

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 4th DECEMBER IN THE PARISH ROOM, FELIXSTOWE ROAD

PRESENT: Cllr L Burrows (Chairman), Cllr M Irwin (ex officio), Cllr J Hall (Committee), Cllr Ian O'Brien Baker (Committee), Cllr D Parsons (Councillor).

In attendance: Louis Linsley (Council Officer), Lisa Burgess (Incoming Clerk)

1. Apologies: Simon Daws

2. Interests

2.1 Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI): None Declared

2.2 Local non-pecuniary interests (LNPI): Cllr Mike Irwin is a user of Headway Services

3. Actions from last Meeting

Ongoing or on agenda

4. PUBLIC Forum

4.1 To allow members of the public to address business on the agenda.

No members of the public present

4.2 Any issues raised by the public.

No members of the public present

5. Financial Matters

5.1 Payments signed between meetings.

DECISION F2024/12a: To ratify the following payment, **Agreed**

Payment made between meetings				
08/10/24	SCC	75.00	Job advert	
Total		75.00		

5.2 Any pending expenditure transactions

See table with list of pending payments below.

Cllr Jane Hall to be reimbursed for purchasing food and other items for the volunteer evening.

Agreed

DECISION F2024/12b: To approve the following payments:

Pending Payments

Date of invoice	Payee	Gross £	Reason	Sect 137
18/11/24	Dave Parsons	65.25	Travelling to Dereham re Community Speedwatch	
21/11/24	Helen Davey	150.00	Musical entertainment for volunteer evening	Y
25/11/24	Jane Hall	11.34	Tea towels, cloths, antibacterial spray for MPC office	
14/11/24	Mike Irwin	27.37	Refreshments for volunteer evening	Y
02/12/24	Tesco	3.11	Office supplies	
02/12/24	Tesco	14.25	Office supplies	
21/11/24	Ipswich Computer Services	1520.40	Supply and installation of two laptops	
27/11/24	BT Direct Debit	205.02	Phone package November	
30/11/24	SCL	1996.37	Scheduled groundworks	
30/11/24	SCL	2692.80	Installations, Path clearing and litter removal	
26/11/24	Melanie Thurston	139.68	Locum clerk services	
04/12/24	Martlesham Community Hall	42.00	Hall for volunteer evening	Y
01/12/24	John Goodluck	225.00	Litter picking	
Total		7092.59		

5.3 Admin Income & Expenditure Report

Noted – The council is aware of some anomalies which are currently being corrected.

5.4 Appointment of Internal Auditor for 20223/24 financial year. Recommend to the full PC that Mr Hunt is appointed as internal auditor for 2024/25 with fee held as for 2023/24?

RECOMMENDATION F2024/12a: The F&GPC recommends to the Parish council that David Hunt reprise his role of internal auditor for the 2024/25 financial year with the fee held at same rate. Proposed by Cllr Burrows Seconded by Cllr Hall **Agreed**

5.5 Bank reconciliation verifications

Bank reconciliations completed 3rd December 2024

5.6 CIL report

Unchanged.

5.7 Council debit cards - cardholders Consider and recommend to the full PC who the cardholders should be.

There was a discussion.

RECOMMENDATION F2024/12b: The F&GPC recommends to the Parish Council that the incoming clerk has a card, the chairman has a reserve card and that when appointed the RFO will have a card. **Agreed**

6.1 Grants

6.1 Headway Suffolk request for a donation Consider and make recommendation to the full Council.

There was a discussion and £500 was proposed.

6.2 Greenways Project

Discussion about Greenways' work in the parish and a grant of £1200 was proposed.

RECOMMENDATION F2024/12c: That the Parish Council agrees to give a grant of £500 to Headway and £1200 to the Greenways project from the 2025/26 Grants budget. If agreed Headway should also receive a letter from the Council asking them to consider providing a service in Martlesham once again and making them aware of our new carpark facility.

Proposed by Cllr O'Brien Baker, seconded by Cllr Irwin **Agreed**

7. Draft F&GPC Budget & Earmarked Reserves for 2025/26

7.1 Review draft Admin budget Agree figure for recommendation?

There was a discussion, CP filed in the office together with these minutes.

The F&GPC recommend a budget of £161,172 for 2025/26, to be included in proposals to full Council. **Agreed**.

7.2 Draft Earmarked reserves Agree figure for recommendation, noting this is subject to change depending on expenditure?

There was a discussion

Projected end of year figures			
	Actuals to 28/11/24	Totals Projected to 31/03/25	Projected Commitments
101 Administration	£16,096.00	£24,000.00	£7,904.00
102 Total cost of employees	£70,057.00	£101,180.00	£31,123.00
105 Parish Room Expenses	£5,397.00	£8,000.00	£2,603.00
110 Chair's Budget	£362.00	£362.00	£0.00
111 Grants	£3,594.00	£3,594.00	£0.00
116 Climate Action	£0.00	£120.00	£120.00
120 Community Development	£1,831.00	£1,831.00	£0.00
201 Land Maintenance	£13,489.00	£25,000.00	£11,511.00
205 Play Equipment	£660.00	£2,000.00	£1,340.00
206 Trees and Hedging	£142.00	£2,000.00	£1,858.00
210 Parish Amenities	£778.00	£1,000.00	£222.00
220 Portland Woodlands	£1,236.00	£1,236.00	£0.00
Totals	£113,642.00	£170,323.00	£56,681.00

