

Minutes Meeting of the Finance & Administration Committee meeting held on Monday 14th October 2024 at 7.00pm.

Present: Cllrs Mike Shepherd (Chairman), Coral Shepherd, Brett Thomas, and Sarah Whitehead.

In attendance: Karen Orgill (Business Manager (BM))
Geraldine Scanlon (Assistant Business Manager (ABM) & Minute Taker).
Jo MacCallum (Responsible Finance Officer (RFO))

- 1 **Apologies for absence** – Cllr Robert Frost.
- 2 **Declarations of interest and requests for dispensations by councillors in any agenda item** – None received
- 3 **Public participation** – None present
- 4 **Minutes of the Finance & Administration Committee meeting 15th July 2024**
 - a) To approve the Minutes
The minutes were approved as a correct record and duly signed by the Chairman.
 - b) To review action list
The action list was reviewed with those completed removed.
 - c) To consider matters arising
Cllr M Shepherd asked if the plants purchased by the Task Force had been paid for or if the invoice received from Thaxters was to be authorised for payment. The BM confirmed that the invoice should be paid directly to Thaxters. It was agreed the RFO would set the payment up to Thaxters and Cllr C Shepherd would release the payment without further delay.
Cllr C Shepherd said, at the last F&A Committee meeting the vacancy for the school crossing patrol had been discussed and, to her knowledge the post remains vacant but no updates from NCC Staff or our County Councillor.
- 5 **Current Financial Position**
 - a) IAC monthly report/quarterly report
Cllr M Shepherd advised his monthly and quarterly report had been shared via SharePoint prior to the meeting. He confirmed that bank reconciliations for 1st April 2024-30th September 2024 were all in order and the financial reports were numerically consistent. All payments had been processed and authorised in accordance with the financial regulations. The second quarter VAT return had been submitted on the 4th October 2024 and the reclaimed sum is £1743.19 had been paid on the 10th October 2024.
 - b) Whole council budgets
Cllr M Shepherd said all financial reports for July and August were posted on SharePoint prior to the meeting and invited questions. There were no questions raised regarding the reports.

Cllr C Shepherd reported there could be a potential overspend on the Environment Committee Street Lighting energy budget but advised the grass cutting payments should be within budget as there are only two invoices remaining for this financial year.

c) Aged debtors

Cllr M Shepherd said a cheque for £190.00 had been paid in on the 1st October 2024 and asked the ABM to confirm it was the outstanding invoice for a village voice advert that had been shown on the September aged debtors list. The ABM confirmed it was the aged debtors payment.

d) Reserves

Cllr M Shepherd said the reserves reports have been circulated via SharePoint and advised that there has been very little movement in the reserves this financial year. The only spending has been from the Warren and Skatepark reserves. Cllr C Shepherd advised funds had been used from the skatepark reserves for soil to infill around the skatepark.

Cllr M Shepherd asked the RFO if we should make any changes to the way the Parish Council use Edge for the next financial year. The RFO said there are no issues with the way the system is used so no changes are necessary. Cllr M Shepherd reminded the committee that budget setting was due to commence for 2025/26 and advised he would follow his usual procedure of creating an excel spreadsheet to project the budgets for the coming financial year and said it was the responsibility of other committee chairmen to review their budgets. F&A committee will then review all committee budgets before being presented to Full Council for approval.

6 IT Update

Cllr M Shepherd reported the following:

LightSpeed have confirmed they will be arriving Wednesday 16th October to complete the installation of the fibre broadband for both the Parish Council and DVCA.

A grant of £100.00 has been received from the government to switch our corporate identity from dersingham.org.uk to dersingham-pc.gov.uk. This has now been done apart from switching our default email addresses from .org.uk to .gov.uk. This now needs to be done. Cllr M Shepherd suggested he assists everyone individually with the switch and this was agreed.

7 New Savings Account for Parish Council

Cllr M Shepherd said the BM had placed details on SharePoint of a new account available with Hinckley & Rugby Building Society designed for Town and Parish Councils, which she had obtained from the Norfolk PTS newsletter. The F&A committee have previously discussed alternative accounts to replace the councils NS&I account. Cllr M Shepherd said it would be beneficial to have an account that was easily accessible and can be checked on a monthly basis, rather than annually. It was agreed that the RFO will investigate this and other similar accounts and report back to the committee.

