

Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 23rd August 2023

Present: Cllr I Mitchell (Chair), Cllr M Devendran (Mayor), Cllr R Crook, Cllr A Lord, Cllr M Verbinnen
Mrs W Bown (RFO)

1.	Apologies for Absence Cllr Edwards (ill)	ACTION
2.	Declarations of Interest None	
3.	<p>Updates from the last meeting: Mayor: payment of outstanding debt from Wiltshire Council £20,000 has now been paid into the Town Council's account.</p> <p>An environmental element has been added to the contractor appointment matrix.</p> <p>The payment of £1 per annum by Amesbury Green Fingers allotment group was recommended to the amenities committee and will be recommended to Full Council along with other charges to be discussed at this meeting at item 7.</p>	
4.	<p>Grant applications/General Power of Competence – Neighbourhood Watch The Clerk explained a misunderstanding on the part of the Neighbourhood Watch Group and confirmed that the Town Council had agreed at a previous meeting to support the scheme. Proposed: Cllr Lord Seconded: the Mayor Resolved: Neighbourhood Watch is to be asked to complete a grant application form to be presented to Full Council. Information re the Town Council's agreement to support the scheme is to be noted under 'special circumstances'.</p>	Clerk
5.	<p>To recommend the use of income from the outstanding debt to cover recent election costs It was noted that the Election EMR (earmarked reserve) would not cover the cost of recent by-elections and councillors discussed the merits of using the recently acquired £20,000 debt payment to boost the EMR. Proposed: Cllr Verbinnen Seconded: the Mayor Resolved: that the £20,000 be paid into the Election EMR.</p>	Clerk
6.	<p>To note contracts due for renewal For information, it was noted that the following contracts are soon due for renewal: Grounds maintenance Toilet cleaning Joblogik</p>	

		ACTION
7.	To consider 2024/25 charges	
7.1.	Bowman Centre and Centenary Pavilion: Proposed: Cllr Crook Seconded: the Mayor Resolved: to recommend to Full Council that charges are increased by £1/hour	Clerk
7.2.	Allotment charges: Proposed: Cllr Lord Seconded: Cllr Verbinnen Resolved: to recommend to Full Council that charges are raised by £1 per year, to include a charge of £1 per year for Amesbury Green Fingers.	Clerk
7.3.	Sports club charges: It was noted that each club was charged using a different formula. Councillors considered the matter of the youth football club not paying for training sessions. It was noted that the Town Council maintains the area and the income does not cover this cost. Proposed: Cllr Lord Seconded: Cllr Verbinnen Resolved: to recommend to Full Council an increase of 5% on charges across the board and to continue a zero charge for youth football training sessions.	Clerk
7.4.	Cemetery charges: Proposed: Cllr Lord Seconded: Cllr Verbinnen Resolved: to recommend to Full Council an increase of 5% on cemetery charges.	Clerk
8.	To receive the report from the External Auditor It was noted that there were no recommendations from the auditor. Congratulations were extended to the Clerk. Cllr Crook asked that it be noted that the Town Council had been praised externally for its accounting.	
9.	To consider the content of the Ten-Year Plan for recommendation to Full Council Cllr Lord asked that an explanatory reference be added for items over £2,500. The Clerk confirmed that expenditure is always referred to Full Council or the appropriate delegated committee before being actioned. Reference was made to the idea of a new Plan, to be developed over the next year. Councillors confirmed that they were happy to continue the support given to the youth group who currently uses the Bowman Centre without charge.	Clerk
10.	To resolve to exclude the public and press for the following items due to the confidential nature of discussing contracts No members of the public or press were present.	
11.	To consider quotations for the recruitment of the new Town Clerk for recommendation to the Full Council at the Extraordinary Meeting on 23rd August Four quotations have been considered by the Staffing Panel, marked against the	

		ACTION
12.	<p>newly-established matrix (effectiveness/efficiency/cost). Cllr Mitchell recommended LGRC, quote £2,397 plus advert cost. Cllr Crook asked that a question be asked in the interview to demonstrate local knowledge. It was noted that, due to the shortness of time, LGRC has been appointed and that the finance committee is being asked to ratify the decision. Proposed: the Mayor Seconded: Cllr Lord Resolved: the decision to appoint LGRC to assist with the new Town Clerk recruitment is ratified.</p> <p>To agree to use funds from EMR 356 to support the recruitment process The Clerk confirmed that the EMR was for Asset Transfer/Staff. Proposed: Cllr Mitchell Seconded: Cllr Lord Resolved: to use funds from EMR 356 to support the recruitment process.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 7.50pm</p>	Clerk