

TWYFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held at Loddon Hall, RG10 9JA on Tuesday 24th January 2023 at 7.45pm.

Present: Mr J Bowley (Chairman), Mrs B Ditcham, Mr R Abeywardana, Mr M Alder, Mr M Bray, Mr R Mantel, Mr C Wickenden & Mr T Winchester.

Minutes: Mrs L Povey (Clerk).

1. **Public Questions.** None.
2. **Apologies.** None.
3. **Declaration of interest in items on the agenda.** None.
4. **Minutes of the meeting held on 13th December 2022** Approval of the minutes as a true and accurate record proposed by Mrs B Ditcham, seconded by Mr M Alder, motion carried nem con.
5. **Matters arising and action points:**
 - 5.1 Meet your Councillor – resident request to include cycling information on the website – committee to consider whether this would be appropriate. Mr M Alder and Mr C Wickenden to provide information to go on the website.
6. **Budgets and Precept**
 - 6.1 To finally review the Finance and General Purposes committee budget for 2023-24. Proposed by Mr M Alder, seconded by Mr C Wickenden to budget £106,431.61 for the Finance and General Purposes committee part of the budget/precept. Motion carried nem con.
 - 6.2 To review the whole Council budget/precept for 2023-24 and to make a recommendation to Full Council for both the budget and precept for 2023-24. Agreed a total Council budget of £179,097.51 with ring-fenced funds of £5715 (wildflower information board £1170, hedge-laying at Hurst Road Allotments £4375 & hedge-laying at Stanlake Meadow carpark £170). Proposed by Mr C Wickenden, seconded by Mr T Winchester to reduce the precept using £14,000 from capital. A counter proposal was made by Mr R Mantel, seconded by Mr M Bray to reduce the precept using £18,000 from capital (in addition to the £2,000 previously agreed). Proposed to **RECOMMEND to Full Council** a precept of £153,382.12. Unanimously agreed.
 - 6.3 Precept over £140,000 – to review the need to provide financial information to residents (draft leaflet in Sharepoint). Proposed by Mr M Bray, seconded by Mr C Wickenden to approve the leaflet subject to final adjustments. Motion carried unanimously.
7. **Clerk's Report** (written report circulated to councillors)
 - 7.1 Berkshire Pension Scheme - employer contribution rate from 1 April 2023 (until 31 March 2026) is 27.2% - noted.
 - 7.2 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 – noted.
 - 7.3 Quote to improve logo / header – the clerk is working on obtaining a sharper logo for use on the leaflet / promotional materials.
 - 7.4 Budget and Capital Statement to 31.12.22 – noted.
 - 7.5 Risk Assessment 2022-23 – Mr M Bray sought clarification surrounding age restrictions in terms of insurance cover. Clerk to provide information to the committee.
8. **Cost of Living Crisis**
 - 8.1 Update on leaflets, website & Community Hub / Warm Space event calendar – noted.
9. **CIL**
 - 9.1 To note the January reports – noted.
 - 9.2 To consider using CIL for £3,593 tyre run – Proposed by Mr M Bray, seconded by Mr C Wickenden to use CIL funds for the tyre run. Motion carried unanimously.
 - 9.3 To consider using CIL for playground repairs / new equipment – carried forward.

10. Review of Policies

10.1 Investment policy

10.1.1 Mr R Mantel and Mr J Jarvis to provide historic information on the shares, Draft grid sent 14.12.22. Reminder sent 16.01.23. Mr Mantel's updated information has been added to the grid.

10.1.2 HALC – recommendation for legal / financial adviser to advise on policy, draw up a plan and provide information on the real return of the original investment – quote awaited.

10.2 Election protocol – approve unamended. Proposed by Mr R Mantel, seconded by Mrs B Ditcham to **RECOMMEND to Full Council** to amend the wording to read “Any person having given notice should advise the Clerk of any amendment which should be circulated to the Council prior to the election” motion carried unanimously.

10.3 Draft appraisal policy (JB) – carried forward.

10.4 Amendments to Standing Orders

10.4.1 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).

10.4.2 To consider amending the Committee Terms of Reference on the Standing orders in line with the recommendations in the Streamlining Meetings report. This will empower the committees to make decisions within their remit. (Amendments to consider are listed in Sharepoint)

Agreed for the committees to discuss this item and report back with their comments.

10.5 Risk Management Policy - version updated – Approval proposed to **RECOMMEND to Full Council** by Mr T Winchester, seconded by Mr C Wickenden. Motion carried unanimously.

10.6 Publishing Policy – version updated – Approval proposed to **RECOMMEND to Full Council** by Mr M Bray, seconded Mr T Winchester. Motion carried nem con.

11. Grant Requests

11.1 Citizen Advice Wokingham – Proposed by Mr R Abeywardana, seconded by Mr M Bray to **RECOMMEND to Full Council** a grant of £2,000. Motion carried 7 for, 1 against.

12. Correspondence – none.

13. Citizen of the Year Award – to consider nominations.

The Council agreed that as confidential items were to be discussed the Chairman invoked Standing Order 1C “That in view of the special or confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw”. Proposed Mr C Wickenden, seconded Mrs B Ditcham and carried unanimously.

Any decisions will be noted on a separate set of confidential minutes.

14. Annual Parish Meeting – to consider the format and whether to invite a speaker. Agreed the reports should be more vibrant with 2-3 slides per presentation. The Neighbourhood Plan referendum should be promoted. Clerk to provide ideas for speakers.

15. Items to be considered from other Committees:

15.1 Planning and Amenities 10.01.23 – None.

15.2 Parish Lands 17.01.23

Recommendations:

15.2.1 To make payment of the TRCA electricity invoice £1,099.30 for the skate park lighting 2019-2022.

15.2.2 To accept the quote of £21,839 for playground repairs and replacements.

Agreed there are sufficient funds and both items should be funded from CIL.

16. Date of next meeting - 18th April 2023

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All items were noted.

17. Bank Balances and VAT.

Bank balances as at the end of January 2023
Nat West current account £38,307.22, Unity Trust current account £42,520.05, Deposit account £6,976.09, income bonds £157,000, National Savings account £3,770.62 and Twycombe Lodge tenants deposit account £3,026.55
VAT return for December 2022 - £1,452.05
VAT return for January 2023 - £1,473.38

18. Data Protection Regulations update – no items to report

Expenditure approved under Financial Regulation 4			
Description	Budget	Amount	Approval
Edge IT Systems	5 year contract	£850.40	Clerk

The meeting closed at 22:02.