8 Update on Staff and Councillor ID Badges

The BM handed round an ID badge she had made and advised she had placed on SharePoint prices for lanyards and ID badge holders. Cllr C Shepherd said the more lightweight badge holders would be sufficient for the staff and councillors needs. Cllr M Shepherd asked if people would prefer a clip to a lanyard. Cllr Thomas advised some companies have a policy in place regarding the wearing of the ID badges. After discussion,

Cllr M Shepherd proposed the mock ID Badge be presented at the next Full Council meeting for approval and the BM obtains costings of the badge holders, lanyards, and suitable cardboard to used. **It was resolved to approve the proposal.**

9 Update Supplier Due Diligence

Cllr M Shepherd advised he had placed two procedural documents on SharePoint that the RFO had written. The procedure for checking a Suppliers IR35 status and a Supplier Verification procedure. F&A committee had previously agreed the two accompanying forms for these procedures. After discussion it was agreed to add supplier insurance cover details to the forms.

Cllr C Shepherd said the PC currently have some existing contractors that should go through the supplier verification process.

There was a discussion about what stage in the ordering process the IR35 checks should take place. It was agreed that the IR35 and insurance status needs be known before councillors accept a quote otherwise there could be delays if the contractor fails the checks. It was suggested that the best way forward for minor works would be the development of a select list of contractors for different types of work and that all contractors on that list would have due diligence checks confirmed before they are asked to quote for services. It was agreed the BM would amend the supplier forms and the RFO will finalise the procedures ready for formal adoption.

10 Update Asset Insurance Valuation Review

Cllr M Shepherd expressed concern that we do not have a current insurance valuation for the Village Centre building and the QE2 Jubilee Hall. The former is needed for the Parish Councils insurance renewal and the latter is needed to enable us to confirm the adequacy of our tenants insurance cover. After discussion **it was resolved that the BM should obtain quotes for obtaining professional valuations from valuers with experience in assessing these types of public buildings. The quotes are required for the November F&A meeting to allow time to consider the value of the buildings when setting next years budgets.**

11 Update on Contracts Register.

Cllr M Shepherd reported he is still reviewing the contracts register.

12 Business Managers Update

a) Defibrillator Checks

The BM reported once she has carried out her monthly inspections the information is placed on SharePoint and Circuit is updated. If an email is received from Circuit to notify one of the defibs has been used the BM will check the defib and will update circuit accordingly.

The BM said a letter had been received from London Hearts, a charity which helps communities purchase new defibrillators. To take part in the scheme match funding would be needed. Councillors discussed possible locations and costings. It was agreed, for now, to take no further action.

b) Continuation of subscription to Google

The BM advised the Google subscription is an annual fee of £15.99 and asked Councillors if they wanted her to renew the subscription. After discussion **it was resolved to renew the subscription for one further year.** The BM asked for authority to replace her personal credit card details with the Parish Council purchase card details. This was agreed.

13 Correspondence

None

14 Items for inclusion on the next agenda

Budget Setting

15 Date of next meeting – Monday 11th November 2024, 7pm in the Loft

The meeting was placed in closed session at 8.40pm

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider passing the following resolution: "That by virtue of the provisions of Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded during discussion of the following business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

16 Leases Update

a) Sportsground

Cllr C Shepherd reported she had contacted James Wild regarding the delay with the land registry.

(b) Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hall

Cllr C Shepherd advised there is no update regarding the QE II Jubilee Hall lease.

(c) Land beside A.149. This had been discussed by Environment Committee and will be progressed.

With no further business the meeting was closed at 8.45pm

Action Points

Cllr M Shepherd

- To review the Contracts Register and give feedback to the BM.

Cllr C Shepherd

- To contact a specialist roofing/safety company for advice and quotation for installation of safety roof anchorage points.

Business Manager

- Obtain prices for lanyards, ID card holders and appropriate cardboard for ID Badges
- Add contractor insurance status to the New Supplier/Amended Supplier details forms.
- Obtain quotes for professional valuations on the QE II Jubilee Hall and the DVC buildings and present them to the November F&A committee meeting for decision.
- Renew the Google subscription and change the payment details held on the account.

RFO

- To review and update the insurance valuations on the current Asset Register for insurance renewal purposes in 2025
- To pay the invoice received from Thaxters.
- To investigate alternative Building Society accounts available for Parish Councils.