

# TWYFORD PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held at Loddon Hall, RG10 9JA on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2022 at 7.45pm.**

**Present:** Mrs B Ditcham (Acting Chair), Mr R Abeywardana, Mr M Alder, Mr M Bray, Mr J Jarvis & Mr R Mantel.

**Minutes:** Mrs L Moffatt (Clerk).

In the absence of the Chairman and Vice-chairman the committee elected a chair.

Mr R Mantel proposed Mrs B Ditcham to chair the meeting, seconded Mr R Abeywardana. Motion carried unanimously.

1. **Public Questions.** None.

2. **Apologies.** Mr J Bowley, Mr C Wickenden & Mr T Winchester.

3. **Declaration of interest in items on the agenda.** None.

4. **Minutes of the meeting held on 15th November 2022** Approval of the minutes as a true and accurate record proposed Mr M Bray, seconded Mr M Alder, motion carried unanimously.

5. **Matters arising and action points.** None.

6. **Budgets and Precept 2023-24**

6.1 To consider a budget for community engagement (see item 9.1)

Proposed Mr R Mantel, seconded Mr J Jarvis to **RECOMMEND to Full Council** that any Coronation expenditure should be taken from capital reserves. Motion carried unanimously.

Proposed Mr R Abeywardana, seconded Mr M Alder to budget £2,000 for community engagement. Funds to be taken from capital to negate the effect on the precept. Motion carried unanimously.

6.2 To review the Finance and General Purposes committee budget for 2023-24

The figures were reviewed.

[Note: Salary forecast increase is based on 3%]

6.3 To note the 2023-24 provisional tax base of 3,046.30 – noted.

[Note: Last years tax base was 3026.40]

6.4 To review the whole Council budget/precept for 2023-24

The figures were reviewed and are currently looking at a 35% increase which amounts to an additional £14.50 per year for a band D council tax payer. It was agreed that the committees should be asked if there are any cuts they wish to make.

No allocation will be made for elections, these costs will be budgeted for retrospectively.

7. **Clerk's Report (written report circulated to councillors)**

7.1 National Westminster bank – closure of safe custody with effect from May. Clerk to look at alternatives.

7.2 Completion of Internal Checks (with Mrs T Ramsden) – 29.11.22. Noted.

8. **Cost of Living Crisis**

8.1 Update on website, leaflets, Community Hub events. The leaflet has been circulated to Twyford and Ruscombe residents. Pages are on the website for both cost of living help and community hub (warm space) events. Twyford Together are holding the funding left over from the community covid response. Agreed to ask if they would help businesses offering assistance (hot drinks and soup) and they, in turn, could apply to the Council for grant funding if required. Clerk to liaise with Rob Yeadon.

8.2 To consider a social media advertising budget for this initiative. Proposed Mr J Jarvis, seconded Mr M Bray to **RECOMMEND to Full Council** a budget of £400 for promotion of the cost of living leaflet. Motion carried unanimously.

9. **Streamlining meetings**

9.1 To consider widening the remit of the fete committee to form 'Community events and engagement committee' and increasing the budget to take account of the wider remit. The committee considered that the remit of the Fete committee could be widened to encompass events such as Meet your Councillor, Annual Parish meeting, Coronation planning and social media. Agreed not to include Twyford in Bloom at this stage although this can be reviewed.

Proposed Mr M Bray, seconded Mr M Alder to **RECOMMEND to Full Council** widening the remit of the fete committee to form 'Community events and engagement Committee'.

Motion carried unanimously.

**10. Meeting dates** - to consider the two options and agree 2023 dates. Proposed Mr M Alder, seconded Mr R Abeywardana to **RECOMMEND to Full Council** the 'aspirational' set of meeting dates. Motion carried with 4 in favour.

**11. Zoom** – to consider whether there is a requirement for the monthly subscription now that there is access to Teams. Agreed to cancel the Zoom subscription.

**12. Cheque List** - To consider data protection advice from BALC and the need to group salary payments on future reports. Noted.

