

Marlborough Town Council



Finance and Policy Committee

**Minutes of a meeting of the Finance & Policy Committee held Monday, 24 October 2022
in the Council Chamber, Marlborough Town Hall at 7pm**

PRESENT Councillor Caroline Thomas Chair
Councillor Nicholas Fogg
Councillor Andrew Ross
Councillor Jo Waltham
Councillor Richard Allen
Councillor Kymee Cleasby

ALSO

PRESENT Richard Spencer-Williams Town Clerk
Councillor Guy Loosmore Chair of Property Committee

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions.

215/22 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from the **Town Mayor** and **Councillors Davies, Sheppard** and **Dawn Whitehall**.

216/22 DECLARATIONS

There were no declarations.

217/22 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair thanked Councillor Loosmore for attending the Committee meeting in his capacity as the Chair of the Property Committee.

218/22 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 August 2022 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair

219/22 ACTION LOG

Members noted the updated action log. Verbal updates included:

- #81: Although a response was sent by email by the Town Clerk to the Committee, Councillor Ross still considered the matter unresolved.
ACTION to have 'EMR accounting practice' on a future Committee agenda for further discussion.
- #82: Councillor Ross asked for his report regarding the EMR accounting to be circulated to all the Committee Members
ACTION Town Clerk to forward Councillor Ross' report and associated emails to Committee Members

220/22 SMALL GRANT SCHEME

Members considered four requests for small grants.

RESOLVED: (i) to award £500 to Wiltshire Citizens Advice

RESOLVED: (ii) to award £500 to Wiltshire Sight to support monthly sight loss hubs in Marlborough

RESOLVED: (iii) to award £1500 to 1946 Savernake Explosion Memorial towards the creation and installation of a memorial (*funds to be taken from the Heritage budget line*)

RESOLVED: (iv) to award £300 to Age UK towards the cost of recruiting, publicising and improving its service to Marlborough residents

The remaining balance for the grants budget would then be £1500

221/22 Q2 FINANCE REPORT AND 2023-24 BUDGET REQUIREMENTS

Q2 Finance Report

Members noted the finance report for Q2, 2022-23. Discussion points included:

- That the Events (4153) line EMR transfer balance shows as £11667; yet on the following page the report reads as if £60 should be subtracted from £11607. It was recognised this is most likely a reporting format issue, but an explanation would be helpful

ACTION Town Clerk to seek clarification

- That at the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee it was agreed that CCTV should be installed at Coopers Meadow due to ongoing vandalism; and that this would be taken from the CCCTV EMR.

RESOLVED: to support the use of the CCTV EMR for a camera at Coopers Meadow play area.

2023-24 Budget

Members considered the F&P Committee budget requirements for 2023-24 to feed into the whole Council's budget consideration at the F&P Committee meeting in November. The Committee's view was also invited in response to the proposed restructuring of some budget lines. Additional considerations were:

- Whether the photocopier contract could be reviewed
- Whether the mobile and land line phones could be reviewed
- Whether for 2024-25, the Festive Lights could be reviewed
- That the Council was still awaiting advice from the energy broker about possible energy costs beyond the current contract term (Spring 2023)
- That it is hard to plan for actual energy costs, but that a significant increase should be expected; and that there was at least some allowance for this in the proposed budget
- That the proposed sums kept the Committee's request within the 3% precept rise maximum target

Feedback on the Excel report was given as:

- The report is generally helpful
- That the inclusion of a % column for proposed figures would be useful

RESOLVED: To support the budget as proposed for the Finance and Policy Committee 2023-24 as outlined in the Town Clerk's report

222/22 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2021-22

Members noted the AGAR 2021-22 section 3 external audit return.

223/22 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Members noted and considered the 2022-23 interim Internal Audit Report section 3. Matters arising included:

- The need to add the value of the skatepark lighting to the assets total as advised by the external auditor

224/22 YEAR END ACCOUNTS REPORT

Members were invited by the Chair to raise any matters arising from the previously circulated year-end accounts report for 2021-22. Discussion points included:

- Councillor Ross questioned the viability of year end account reports, as circulated by the Town Clerk to the Committee
- That the reports are generated by the Omega system and are what is supplied and used by the auditors
- A debate around accounting styles and expectations
- Councillor Ross was invited to provide examples of what he thought was lacking in the reports supplied

225/22 PETTY CASH REPORT

Members considered the use of petty cash.

RESOLVED: to continue with the current process for petty cash

226/22 AMENITIES & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE REQUEST FOR CIL FUNDS

Members considered a request from the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funds for Wye House Play area to create a £30K EMR in 2023-24.

RESOLVED: to allocate £30k of CIL funds for Wye House Play area (and to create a separate EMR for this purpose)

227/22 TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT & APPRAISAL POLICY

Councillor Thomas stated that whilst she supported the Policy as read, there were some grammatical changes she would make to allow the policy to be read more easily.

RESOLVED: that the Finance & Policy Committee supports the draft Training, Development & Appraisal Policy for recommendation to Full Council for adoption

ACTION Councillor Thomas to send the Town Clerk comments for possible amendment/inclusion.

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm

Signed:

Chair

Date: