

**THATCHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of a meeting of the**  
**Finance and General Purposes Committee**  
**held on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 19:00hrs**  
**in the Council Chamber, Brownsfield Road, Thatcham**

Present: Councillor Mike Cole (Chairman)  
 Councillors Owen Jeffery, Mark Lillycrop, Dave Lunn (substituting for Iain Cottingham), Jay Lunn, Tom McCann, Justin Pemberton and Stephanie Steevenson (substituting for Jeremy Cottam)

In attendance: Mel Taylor (Town Clerk) and Miri Willan (Finance Manager)

**FGP/2024/10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**  
 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jeremy Cottam (Stephanie Steevenson appointed as substitute) and Iain Cottingham (Dave Lunn appointed as substitute).

**FGP/2024/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
 There were no declarations of interest.

**FGP/2024/12 MINUTES**  
**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024, having been previously circulated, be taken as read, confirmed, and signed as an accurate record.  
 The Town Clerk advised that a response was awaited to the questions raised under minute reference FGP/2024/04.

**FGP/2024/13 BUDGET REVIEW 2023/24**

- a) Committee reviewed a budget report for the whole Council budget, for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, noting that whilst the report covered the full financial year, it was still subject to year-end adjustments and the final accounts for 2023/24 would be presented to Full Council on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024.
- b) Committee noted a sundry debtors report for the Jubilee Tableau project.
- c) Committee noted a report on Reserves and CIL funds held.
- d) Committee considered a referral from the Grants Sub-Committee, arising from its meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2024 (G/2024/09), to consider allocating funding from the Community Grants budget underspend (£7,710) to the London Road Cemetery Baby Memorial Garden project. Total project cost: £30,325 less £16,708 raised to date, funding required: £13,617.

**RESOLVED** to defer to a future meeting of this Committee or the Recreation and Amenities Committee.

e) Committee considered a request from the Events Manager, supported by Councillors Lillycrop and Adamantos, to allocate £2,500 as core funding to support matched funding applications to implement the Young People Music Project.

**RESOLVED** to approve expenditure of £2,500 as core funding to support matched funding applications to implement the Young People Music Project, funded from EMR350 Youth Projects.

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- FGP/2024/13**      **BUDGET REVIEW 2023/24 continued**
- f) Committee considered a recommendation from the Planning & Highways Committee, arising from its meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024 (PH/2024/027(b)), to allocate up to £5,000 of Community Infrastructure Levy funding as matched funding for a Members' Bid by West Berkshire District Councillors for the purchase of Speed Monitoring Device/s.
- RESOLVED**      to allocate up to £5,000 of Community Infrastructure Levy towards the purchase of Speed Monitoring Device/s.
- RESOLVED**      g) Committee considered year-end adjustments.  
to agree to the following year-end adjustments, with further adjustments relating to financial year 2023/24 considered in due course:
- i. To transfer £12,470 to a new 'Uncompleted Projects' Earmarked Reserve for the following projects; trace heating assessment, relocation of power in market cupboard, various play area repairs, public space bin liners, purchase & installation of picnic tables and benches.
  - ii. To transfer £807, being the balance remaining from a grant from Sovereign towards community projects in Jubilee Sensory Garden, to an Earmarked Reserve for future relevant projects.
- FGP/2024/14**      **ADDITIONAL IT INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT INCREASED STAFFING**
- Committee considered a quote from the Council's IT contractor for additional laptops and peripherals to support increased staff numbers.
- RESOLVED**      to approve expenditure of £2,761.68 for additional laptops and peripherals, funded from the Rolling Capital Fund.
- FGP/2024/15**      **GRANTS SUB-COMMITTEE**
- RESOLVED**      to adopt the Minutes of the Grants Sub-Committee meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2024.
- FGP/2024/16**      **COMMUNITY PROJECTS FUND**
- Committee considered an application from Thatcham Bowling Club for £250 from the Community Projects Fund for a community engagement project.
- RESOLVED**      to award a grant of £250 from the Community Project Fund to Thatcham Bowling Club.
- FGP/2024/17**      **ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE – AUTOMATIC FIRE ALARMS CONSULTATION**
- Councillor Jeffery declared a non-pecuniary interest in this agenda item as a member of the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service*
- Committee received a referral from Full Council when it met on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024 to consider the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service's consultation on proposed changes to the way it responds to automatic fire alarms. As no comments had been received from Councillors, it was agreed not to respond but Councillors were able to submit individual responses.

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- FGP/2024/18      CITIZENS' ADVICE WEST BERKSHIRE**  
 A three-year funding agreement with Citizens' Advice West Berkshire expired on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. Details of the agreement being; "to provide outreach Citizen's Advice services for the residents of Thatcham. A minimum of two x one hour outreach appointments per week will be provided in Thatcham at Thatcham Medical Practice, Bath Road and/or The Burdwood Surgery, Wheelers Green Way, or at such other location as agreed with the Council". Funding provided in 2023/24: £4,785.
- RESOLVED** that Councillors Cole, McCann and Pemberton would meet, along with the Community Engagement Manager, to consider potential funding options for consideration at the next meeting.
- FGP/2024/19      REVIEW OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**  
 Officers recommended that the current Financial Regulations be overhauled to facilitate more efficient and effective processes and a draft revised version had been provided.
- RESOLVED** that Councillors Cole, Cottingham and McCann shall meet with the Town Clerk/RFO and Finance Manager to review the proposed revised Regulations.
- RESOLVED** in accordance with Standing Order 6.3.10, to continue the meeting beyond 2 hour's duration.
- FGP/2024/20      FINANCIALS**
- RESOLVED**
- i. Committee considered proposed BACS payments due from the current account.
  - to approve the proposed BACS payments (appendix I).
  - ii. Committee noted details of pre-authorised payments made from the current account, Soldo pre-paid debit card and Clerk's account during the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 (appendix II).
  - iii. Committee retrospectively approved payments made from the current account on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024, and supported approval of the payments by the Town Clerk and Finance Manager under delegated authority in accordance with Financial Regulation 5.5a, to ensure payments were processed within the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 (appendix III).
  - iv. Committee noted a bank reconciliation report.
  - v. Committee noted an Aged Creditor report.
  - vi. Committee noted an Aged Debtor report.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 21:08hrs.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_