**13. To consider booking a training session for Thursday 25th May 2023 and facilitated Action planning session.** To consider options. Following discussion, it was proposed by Mr R Abeywardana, seconded Mr M Alder to Recommend to Full Council approval of the quote of £325 plus mileage for Councillor training on 25<sup>th</sup> May. 2 in favour, 4 against, motion fell.

Proposed Mr R Mantel, seconded Mr M Bray to **RECOMMEND to Full Council** approval of the BALC quote of £840 for training on 25<sup>th</sup> May. Motion carried with 4 in favour.

Proposed Mr J Jarvis, seconded Mr R Abeywardana to **RECOMMEND to Full Council** approval of the quote of £450 plus mileage for a facilitated action planning session in September. Motion carried unanimously.

**14. CIL – to consider request for funding for California Country Park one drive folder)**

Proposed Mr Roy Mantel, seconded Mr R Abeywardana to **RECOMMEND to Full Council** not to contribute CIL funding to California Country Park. Motion carried 3 in favour, 1 against, 2 abstained.

**15. Review of Policies**

15.1 Investment policy (Note: Councillors to have read the guidance note and draft policies in the One Drive Folder) To consider response from BALC.

Mr R Mantel reported on the history of the share purchases which took place between 1960 and 1990's. He will draft detailed information on this jointly with Mr J Jarvis and send to the clerk.

Proposed Mr M Alder, seconded Mr R Abeywardana to seek quotes for a legal/financial adviser who can advise on the policy, draw up a plan and provide information on the real return of the original investment. Motion carried unanimously.

The clerk will seek further information from BALC as to whether they can recommend someone to undertake this task.

15.2 Election protocol – approve unamended – carried forward

15.3 Procedure for making payments

15.3.1 To consider adding the requirement to check minutes for authorisation / budgeted funds for each payment – no action

15.4 Standing Orders – carried forward

15.4.1 To consider amending the Terms of Reference for the Planning & Amenities and Neighbourhood Plan Committees as detailed in the Planning and Amenities minutes (November 2022).

15.4.2 To consider amending the Terms of Reference as detailed in the Streamlining meetings report.

**16. Grant Requests**

16.1 Me 2 Club Grant request £500 – Proposed Mr M Bray, seconded Mr J Jarvis to **RECOMMEND to Full Council** a grant to Me 2 Club of £400. Motion carried unanimously.

**17. Correspondence** – all noted.

17.1 Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund - employer newsletter - Autumn 2022

17.2 Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund Annual Meeting 2022 16.11.22

17.3 Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund newsletter reminder

**18. Citizen of the Year Award** – to consider nominations. The Twyford Together Awards evening will be held on either 6<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023. Agreed to carry item forward.

**19. Items to be considered from other Committees**

19.1 Planning and Amenities 06.12.22 – no items to be considered.

19.2 Parish Lands – no meeting.

**20. Date of next meeting** - 24<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Finance and General Purposes committee  
Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2022  
All items were noted

**21. Bank Balances and VAT.**

Bank balances as at the end of November 2022

Nat West current account £35,841.35, Unity Trust current account £59,478.51, Deposit account £6,971.51, income bonds £157,000, National Savings account £3,770.62 and Twycombe Lodge tenants deposit account £3,024.56

VAT return for November 2022 - carried forward

**22. Website –**

22.1 Downtime due to security issue

22.2 Cloudflare - DDoS Protection – name server change completed

22.3 Additional pages: Twinning; Cost of Living; Community Hub; Transactions over £500.

**23. Clerk report:**

23.1 Berkshire Pension Scheme - employer contribution rate from 1 April 2023 (until 31 March 2026) is 27.2%.

23.2 The National Joint Council (NJC) has also agreed that from 1 April 2023, all employees covered by this National Agreement, regardless of their current leave entitlement or length of service, will receive a permanent increase of one day (pro rata for those who work part-time) to their annual leave entitlement.

**24. CIL Funding**

24.1 To note the reports

**25. Data Protection Regulations update – no items to report**

Expenditure approved under Financial Regulation 4			
Description	Budget	Amount	Approval
Remembrance band costs	Office expenses	£300	Clerk

**The meeting closed at 9:54 pm.**