

Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance & Administration Committee meeting held on Monday 11th November 2024 at 7.00pm.

Present: Cllrs Mike Shepherd (Chairman), Robert Frost, Coral Shepherd, Brett Thomas, and Sarah Whitehead (Left at 8.20pm).

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** – All committee members were present.
- 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 14th October 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**
The BM had paid the Google subscription as previously agreed by the F&A committee. Cllr C Shepherd said she had begun the process of sifting through the Clerk Gmail account. To date, she had deleted more than a thousand emails however there are still a large volume of emails outstanding.
- 5 Current Financial Position**
 - a) IAC monthly report**
Cllr M Shepherd advised his monthly report had been shared via SharePoint prior to the meeting. He confirmed that bank reconciliations for 1st April 2024-31st October 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.
 - b) Whole council budgets**
Cllr M Shepherd said all financial reports for October had been placed on SharePoint prior to the meeting and invited questions. There were no questions raised regarding the reports. Cllr C Shepherd asked the RFO if she could provide the Staffing Committee with an estimated figure regarding the increase in National Insurance to assist with budget setting. Cllr M Shepherd said, whilst reviewing the budget headings, he had found a couple of minor miscoding's which have now been rectified.
 - c) Aged debtors**
Cllr M Shepherd advised there are currently no Aged Debtors.

d) Reserves

Cllr M Shepherd said the reserves reports have been circulated via SharePoint and advised there were no issues regarding the Reserves.

Cllr C Shepherd advised that the Planning Committee had discussed and agreed to the implementation of a Neighbourhood Plan which would need Councillors approval at the next Full Council meeting. Although there is currently no budget for the plan, Cllr C Shepherd advised grants can be applied for to the value of £10,000.00 and the planning committee suggested getting approval from Full Council to use funds from the Project Reserves for the remaining costs.

6 2025/26 Budget Setting

Cllr M Shepherd said he had worked with the RFO to gather as much basic information as possible regarding the projected 2024/25 outturn figures and known commitments for 2025/26. This information was summarised on the spreadsheet provided for the meeting. Councillors reviewed the projected outturns and the budget requirement for 2025/26 for each of their budget lines and agreed figures where possible. It was agreed to leave some of the 2025/26 budgets the same as 2024/25, but the following points were also noted.

Council Income

110	Interest BP	Increase to £3,500.00
145	Printing	Reduce to £100.00

Council Expenditure

1000	Chairman's Allowance	Increase to £300.00
1010	Councillor Training	Reduce to £1,200.00
1030	Section 137 Payments	Increase to £200.00
1045	Telephones/Broadband	Increase to £1,000.00
1050	Postage	Reduce to £0.00

Some budget lines require further investigation for additional information to establish a proposed figure for the 2025/2026 budget.

Codes requiring further information:

Council Expenditure

1015 Insurance – It was agreed to review the 2025/26 budget once the valuation of parish council owned buildings has been completed.

1025 Subscriptions – Cllr C Shepherd asked if the Parish Council should consider reinstating the NALC subscription next year. After discussion it was agreed that it would be prudent to make an allowance in our budget to allow re-joining next year. It was agreed that the BM would contact NALC to check the likely cost of the subscription. It was agreed that a total budget of £1,800.00 should be sufficient but this will be reviewed if NALC are able to provide a budgetary figure before we set our budgets.

1035 Office Rent/Maintenance – Cllr M Shepherd advised we have not received any running cost information from DVCA this financial year so it is difficult/impossible to project an outturn or budget figure for next year. Cllr C Shepherd said she would speak to the DVCA treasurer to obtain the required information for the period April 2024 to September 2024.

1065 Legal Fees/ Land Registration – Cllr M Shepherd said that with both the Social Club and Sportsground leases needing to be finalised, more information is required before current year outturn and required a budget figure for next year can be determined. Cllr C Shepherd advised she would speak to the solicitor for possible completion dates and costs.

1130 Software/Subs/Licensing/Maintenance – Cllr M Shepherd advised that we need to check if any Microsoft price increases have been announced to dealers for 2025/2026. He will contact System 3 to check and report back. The RFO was asked to check the approximate license cost for Edge for 2025/26, which will be subject to an inflation plus x% increase over this year.

1140 IT Support & Maintenance - Cllr M Shepherd said the figure shown for 2024/2025 was sufficient however the 2025/2026 needs more consideration. He will report back to the committee at the next meeting.

1145 New Replacement IT Hardware – Cllr M Shepherd said if the Government approve local authorities holding hybrid meetings the Parish Council may wish to purchase appropriate hardware and screens for both the Garden Room and the Loft to properly support them. It was agreed that he would propose an appropriate budget at the next meeting.

1170 Service Improvements – Cllr M Shepherd said he wished to review this budget line and would report back to the next meeting.

Council Grants – Expenditure

It was agreed that the grants budgets will remain unchanged to 2025/26.

2015 Minor Grants – Cllr M Shepherd advised the minor grants budget has £1,914.27 remaining of the £2,000.00 2024/2025 budget. There has been only one grant application received for this year. Cllr C Shepherd suggested various groups that would benefit from a grant, NARS, Baby Basics and Dersingham Choir. After discussion it was agreed to review the 2024/25 minor grants in January with a possible donation being made to NARS. Cllr C Shepherd suggested, in her Chairman's article for the next edition of Village Voice, to ask local charities to consider applying for a grant.

Codes for removal from EDGE.

Council Expenditure

1150 General Administration

Council Grants – Expenditure

2020 Dersingham Social Club

7 IT Update

Cllr M Shepherd advised the VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) phone system has been ordered. Delivery could be between 2 to 4 weeks; this is dependent on Openreach. The communications committee had agreed to Parish Online managing the registration and hosting of the dersingham.org.uk domain and this transfer has now been completed. The cost will be £30 per year and will be collected in August.

8 Update on New savings Account

This item was deferred to the next F&A committee meeting.

9 Update Asset Insurance Valuation Review

This item was deferred to the next F&A committee meeting.

10 Business Managers Update

a) Defibrillator Checks

This item was deferred to the next F&A committee meeting.

11 Correspondence

There was no correspondence received.

12 Items for inclusion on the next agenda

Insurance valuations review.

Savings Account options.

13 Date of next meeting – Monday 9th December 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.

14 Leases Update

a) Sportsground

Cllr C Shepherd advised there was no update.

(b) Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hall

Cllr C Shepherd advised there was no update.

15 Quotations for Parish Council property Valuation

Councillors discussed the quotations received relating to the property valuation for both the QE II Jubilee Hall and DVC. **It was resolved the BM would raise an order for Brown & Co to carry out the valuations and that Cllr M Shepherd would request Full Council to authorise funding for this be taken from the Dersingham Centre Reserve.**

With no further business the meeting was closed at 8.55pm

Action Points

Cllr M Shepherd

- To review the Contracts Register and give feedback to the BM.
- To enquire about possible price increase for Microsoft for 2025/2026

Cllr C Shepherd

- To contact a specialist roofing/safety company for advice and quotation for installation of safety roof anchorage points.
- Speak with DVCA treasurer regarding budget code 1035 Office Rent/Maintenance
- Speak with the solicitor to discuss possible fees to complete the leases for both the Sportsground and the Social Club.
- In the next Chairman's article for the Village Voice magazine a reminder of minor grants for local charities

Business Manager

- Contact NALC to establish the subscription cost for 2025/2026.

RFO

- To review and update the insurance valuations on the current Asset Register for insurance renewal purposes in 2025
- To confirm the approximate license cost for the EDGE IT package for 2025/2026.