Projected funds available 31/05/25	
Account	Balance at 28/11/24
XX4211	£54,337.00
XX0198	£224,032.00
XX0624	£0.00
XX5494	£85,000.00
Projected total funds available	£363,369.00
MINUS	
Projected Commitments	£56,681.00
Projected funds available	£306,688.00
31/05/25	
Ear marked reserves	£222,624.36
General reserves	£84,063.64

8. Budget & Precept for 2025/26

8.1 Draft Recreation & Amenities budget & Earmarked Reserves

CPs for information filed in the office together with these minutes - Noted. There is an increase for the additional site of the Runway Heritage Carpark added to the land maintenance contract as well as relevant inflationary increases, the draft R&AC budget of £37,400.00 for 2025/26 to be included in proposals to full Council. **Agreed**

8.2 Draft Total Budget 2025/26 of £203,038.00 and Summary of Income to 28/11/24

CPs for information filed in the office together with these minutes. A draft budget total of £203,038.00 for the 2025/26 financial year was noted.

8.3 Financial Summary & Account Balances

Noted – Projected expenditure of £170,323.00 to 31/03/2025.

8.4 Martlesham Parish Council Precept 2025/26: ESC Letter

Noted.

8.5 Risk Assessment of General Reserves

DECISION F2024/12c: To agree the following Risk Assessment of General Reserves:

1. Risks related to uncertain income

- a) Potential capping of precepts by central government
- b) Low and possibly diminishing returns on investment income for the foreseeable future
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- c) Unavailability of short-term loan finance to cover extraordinary or emergency

expenditure

d) Potential unavailability of grants

2. Risks related to uncertain expenditure

- a) New developments in the parish requiring provision of more facilities and services without a matching increase in income
- b) Possible need to plug gaps arising from decreasing central government, county and district councils' and village organisations' provision
- c) Increasing frequency of extreme weather events
- d) The small scale of parish council activities means that extraordinary or emergency expenditure in any one year may be unpredictably large in comparison with budgeted income
- e) The growth of the parish may result in the need for additional councillors
- f) Changes in legislation and potential increase in the need for professional advice and services
- g) Potential changes of staff.
- h) Low recruitment of new councillors leading to increase in 'paid for' work
- i) Risk of becoming the sole trustee for the Martlesham Community Hall and Village Hall charities if the charities cannot continue to recruit and manage the buildings & bookings.

Agreed

8.6 Earmarked Reserves: proposals for 2025/2026

There was a discussion, the recommendation is that bigger councils keep 3-6 months of expense in General Reserves, in light of the risk assessment agreed in item 8.5. Noted CP filed in the office together with these minutes. Noted that the Earmarked Reserves are projected to be £222,624.36 on 31st March 2025.

8.7 Setting the budget & precept for 2025/26.

CP filed in the office together with these minutes.

Several examples were considered.

RECOMMENDATION F2024/12d: That the £30,000 in the EMR Strategy/Infrastructure be transferred to General Reserves to reduce the impact of the budget increase and it was noted that this EMR was superseded by the CIL Reserve. **Agreed**

Examples were provided and that chosen by the Committee as a recommendation to Full Council and would result in a 7.1% increase to the council tax. General reserves would be £75,000 which is 37% of the proposed budget.

RECOMMENDATION F2024/12e: That the Parish Council sets a **budget** for 2025/26 of **£203,038.00**.

Agreed.

RECOMMENDATION F2023/12f: That the Parish Council sets a **precept** for 2025/26 of **£165,000.00**.

Agreed.

The council thanked Cllr Mike Irwin for his work on preparing all the information for the budget.

9. Interim Clerking Working Group Report

9.1 Vehicle Activated Signs

There was a report from Cllr Parsons on new signs to improve the speeding in Martlesham.

DECISION F2024/12d: Upon receiving official notification of funding of £6400 from East Suffolk District Council, the Vehicle Activated signs can be purchased at the agreed upon quote of £6750 + £1350 in VAT with Martlesham Parish Council covering the shortfall of £350. **Agreed**

9.2 Project Management

A discussion paper and draft project plan had been provided for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION F2024/12g: The F&GPC recommends that the project document produced by

the Planning and Projects officer is used as a working document for future projects. **Agreed**

The F&GPC thanks the Planning & Project Officer for her work and expertise on the subject in the preparation of this document.

10. Consultations

10.1 Any consultations?

No consultations.

11. Annual Review

11.1 Annual Review

Noted – Planning and Projects Officer to add best value policy to the annual review program for once every 4 years following an election.

11.2 Review Risk Management

The current risk management has been accepted on an interim basis bearing in mind ongoing work is being completed.

11.3 Topic(s) for August workshop 2024 - an informal meeting which replaces a full Council meeting.
Cllr Irwin suggested a team building event to build team working skills.

12. Any items for the next agenda

12.1 List items

Procedures to be reviewed.

13. Martlesham Newsletters/Website/Facebook

13.1 Contributions/what has this meeting achieved?

Noted.

14. Staff Matters

14.1 2024-25 National Salary Award

It was decided that this item did not need to be taken in camera. It was noted as it has been previously agreed.

The meeting was closed at 09:15 pm.



Chairman, 8th Jan 2024