



FINANCE COMMITTEE Met at Marshalswick Community Centre on Monday 31st October 2022 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Councillors John Hale, Janet Churchard, Jenny Roberts, John Newton Davies

OFFICERS: Simon Thwaites, Parish Clerk, Emma Hostler, Deputy Parish Clerk

ABSENT: -

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Neil Harris

690 APOLOGIES

Councillors Graham Leonard, Sam Vosper.

691 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

There was none.

- Councillor Hale agreed to meet with Councillor Harris in connection with an email sent to the committee in advance of the meeting regarding several questions Cllr Harris considered outstanding from October Full Council.

692 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 26th SEPTEMBER 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on the 26th September 2022, having been previously circulated, were reviewed. It was unanimously:

Resolved

That the minutes be approved and then signed by the Chair.

693 2022/23 BUDGETARY CONTROL AND 2023/24 DRAFT BUDGET

Members reviewed and discussed the draft budget for 2023/24 as compiled by the Clerk in liaison with officers, Parish Councillors and suppliers. The projected outturn for 2022/23 was also reviewed and noted to be an overspend on budget of £34,713. This figure will be further adjusted prior to presentation to Full Council in December following discussions at this meeting and any subsequent non material adjustments as appropriate in the interim.

In summary, draft net expenditure for 2023/2024 was noted to be £330,728, an increase of 8.9% on the current year's budget. Again, the figure to be reported to Full Council will be amended according to decisions made at this meeting. It was agreed to leave the budgeted gas and electricity expenditure for 2023/24 as stated in the draft but that officers would pay particular attention to these in future budgetary control reports. It was further noted that the Centres Manager is taking measures to reduce usage without inconveniencing hirers.

Adjustments made to the draft 2023/24 budget at this meeting were as follows;

- Removal of the Nomansland Quest budget of £1,750 from 2023/24.
- Increase to the 2023/24 Grants budget of £20,000 to £22,000.
- Update of the salary/pension/NI expenditure for both 2022/23 and 2023/24 in accordance with the pay award to be announced on 1st November.

It was proposed by Councillor Hale, seconded by Councillor Churchard and unanimously;

Resolved

To approve the draft 2023/24 budget as amended subject to funding (see later item) and further approval by Full Council on December 14th 2022.

694 SIX YEAR MODEL

Members reviewed a six-year financial model circulated with the agenda to assist in identifying trends in levels of income, expenditure and, most importantly, reserves. It was noted that the model supported applying both the recommended draft budget and the recommended precept.

695 2023/24 DRAFT RESERVES, PRECEPT AND FUNDING REQUIREMENT

The Committee considered a table detailing the opening and projected closing position on reserves. The projection assumed approval of the draft 2023/24 budget, a 3.5% increase on the 2022/2023 precept and that reserves of £29,636 would be used to support the 2023/2024 budget. The following was also noted in relation to these assumptions;

- Sandridge Parish Council continues to raise one of the lowest precepts in the district and economic challenges in future years would impact more heavily if the Parish Council failed to maintain appropriate balances.
- There is no draft budget or earmarked reserve for installing EV Charging points in the draft 2023/24 budget because the timing, probability, and cost of such a project is unknown. There remains however a possibility that this matter will be raised in the future and the likely lead times may require a funding decision outside of the usual budget process.
- The draft estimate for community centre income for the rest of 2022/23 and for 2023/24 is a prudent estimate but could be subject to material adjustment in future. Furthermore, the ongoing volatility of inflation in general has made the budgeting process less reliable this year.

Following discussion it was proposed by Councillor Hale, seconded by Councillor Churchard and unanimously;

Resolved

To recommend to Full Council an increase on the 2022/23 precept of 4.5%.

696 ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR PLAYGROUND REPAIRS

Members were reminded that, at the last meeting of the Committee it was resolved to authorise expenditure of up to £4,500 to renovate the two timber clad slides in Parish Council owned playgrounds. It was noted that this figure had been well understated and that, whilst the Project and Amenities Officer will seek to obtain two further quotes, funding of up to £8,100 will be required to complete both renovations.

Following discussion it was proposed by Councillor Hale, seconded by Councillor Roberts and unanimously;

Resolved

To approve funding of up to £9,000 from current general reserves. Full Council to be asked to ratify the decision in November.

697 FUNDING THE REPLACEMENT OF THE SPENCER MEADOW ASTRO TURF

It was unanimously;

Resolved

To set aside £2,000 annually from 2023/24 for the eventual replacement of the Astro Turf court at Spencer Meadow.

698 MATTERS OF NOTE

- The Centres Manager continues to take enquiries from potential hirers of Marshalswick Community Centre, however there remains an ongoing deficit in hire income. The number of children’s parties at the centre continues to increase.

699 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA

There was none.

The meeting closed at 8.37 pm.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday February 20th 2023 at 7.30pm

Chair **Date**