

Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance & Administration Committee meeting held on Tuesday 14th January 2025 at 7.00pm.

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

In attendance: Karen Orgill (Business Manager (BM))
Geraldine Scanlon (Assistant Business Manager (ABM) & Minute Taker).

- 1 Apologies for absence** – Cllrs Robert Frost and Sarah Whitehead.
Jo MacCallum (Responsible Finance Officer)
- 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 11th November 2024**
 - a) To approve the Minutes**
Committee were unable to approve the minutes due to Councillors in attendance at the meeting of 11th November 2024 not being present this evening.
 - b) To review action list**
The action list was reviewed with those completed removed.
 - c) To consider matters arising**
Cllr Thomas asked if the insurance valuation had been received for DVC and the QE II Jubilee Hall. The BM said she had chased the estate agent numerous times but had received nothing to date.
- 5 Current Financial Position**
 - a) IAC monthly and quarterly reports**
Cllr M Shepherd reported that his monthly and quarterly reports had been shared via SharePoint prior to the meeting. He had confirmed that bank reconciliations for 1st April 2024-31st December 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 Quarter 3 VAT return was submitted on the 6th January 2025 and the sum of £1,604.93 had been received today from HMRC.
 - b) Whole council budgets**
Cllr M Shepherd said all financial reports for December had been placed on SharePoint prior to the meeting and invited questions. There were no questions raised regarding the reports.
 - c) Aged debtors**
Cllr M Shepherd advised there is currently one Aged Debtors. The BM said she had emailed the RFO to see if payment had been made. Cllr M Shepherd confirmed no payment had been received when he looked at the bank account on Sunday. The BM agreed to contact those concerned.

d) Reserves

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

6 2025/26 Budget Setting and Precept Setting

Cllr M Shepherd advised some budget codes within the F&A budgets were yet to be finalised.

1015 Insurance – Cllr M Shepherd said the valuations for the DVCA and QE II Jubilee buildings have not been received to date he therefore suggested increasing the budget by £1,000.00 to allow for an increase in costs and inflation. After discussion it was agreed to set the budget at £5,500.00.

1035 Office Rent/Maintenance – Cllr M Shepherd advised that DVCA had not yet submitted their figures for the Parish Councils contribution to the April to October running costs. He had reviewed previous payments but this was of little help and in the absence of any other information he proposed an increase of £500.00. This was discussed and it was agreed to set the budget at £4,000.00

1045 Telephones/Broadband – Cllr M Shepherd reported that Lightspeed is now up to date with their monthly subscription payment direct debits. It was agreed the budget be set at £1,000.00

1170 Service Improvements – Cllr M Shepherd proposed a carry forward of £3,500.00 as a fixed sum to use as 2025/26 budget. It was resolved to approve the proposal.

Cllr M Shepherd advised he had placed all the budget setting reports and a discussion paper on SharePoint prior to the meeting. The Budget Comparison report shows the proposed budgets for 2025/26 from all committees. The Precept figures are not added to the report as they are still to be discussed by the F&A Committee.

The contents of the discussion paper were considered in detail and the following decisions were made.

The proposed fixed carry overs for 2025/26 financial year are:

Council

1155 – QE II Jubilee Hall Contingency	£12,000.00
1170 – Service Improvements	£3,500.00

Communications

6035 – Events	£900.00
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Recreation

5065 – Recreation Ground 5-year plan	£2,000.00
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In addition, there are three proposed requests to carry forward balances unspent at the end of this financial year. The estimated values are:

Council

1065 – Legal Fees/Land Registration	£1,400.00
1140 – IT Support & Maintenance	£2,000.00

To avoid further complications, it was agreed that the recommendation to Council will include a suitable paragraph to formally authorise that these revisions to the budget be carried out in April when the exact sums are known.

It was agreed that the Precept recommendations to Full Council will be:

- To set the Precept for 2025/26 at £179,000 which will result in individual households paying the same as last year.
- Use £6,750 from General Fund surplus to supplement the 2025/26 budget.
- A report to be produced for Full Council early in the new financial year recommending appropriate transfers from the General fund to other reserves and any other appropriate changes relating to the use of existing reserves.

7 IT Update

Cllr M Shepherd said Lightspeed are now up to date with invoicing the Parish Council. Three monthly payments have been collected by direct debit within the last month but the payments were expected and correct.

Cllr M Shepherd asked if either the BM or ABM had spoken to ARK regarding the setting up of the voicemail on the new VOIP telephone. The ABM said she would contact ARK. The switch from our corporate identity emails from dersingham.org.uk to dersingham-pc.gov.uk is yet to be commenced.

8 Update on New savings Account

Cllr M Shepherd deferred this item as the RFO was unable to attend the meeting.

9 Update Asset Insurance Valuation Review

This item was covered under minute number 4c.

10 Business Managers Update

a) Defibrillator Checks

The BM said the defibrillator checks have been completed and the outcome put onto SharePoint. The repaired Defib from the QE II Jubilee Hall has been returned and has been reset to factory settings. The loan defib will be returned.

11 Correspondence

11.1 End of contract for Unmetered Supply

Cllr C Shepherd advised a letter had been received from OPUS Energy notifying the Parish Council that supply had been transferred to DRAX. Also the existing contract will shortly expire and the BM has been contacting other energy suppliers for quotations.

11.2 Cllr C Shepherd said a grant application had been received from Dersingham Choir. Councillors discussed the application and it was agreed the applicant would be invited to February's F&A Committee meeting to discuss their request.

11.3 Cllr C Shepherd advised she had been approached by a trustee of the Dersingham Sports Ground Association for a letter of support for a grant application to the Borough Council to assist with the refurbishment of the pavilion. **It was approved for Cllr C Shepherd to write a letter of support.**

12 Items for inclusion on the next agenda

Grant application
Savings account.

13 Date of next meeting – Monday 10th February 2025, 7pm in the Loft

The meeting was placed in closed session at 8.25pm

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 she was waiting for an update from the Football Foundation solicitor.

(b) Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hall

Cllr C Shepherd advised there was no update.

With no further business the meeting was closed at 8.30pm

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.
- To write a letter of support for DSGA Borough Grant application

Business Manager

- To check the defibrillator located at the QE II Jubilee Hall as per minute 10
- To invite the grant applicant to attend Februarys' F&A Committee meeting.

Assistant Business Manager

- To contact ARK regarding the voicemail on the new VOIP telephone system.