

A Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee of Arlesey Town Council held in the village hall on Tuesday 6th December 2022 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs: S Hamilton S Spoor
T Pang P Arkle
N Stevenson J Brown
J Hooker

In attendance: Mrs Janet Bailey (Town Clerk). Reece Delaney Co-option candidate was in attendance and no other members of the public were present.

22-3/014 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Dalgarno – attendance at Police Crime Panel meeting, and Cllrs Shelvey and Wenham – prior commitments.

22-3/015 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

(Members of the Council are invited to disclose any personal interest or personal and pecuniary interests they may have in any items on the agenda for this meeting in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct for Members)

015.1 To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda.
None received

015.2 To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests.
None received

015.3 To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate. A request for dispensation must be made on an individual basis.
None received

22-3/016 Public Participation- Standing Orders will be suspended at this point and re-instated before proceeding to the next agenda item - Public Participation up to a maximum of 15 minutes. Members of the public wishing to address the Council should note that they must advise the Council before 12 noon the day before the meeting both of their wish to participate and their topic. All participants are restricted to a maximum of three minutes.

There was no public participation.

22-3/017 Minutes of Meeting held 7th June 2022

To consider and approve the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 7th June 2022.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 7th June 2022 be approved and be signed by the Chairman as a true recording of proceedings

22-3/018 Planning Applications- None received

22-3/019 Balance Sheet as of 30th November 2022- For Information Only – Members reviewed Interim Balance Sheet as of 30th November 2022 (month 8).

The Clerk confirmed an additional bank account was being explored in preemption of precept receipt April 2023 to protect all funds within the FSCS limits.

22-3/020 Finance Review year to date – Members received and reviewed interim income and expenditure information as of 30th November 2022.

Noted, no questions raised.

21-3/021 Ear Marked Reserves Review – Members reviewed interim ear marked reserves as of 30th November 2022

The Clerk provided informed members of recommended EMR movements contained within the budget 04.11.22 v1 to build up specific reserves including the Community Centre Roof.

22-3/022 Committee Agendas – Members considered renewal of acceptance of electronic distribution for committee agendas.

Recommendation that council approve renewal of electronic distribution of committee agendas and provide printed copies for requesting members – Cllrs Arkle and Spoor.

22-3/023 Etonbury Green Wheel – Members received an update from Cllr Stevenson following recent meeting attendance.

Cllr Stevenson provided a through report on the “sticking points” for cycle access through the Western side of the green wheel and discussed the North/South route issues – currently being explored by BRCC and the stakeholder group. Alternative solutions for the Central Bedfordshire Council Rights of Way funding secured, are being investigated.

22-3/024 Draft Budget 2023/2024 –

i) Fee Review – Members reviewed fees charged for council services/use of facilities to be reflected in draft budget.

Recommendation that Clerk recommendations for fee reviews appended to the agenda are approved, with the following amendments:

- i) Allotment yearly rentals to be increased 2024/25 (in compliance with 1 year notice period required Allotment Holder Act 1950) to Standard Tenancy £50 per annum and Concessionary rate £25 per annum**
- ii) Football pitch fees to also apply a charge of £25 per hour cleaning for instances where the pavilion has been left in a condition requiring cleaning, and a £100 retention deposit for a season to be retained should any damages result due to misuse or mismanagement of the facility.**

ii) St Peters Grass cutting financial assistance – Members considered and approve continuation of St Peters grass cutting for 2023/2024 as part of budget setting.

Recommendation that council continue current contract with DCHL due to difficulty in finding willing contractors to carry out maintenance of graveyards and in light of complimentary feedback received from St Peters Church, residents and council staff.

iii) Draft Budget v1 04/11/22 - Members discussed and considered information contained in draft budget. v1 using data as at end Month 7 (interim figures)

The committee considered the draft budget.

Current year budget overspends were identified and approved.

Discussion followed on current year utility expenditure increases, provision of top up to EMR for Community Centre roof to facilitate total of £33k, Coronation contingency to assist Arlesey Community Events Group provision of activities in Arlesey and showing calculations had allowed for potential increases foreseen with utilities and contracts for the year 2023/24 whilst retaining the proper practices recommendation of between 3 to 6 months running costs in general reserve – council forecast showed slightly over 3 months available.

Recommendation that council approve draft budget 04.11.22 v1 appended to agenda controlling and providing cuts in expenditure forecasting income of £19,220 and £287,706 expenditure. £268,486 precept request resulting in an increase of 3.3% on Arlesey Town Council element of council tax – a £4 per year increase to Band D properties.

22-3/025 RoSPA Report Repairs – Members received quarterly update on repairs carried out in response to RoSPA report 2022.

Clerk to approach play area inspection contractor with bulk list issues and request quotation to complete as one job, presenting quotation to council at a subsequent meeting. The Clerk informed members that none of the issues identified were of high risk.

22-3/026 2022/23 Year End Closedown – Members considered quotations for third party closedown of 2022/23 accounts.

Recommendation that the council approve the ACCLC quote in the sum of £440.00 to complete the close down operation providing additional internal control.

22-3/027 St Johns Road Play area safety surfacing – Members to consider quotations sought following risk highlighted in RoSPA and quarterly contractor inspections.

Item deferred pending receipt of additional quotation requested not received to date.

22-3/028 Flag-Pole repairs – Members noted repairs commissioned to flagpole under delegated authority, by installer ensuring full health and safety compliance and insurance liability, at a cost of £387.20 + VAT. Funding to be provided from EMR Community Projects.

Recommendation that council approve expenditure to be offset by transferring funds from EMR 364-Community Projects.

22-3/029 CCTV Budget overspend – Members noted overspend of CCTV budget due to emergency repairs required following broken DVR and hard disk drives.

Noted - repairs authorised in compliance with Clerk delegation and authority under Financial Regulations.

22-3/030 Return of Resource Centre photocopier- Members to note correspondence and costings received from Utax regarding return of photocopier following termination of lease.

Noted

22-3/031 Pensions Triennial Valuation – Members to approve employer contribution rates calculated for the coming 3 years.

Recommendation that council approve the contribution rates as detailed for years 2023 to 2026 provided in the Triennial Valuation report for Arlesey.

22-3/032 Public Participation on Items Arising from this Meeting- *Standing Orders will be suspended at this point and re-instated before proceeding to the next agenda item.*

None

Meeting Closed 8.20pm

Chairman.....

Date