

# Normandy Parish Council

Serving Our Community through working in Partnership

Minutes of a meeting of **NORMANDY PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE** held at the **ROYAL BRITISH LEGION HALL, GUILDFORD ROAD** on **THURSDAY 26 OCTOBER 2023** at 7.00 pm.

**Committee Members present** Cllrs Paul Chillman, Bob Hutton, Simon Schofield, Pat Tugwell  
**Non-committee members present** Amanda Pick (Parish Clerk & RFO)

**FG-19 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Jane Hill

**FG-20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

**FG-21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED:** The minutes of the Finance & Governance Committee meeting held on 13 July 2023 were adopted as a true record.

**FG-22 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None

**FG-23 FINANCIAL REPORTS Q2**

(a) Members approved the Payment List, it was noted that income from the Local Council Tax Support Scheme has been included within the precept code as this comes as one payment.

**RESOLVED:** The RFO will journal this to a separate code for grant aid.

(b) Members noted the Income and Expenditure list

(c) The Bank Reconciliations were approved and signed by Councillor Schofield and the RFO

(d) Members noted the Ear Marked Reserves

**RESOLVED:** It was noted that these will reviewed before the end of the year.

(e) The Summary and Receipts and Payments were noted.

**FG-24 BUDGET 2024/25**

Draft budgets are now prepared for all areas. Events budget is currently a rough draft and will be reviewed and updated after this year's firework event. This is so that we can see what the attendance is this year and evaluate the effect of not running our own BBQ stall.

Key points to note: -

1. The overall level of precept required to balance the budget currently stands at £167,285. This would be an increase of 8.29% over the current year.
2. We have been advised by GBC that we should not budget for Local Council Tax Support Scheme funding from central government. This year's figure was £7,235. A similar level of funding would reduce our precept increase to 3.6%.
3. The headline figures for each area are:
  - a. F&G – **reduction** of £4,820 (10.57%), largely driven by removing contingency provision and election expense provision
  - b. HR – **increase** of £10,404 (19.59%). This assumes £1 per hour pay increase for current year, backdated to April, which is currently still being negotiated. It also assumes a 5% uplift in 2024/25.

- c. Estates – **increase** of £6,050 (10.6%). This is largely driven by expected increases in the charges for clearance of litter bins.
- d. Comms – **decrease** of £95 (1.49%)
- e. Events – TBC.

**RESOLVED:**

The committee would like to benchmark these percentages with similar councils and will look to achieve a reduced target of 5% increase. It was noted that the council have the opportunity to use general reserves for some costs. Guidance will be circulated from Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) on general reserves.

**FG-25**

**INTERNAL AUDIT**

To support the RFO in her for 6 months in the role, the Council underwent a mid-year internal audit. The formal response is anticipated next week and will be circulated once received. Members noted the recommendations on the day. The annual internal audit will be in April 2024.

**FG-26**

**POLICIES**

The following policies were discussed

- (a) The new CCTV policy was discussed in relation to who has permissions to view the footage and in what circumstances.

**RESOLVED:** the policy was agreed with Councillor Schofield as the CCTV Designated Councillor and adopted by the council

- (b) Risk Management Policy

**RESOLVED:** the policy was agreed and adopted by the council

- (c) Malware / Own Devices Policy

**RESOLVED:** the policy was agreed and adopted by the council. The clerk will circulate a checklist for Councillors to aid compliance and create a document for Councillors to agree self-certification each year.

**FG-27**

**BANKING ARRANGEMENTS**

It was noted that the current interest rates the Council receives from Lloyds are:

Lloyd's Treasurer's Account Zero

Lloyd's Business Bank Instant 1.3% gross

The ID and paperwork has been submitted for the new Skipton account, which is at 3.6% interest. There has not been any indication given on the time length for the opening of the account.

- (a) With the opening of the Skipton account, the Council need to decide whether to keep the Business Bank Instant account open. It is not currently known if transfers between Skipton and Lloyd's would be immediate as per current arrangements, there would not be a daily sweep).

**RESOLVED:**

The committee agreed to keep the Business Bank Instant account open with some level of cash to be able to maintain a sweep.

- (b) FG-92 on 05/01/23 resolved that 'A sum of £70k will be transferred into the account once opened.'

**RESOLVED:**

The committee agreed that amount is still agreeable and will recommend accordingly to full council.

**FG-28**

**CCLA investment**

The committee reviewed the investment held in CCLA. The RFO, Chair and Vice Chair of the committee held a meeting with CCLA to discuss the funds performance. The criteria for evaluation should firstly be security, then liquidity, then yield - based on the fact that the value is still diminishing, that the liquidity period has been raised to 6 months and that the rough estimate of total return at 1.31% is significantly less than both the 5 year historic total return performance and the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund with 5.3252% Annual Equivalent Yield currently. The committee wish to move this to a deposit fund where all three criteria would be improved. It was noted there is a 6 months' notice period to close the fund.

**RESOLVED:** The committee will recommend to full council that the fund is closed and the committee will seek an alternative investment once the funds are released.

**FG-29**

**VAT**

Councillor Schofield evaluated the Council's VAT position which was circulated to the committee. There are no changes needed at this stage.

**RESOLVED:** The committee agreed to review the VAT status annually.

**FG-30**

**ACCOUNTS SOFTWARE**

There are two main providers of accounting software for Parish Councils; Rialtas and Scribe. RFO is currently using Rialtas accounting software and doesn't find it very intuitive but outdated and hard to navigate. The chairman and RFO have researched the second option, Scribe. From the overview session and webinars this seems more user friendly and efficient.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed that Rialtas will be replaced with Scribe at the beginning of the financial year, including the allotment management package. The RFO will ensure retention of document from the old system and that the transition happens in a safe and effective way.

**FG-31**

**DATA PROTECTION ACT**

No progress as yet, postponed to the next meeting.

**FG-32**

**INVENTORY OF LAND AND OTHER ASSETS**

No progress as yet, postponed to the next meeting.

**FG-33**

**INVENTORY OF THE KEYS AND PASSCODES**

Task in progress, postponed to the next meeting.

**FG-34**

**EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

**FG-35**

**ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND/OR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS**

To receive any urgent information items and agree any items for inclusion on future council and/or committee agendas.

- Data Protection Act
- Inventory of land and other assets
- Inventory of the keys and passcodes
- Budget agreement

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 20:17pm.