alternative to the existing savings account be researched with a view to gaining an improved interest rate.
Action: Chris
- 6 Review of contracts and preferred suppliers. To consider proposals to be made to full Council for the following:**

- 6.1 **Current grounds maintenance contracts, (i) pitch maintenance at the Recreation Ground, (ii) grounds maintenance of land that the Parish Council is responsible for.** It was agreed that both current suppliers be contacted to determine information on possible renewal for next year.
Action: Clerk
- 6.2 **The current preferred suppliers list; any proposals for any amendments/additions.** It was agreed that amendments be proposed to full Council.
- 6.3 **Tenancy agreements for both Parish Council as landlord and as tenant.** These were noted.
- 7 **2023-24 budget review and budget setting for 2024-25.** To consider proposals to be made to full Council for wages, prices, premises costs, quotes in hand, contingencies, costs of future projects and the setting of the parish precept for 2024-25.

It was agreed that the following recommendations be put to full Council:

- 7.1 Budget figures for 2024-25. The first draft including the setting of the parish precept for 2024-25 to be noted and any queries raised, and, following further input, a final draft be proposed to the December Council meeting for approval.
- 7.2 Precept. To agree in principle that the precept be increased to cover rises in costs in order to maintain a good level of service to the parish.
- 7.3 Costs of future projects. To consider whether the shortfall in funding for the Pavilion upgrade project be covered by an increase in the precept over a defined number of years.

Acting Clerk, Jane Porter.