



**Minutes of the Meeting of Finance Committee Held on
Thursday 26th September 2024 at 7pm in the Parish Office**

Present:

Councillors:

Steve Bolingbroke (SB) -Chair
Karyn Buck (KB) – Vice-Chair
Nicky Smallbone (NS)
Tim Horton (TH)
Ian Hill (IH)

Officer:

Kristina Tynan (KT)

44/24 Apologies for absence

None, all present.

45/24 Approval of Minutes from 8/7/2024 to be agreed as a correct record. These were accepted by Council on 9/7/2024.

Resolved: That these minutes be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

46/24 Matters Arising

47/24 Declarations of Interest

There were none notified.

48/24 Financial Issues

1. **Management Accounts to 31/8/2024** – These had been sent out prior to the meeting. SB reported that there is an overspend on staff which is expected. The MUGA costs are slightly over on maintenance but useage will increase now we are in football season. It was noted that Youth Club is not running at present so cost will be less. The bus service has been taken over by OCC so there are no bus costs for this financial year.

2. **Budget Setting Process** – The following timetable was agreed:

Step	When / Who
Full year projection for 2024 /25. End of year balances. Expected staff pay rises, inflation etc.	Early October. SB / KT to discuss based on end September (ie H1) figures.
Strategy proposal written by SB discussed / amended /agreed at Finance Committee	Finance Committee. Late October / November
Circulate to all Councillors	Early November
Input to budget from committees responsible for each business area	Ops, Sports, Town Hall, Allotments Committees. November
Discussion / agreement of strategy	12th November Full Council
Confirmation from SODC of Tax Base	Late November
Agreement of budget proposal at Finance	28th November
Sign off budget at Full Council	10 th December
Finalise budget with input from Full Council	December / early January
Submit budget to SODC.	January
Final budget reported back to Full Council	14 th January 2025

3. **Financial exposure to EV project and decision about recouping overspend-** IH reported that SOS will not give a date for the electrical work until they have received payment. The extra £11813.58 (+vat) for the electrical work was agreed at the September Full Council. IH asked that the Finance Committee give approval for the invoice to be paid ASAP. It was agreed that we ask for all works to be completed before the late-night shopping event(30/11/2024). It was also discussed that we could levy a charge from EZ to pay for this work which was known would need to happen but did not have a cost associated with it. IH will check on charges for EV chargers in the district.
Resolved: That this payment be settled as per the invoice.

4. **Procurement Process** – TH (LTN 87 was attached to the agenda)
TH stated that he had some concerns about this issue as per the issue above about unknown costs of projects. He thought that there should be more guidance if projects are delayed and costs increase. He then asked that Financial Regulation 4.6 be amended:

4.6 No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available, or the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That Financial Regulation 4.6 be amended to:

No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available, or the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained. The council should so far as is possible avoid agreements to contracts where any sums are estimated or provisional for any part or phase of a project that may significantly vary the cost of the total project.

5. **External Audit Report** – This was discussed and items raised noted.
RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That Council accept the External Audit Report and ensure that all items raised be addressed for the next years audit.

KB thanked all involved in the audit process.

49/24 Other Issues

1. **Airband** – They have requested a Wayleave over WPC land at Old School Place – They have offered a sum of £3.90 per metre. After discussion it was:
Resolved: To write back and ask for £5 per metre.
2. **Update on ArtSpine project and financial implications** – SB reported that a rigorous process was carried out. There were seven expressions of interest and the ArtSpine group agreed to interview three artists. One artist, Joseph Hillier was chosen. Council will need to agree to the letter of instruction to him. A programme of events that he will be involved in has been agreed, this will include engagement with both school, local artists, local residents etc. He will also give a lecture about his work. He will then do some sketches and give us some proposals. Delivery of the pieces will be in May 2026.
SB said that there will be £115K from Redkite View and Redrow. Redrow will pay the money in stages during the development which is on a 3 year roll out programme. SB said that there could be a shortfall due to the stage payment and asked the committee to consider using reserves to bridge the short-term funding gap. After discussion, the following was agreed:
RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That Council agree in principle to bridge the funding gap for this project.
- SB was congratulated on all his very detailed work to date on this project.
3. **Photocopier** – our current contract runs out 1/10/2024 – There were three quotes.
RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That we take out a 5-year contract with RICOH.

4. **Preferred Suppliers**
RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That Council agree to list of preferred suppliers (shown at the bottom of these minutes)
5. **WEG** – Request for the Parish Council to pay for their insurance. We are awaiting the invoice.
6. **Health and Safety** – This is now being led by AA on the Operations Committee.
6. **WPC Small Grants** – This has been launched. It was agreed that application will be looked at by a panel consisting of KB, NS, SB and AA following the deadline of 25/10/2024. Recommendations will be brought to the November Full Council meeting.

50/24 Correspondence

1. **OALC** – Subscription Vote – FC agreed to the new subscription calculations on 10/9/24

51/24 Any Other Business

- Update on CIL projects** – This will be an agenda item for the next Full Council meeting.

52/24 Date of next scheduled meeting 2024: 28th November

Items for the Agenda : Review of Financial Regulations, Review of Internal Controls, Grants

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.25PM

Watlington Parish Council - List of Preferred Contractors 24/25

General Maintenance / Building / Misc

Sean Cunningham (maintenance)
 Martin Dix (decorating)
 B Hatt (locksmith)
 Nick Little (groundwork)
 Adam Clissold (General)
 Ben Little (General)
 Bruce Garside (metal work)
 Neil Carrington (pest control)
 Classic Builders (building work)
 Ollie Brake (SID)
 Chris Collingswood (groundwork and bollards)

Electrical Work

NC Electrical
 D Young
 Milner & Sons
 Loop Electrical (PAT testing)

Plumbing

John Taylor
 Lee Beckett
 Sam Passey
 Pelican Plumbing

Alarms/Wi-Fi/Security

Executive Alarms
 Onecom

Waste Collections

Dog Bins
Recycling
General Waste

Shield
Grundon
Grundon

Grasscutting/Gardening/Hedges and Tree work

TLGO
Devey tree Car (hedges)
Nigel Adams (Hedge laying)
South Buck Tree Surgery (stump grinding)
4 Seasons Tree Care
Martin Gammie (tree consultancy)

Sewage disposal

A Better Service

IT Support /Email

Bongo IT
Computer Assistance

Utilities

Tomato Energy (Electricity)
British Gas Lite (Gas)
Castle Water